The Northeast Ohio Recorder

Rotation Issue

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A Word From Our Delegate

With all of you, we embark on this journey of 2021 and Panel 71 together. When I became a GSR, at my first Dual District meeting, Alice H. told me that I was needed. I told her when I thought I could do the work I would stand up. What a journey from then to now.

I am rotating in as your Delegate, just as our East Central Regional Trustee, Mark E. is rotating out. He has served us well for four years. Mark E. shared the latest news from our General Service Office (GSO). I want to pass it on to you.



As some of you know, GSO had to draw from our Prudent Reserves additions monies. The draw was for \$1.5 million. As I understand it, this was to cover, in part, the cost of the Voluntary Retirement and Incentive Plan (VRIP). Twenty GSO staff employees chose to accept this early retirement package. Some wished to take a lump sum payout versus staying in the retirement program. This required additions monies to be paid up front. Our employee retirement program is fully funded. In addition, the lump sum payouts will decrease the future financial impact to the retirement fund. As it turned out a third of that draw down is not needed at this time.

The biggest news to me was the anticipated completion of the ERP program (our computerized database program). The new program was created to combine three different databases (contributions, AA store, and membership). The AA store and the contributions are up and running. I used the Contributions online and it went well. The membership section is scheduled to be up and running by the end of the year. The big difference is that our Area Registrar will have more control over the data. It is proposed that the Area will be making the changes directly. GSO has asked the Area to have an assistant Registrar to be fully trained. The greatest news is that the Delegate and the DCM's will have the ability to review what is in the "system" and process group change forms and send them to our Area Registrar and the corrections will be immediate. The ability to have this local control over the input and ability to correct information in the system is huge. In the past, the corrections were slow to be completed and many times just were not corrected. The Delegate and the DCM's will not be able to make changes, but our local Registrar will handle the changes. I know that our Area 54 Registrar has been keeping our Area database up to date. But, when the new system becomes operational, she will need some time to correct the main database.

As members, GSR's and DCM's, we now have a **HUGE** task to find out which groups are meeting in person or virtually or in a hybrid format. With the closure of so many groups, it is hard to find out which groups are open and which groups have closed permanently.

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The GSR's/DCM's will need to fill out the group change forms and send them to our Registrar. The forms can be found on our website on the right hand side of the site. Look for the "Group Change Form." We all need to see that our group information is current. Please help your Group Service Representative (GSR).

Our General Service Board has begun the search for a new General

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FROM THE EDITOR

ROTATION

There was an article in the June 1996 issue of the AA Grapevine titled "The Spirit of Rotation." At the beginning of that article the author, Don P. of Aurora, Colorado, asks the following question: "How then can we continue to benefit from the experience of those who have rotated?" The article concludes with the answer to that question. "The best way I can think of to benefit from their experience is to be certain that they are a part of mine." (https:// www.aagrapevine.org/magazine/1996/jun/spirit-rotation, accessed 11/17/2020). Don's point is simple. When I rotate from a position it is my responsibility to share the experience, strength and hope gained in that position with the AA rotating in. But it is a two-way street. It is also my responsibility as one rotating into a position to reach out to the AA rotating out. (The article is important to me for another reason. It was in June 1996 that I was first introduced to AA.)

This is the time of year in Area 54 when we experience the pains and gains from what we call rotation. It is not just an action, it also embodies the very spirit that is the foundation of AA.: One Alcoholic helping another. We need to remember that it is not just a game of "musical chairs." In that game someone gets left out every time, and there are rarely any "new players." In our "game" it should be just the opposite - always room for one more. Unfortunately, some have "politicized" the process, resulting in winners and losers. We see it in our jockeying for position, as well as in our lack of willingness to serve. We even see it in the language that we use. I have heard AAs say that they were "running for office." And I have also heard others say "I ain't volunteering for nothing." Perhaps it is time to pause and review where this whole idea of AA rotation came from in the first place.

It has been said that the idea of rotation actually came from right here in Area 54. In the early 1940s Cleveland experienced exponential growth in AA. To maintain some semblance of unity among those groups a Central Committee was formed by one of the early Cleveland AAs, Abby G., who set the committee up with time limits on leadership. I have heard that Bill W. credits Abby with inventing AA's traditional Spirit of Rotation. (https://www.aacle.org/what-is-aa/history-of-a-a/. Accessed 11/17/2020)

The Spirit of Rotation is at the foundation of our Second

Tradition, which provides, in short form, "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

Speaking of a "loving God," I know at least one AA who calls the "hat" "the God Box." When we cannot reach "substantial unanimity" in electing a servant to a position, we "go to the hat." I suppose it is similar to letting go, and letting God. But perhaps there is another consideration before a candidate forces a "hat." That consideration is ego.

I remember once standing for a position, with one other person also standing. By the third ballot it was clear that we had a divided house. The tally was very close, and with each ballot the tally remained about the same (pretty typical in a two-person election). Rather than putting the entire Assembly through the grueling process of voting again, and then deciding whether to vote one more time, before "going to the hat," it occurred to me, "Just sit down!" I did, thereby "conceding" the election. It opened so many more opportunities to serve that now I am sure the voice saying "Just sit down" must have been the voice of God.

The whole point of the Spirit of Rotation is to protect us from our own ego. Sometimes when we "Just sit down," we are doing the same thing Bill W. did when he called Charlie Towns back and said essentially, "Thanks, but no thanks." (See *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pgs.136-138)

In 1955 AA "Came of Age," and Bill W. became an "elder statesman." Basically, he "just sat down." Perhaps we too might come of age. Certainly, for those who stood but were not elected there will be many, many opportunities to continue to serve. Remember, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."

~James T., Editor

Submit your servicerelated contributions, comments and questions, or ideas and complaints to: newsletter@area54.org



AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES

DELEGATE'S REPORT

(Continued from page 1)

Manager of the General Service Office. Our current General Manager, Greg T., will be leaving his office February 1, 2021. He served as a trustee and other volunteer positions before working at GSO for the past 8 years – the last 6 years as our General Manager. He has led us through some vital changes and updates. He has helped streamline many of our operations. I am grateful for his service.

In Spring, 2021, *La Viña* (our Spanish Language version of the Grapevine) is expected to release the publication "Voices of Women" in Spanish. *La Viña* continues to struggle financially. Grapevine will publish a book for prisons, "Free on the Inside."

Another update: the AA warehouse has received 2,000 Big Books and the back orders are now being filled. The Summer Sale of 10% off a case of Big Books cleared out the warehouse.

There are some nice articles about the staff members that are retiring. These stories can be found in the Box 459 Online Supplement October 2020 edition which I found at the www.aa.org website.

We also have a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Paul Konigstein (nonalcoholic). He comes to AA with 30 years of experience working for nonprofit organizations. This is good news as we are going through a difficult financial experience.

"All About the Money"

As of 9/30/2020, thanks to all the members and groups of AA, the contributions are 62% of our income and literature is 38%. In 2018, the literature was 58% and contributions were 42%.

With print publications decreasing because of e-books and the ability to download one copy of each pamphlet from the AA website, our projected literature sales will continue to decrease.

To look at the 2020 monthly numbers, Literature Sales fell from \$1.3 million in January to \$272,401 in April. They rebounded slowly to \$940,959 in September. The Contributions monthly were \$1.8 million in January and after falling to \$0 in April rebounded to \$1.1 million in July. Thank you to all members of AA. For the future, if all the members of AA sent \$10 every year, AA would be fully self-supported. I speculate that the Big Book would cost less.

Grapevine is facing some challenges in this COVID-19 pandemic. There were several cancellations of events to sell book and subscriptions including the International Convention. In addition, the number of subscriptions fell off. So financially they are taking a loss this year.

Grapevine offers a great opportunity for 12-Step work. With folks not able to get out to meetings and some having difficulty getting online for meetings, a Grapevine subscription would be a great gift. This is a great way to 'Carry the Message'. Grapevine is our meeting in print (or online).

Thank you for helping me serve as your Alternate Delegate. Our outgoing Delegate, Shyrl B., made my job much easier in many ways. She guided me and helped me. As with all rotation, I just now have begun to figure out what the Alternate Delegate does. Now, it is a new chapter and Past Delegates, I will need your guidance. Thanks for your faith in me.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan R. - Delegate Area 54 - Panel 71

ROTATING DELEGATE'S REPORT

The Journey has Ended???

Earlier in the week, I had a Conference Literature Committee via Zoom. As we were closing and saying our goodbye, a Panel 69 delegate stated, "Our journey has come to an end." In reflection, the feelings of the moment were sad but had the journey ended? My answer is no because my journey has just changed.

Since the beginning of 2008, where my general service began, I have enjoyed the process of discovering the connections that occur as one travels down the triangle. Becoming a servant to Area 54 has been a highlight of my life. I have met and developed friendships with "people that normally would not mixed." These past 12 years being an area servant has strengthened my recovery. In December of 2020, the delegate term ended, but now it is time to trek into standing committee work.

For Panel 71, I will be the Group Services chairperson. This committee provides the GSR School and DCM College, workshops use to provide important information to our service members. Group Services works along with the Area

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AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES, CONT.

ROTATING DELEGATE'S REPORT Continued from page 3)

Chair on relighting dark or inactive districts. During the last year of panel 69, the Area lost many service workers because of the local and state regulations regarding the pandemic. There is a need to strengthen our ranks and return to continuing the vital work of keeping our groups informed. While we deal with this worldwide health concern, our working way will need to change until the crisis is over. For the coming months, our meetings and assemblies will include virtual or hybrid. PLEASE note the information on the website and emails, ask questions, and provide suggestions or critiques, but let us stay connected and carry on the work that can save many

Thanks for allowing me to serve the Area.

Love and service,

ALTERNATE DELEGATE'S REPORT

Greetings,

Area 54 has had some real changes in the past year changing from in person assemblies at the beginning of the year to needing to conduct meetings online because of the coronavirus. Also changing the makeup of our regular in person and homegroup meetings, my homegroup met outside at the pavilion by the church that my group meets during the summer, but the cold weather and shortening of daylight forced us to ask the church if we could meet at our old meeting place in the basement, we held two meetings toward the end of October and decided that we should wait for the surge in cases to go down before meeting again we are still waiting.

2021 will also include some changes as we will be having Hybrid meetings at the Brunswick 12 step club for our area assemblies and a virtual Mini-Conference as will the other four areas in Ohio. We will have Grapevine and Literature at the January assembly and go over our budget for panel 71 and approve it. If your District would like to host Unity Day, The Area Open House Picnic, or Gratitude Sunday now would be a great time to talk with your district and put in a bid for one of them.

Prices for Grapevine and *La Viña* will increase in January so get your subscriptions in. Big changes are happening at the GSO as twenty of our staff are utilizing an early retirement system put in place by GSO as a way to cut costs and they will be hiring a new General Manager as Greg T. is leaving also. The General Service Office can use our support with financial contributions as they continue to serve our groups.

As members of our fellowship we need to remain diligent in following state and local guidelines for Corona-virus as it does affect our groups and AA as a whole. Some of our members are Immuno-suppressed and have underlying conditions, and we need to protect them so please do your part.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Area 54 Chair for the last two years it was a great experience I met a lot of great people and enjoyed the other panel 69 members insight and love for our fellowship. And thank you for allowing me to serve as your panel 71 Alternate Delegate I will do my best to serve our area.

Love and Service

Tim H. - Alternate Delegate Area 54 - Panel 71

As outgoing Mailing Secretary, I look at the end of my tenure with a certain sadness. Being a point in the communication chain of our area fellowship was a lot of fun and a point of pride. As a printing salesperson for most of my professional life, it was fun to interact with the mail and our printing outlet as we coordinated the various pieces of mail which went into each mailing. The road trips to the multi-districts for the final assembly of the mailings were fulfilling and truly a fellowship moment in my AA journey. I missed those road trips during the pandemic since were, my wife and I, opted to coordinate the mailing, for safety reasons. The zoom room work and the 500 or so emails for each mailing and subsequent notices to the Area 54 body were not as fun, but did give me another way to serve the area. As I transition to Area Treasurer and learn the software for the new position, I hope the fellowship with be lenient with me as I ramp up. Thank you and AA for the spiritual and practical lessons Area 54 has afforded me.

Love and Service

Mark P. - Rotating Area Mailing Secretary Area 54 - Panel 69

(Continued on page 5)

AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES, CONT.

AREA TREASURER'S REPORT

One of the meetings I attend is a hybrid meeting on Saturday mornings. At this meeting, we have zoom and in person attendees, we use Venmo. We offer Venmo as our 7th tradition method of payment for the virtual part of our meeting. I have been using Venmo for 3-4 years and have found it a free application that is easy to use. On Saturday mornings the use of this application has been very successful. Our meeting has a bank account and one of our members has the Venmo funds to him then deposits the money in our account. This free application makes it easy to make a 7th tradition contribution to an AA group or anyone who has the same application.

Please note here there is a charge if you use a credit card to make a contribution. Here are the instructions to sign up for Venmo:

- 1. Download one of our mobile apps: iOS & Android --
- 2. Open the Venmo app.
- 3. Choose your signup method and create a secure password (between 8 and 32 characters long).
- 4. Verify your phone number and email address.
- 5. Add and verify your bank account.

Love and Service.

AREA MAILING SECRETARY'S REPORT

Gratitude

The program tells us to always be Open Minded and to be Willing. These are so important in my program to continue my growth. Having these attributes in my life has enabled me to experience not only awesome joys and struggles but also opportunities I could not have 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 and my higher power, and I could not do any of it without my support system both in the fellowship and outside of it.

I could never imagine being at the level of service that I currently serve in AA. I am so grateful for these past two

years as your Area Treasurer. It has been a big learning experience for me in humility and humbling myself to work on my shortcomings, and realizing I am just a small part of this big production. I had to learn to ask for help. I look forward to my next journey as your Area Mailing Secretary for the next panel.

I was in professional development training for my job this weekend prior to our Gratitude Sunday and I learned a lot about the perception of others and how it may be different than mine. Disagreements are going to happen and when they do I must keep in the forefront of our priority - maintaining AA as a whole for the next Alcoholic that comes through the door. I learned a great acronym Q-TIP; it means **Q**uit **T**aking **I**t **P**ersonal. I need to remember this so that resentments towards others won't happen. All thanks and all praise goes to my Higher Power, the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, my sponsor Kim S, my service sponsors Ola P and Jamie B, and my 5 sponsees.

Love and Service

Tina C. - Rotating Area Treasurer Area 54 - Panel 69

LITURATURE CHAIR'S REPORT

First and foremost, we are still open for business! Please send your literature orders and requests to literature@area54.org or give Dusty a call at 330-620-9642.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Area 54 Literature Chairperson for panel 71. It has been a learning process and great opportunity to put gratitude into action. After holding every position at my Home Group the last one left was GSR. I looked forward to it but did not really know what it was about. A good friend of mine was the panel 67 Mailing Secretary, and took me under his wing. He told me when and where to show up for our Multi-district meeting as well as the Area Assembly. Within a couple months of becoming a GSR, I was volunteered for the Literature Chair.

The cool thing about being a part of the Service Structure is you don't have to know what you are doing, you just need to be willing and show up. Just like in my recovery,

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RESULTS OF THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE

Area Election Results

The Panel 71 Delegate and Committee of officers for Area 54 were elected on October 18, 2020 in Maple Hts., Ohio at a hybrid (virtual + live) assembly. These officers will serve for a two-year term, beginning January 1, 2021. Congratulations to all! A heartfelt thanks to all who were willing to stand for office.

NAME and POSITION

Susan R., Panel 71 Delegate **Tim H.**, Alternate Delegate

Jim S., Area Chairperson Mark P., Area Treasurer

Katie O., Recording Secretary **Tina C.**, Mailing Secretary

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Vote Tally from the Third Legacy Procedure (Elected Servant in Bold Face)

Delegate				Alternate	Alternate Delegate	
Ballot	1st		-	Ballot	1st	
Susan R.	Unanim Acclama			Tim H.	36	
				Tina C.	14	
Area Chair	person					
Ballot	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Hat	
Jim S.	27	27	29	27	Χ	
Beverly F.	25	22	24	21		
Treasurer				Mailing Secretary		
Ballot	1st			Ballot	1st	
Mark P.	33			Tina C.	Unanimous Acclamation	
Wellington I	R. 14					
Recording	Secretary					
Ballot	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	HAT	
Katie O.	22	25	28	24	X	
Sam P.	23	21	20	18		

UPCOMING DATES FOR THE AREA AND BEYOND

NOTE THE DATE

January 17- Hybrid Area Assembly Gv Lit

January 24 – Virtual Mini-Conference Planning Meeting *- 2pm*

February 21 - Virtual GSR School Workshop

February 28 – Virtual Mini-Conference Planning Meeting *- 2pm*

March 21 – Hybrid Area Assembly and MC planning snow date

March 26-March 27- 46th NEOH Mini-Conference - Virtual

OUTSIDE OUR AREA

February 13, 2021 Virtual

Conference of Delegates, Past and Present

March 5 & 6, 2021

Area 55 Mini-Conference

March 12 & 13, 2021- Virtual Area 53 Mini-Conference

March 19-21, 2021 –Virtual Area 56 Mini-Conference

Gv = Grapevine sale days Lit = Literature sale days

EXCEPT AS NOTED, Area Assemblies & Workshops begin at 2:00 pm and are held at The 12 Step Recovery Club, 1480 Pearl Rd. (in Brunswick Plaza), Brunswick, OH 44212. The club is on US Route 42, about 1/4 mile south of State Route 303. Phone: (330) 273-7216

ROTATING MAILING SECRETARY'S REPORT (Continued from page 5) I was never left out to hang. No one ever said, "figure it out". Through the guidance of past and current Chair-people, I had the opportunity to improve the display and organization of our literature.

As Literature Chairperson I certainly learned more about our Conference approved literature, as well as keeping inventory and a ledger. I also got to experience my first Mini-Conference which was a whole rollercoaster of thoughts and emotions. The key lesson that was reinforced is AA is about God not Dusty, and I am so fortunate to be a tiny part of it.

One of the best parts of committing to this type of position is all of the great people I was able to meet. In hindsight, my Program was lacking. I was standing on maybe two and a half legs of our three leg program, and this was the missing foot. I look forward to what the future holds including meeting in person again and seeing my friends.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.

Dusty S. - Literature Committee Chair

Area 54 - Panel 71



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.

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

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