

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

July, August and September 2006

<http://www.aaneoh.org>

Volume XIX, Issue 2

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 16, 2006 2:00 PM
D.C.M. Workshop

July 21 - 23, 2006
50th Ohio State Convention
Perrysburg, Ohio

August 11 - 13
East Central Region Convention
Troy, MI

August 20, 2006 2:00 PM
G.S.R. Workshop

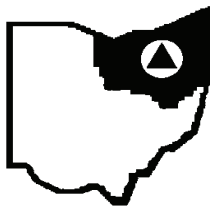
September 17, 2006 2:00 PM
Area Assembly

October 15, 2006 2:00 PM
Area Assembly

November 19, 2006
Gratitude Sunday Dinner
Location in Canton TBA

Area Assemblies & Workshops are held at:

The 12 Step Recovery Club
1480 Pearl Rd., Brunswick, OH (on US Route 42 about 1/4 mile south of State Route 303) (330) 273-7216



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from the Alternate Delegate:

The Area Mini Conference was a success. There were 186 people in attendance, along with our guests Dorothy W., Trustee-at-Large U.S., and Julio E., a staff member from the General Service Office.

On May 6th, I was an invited observer for the Cleveland Corrections Committee to assist them with a committee inventory. Based on the same idea as the Group Inventory, the committee has identified a couple issues they will address in the next few months.

On May 20th I was an invited panelist at the Akron Multi-District seminar, "The ABC's of Service", at Akron City Hospital. Along with Rob S. and Jay M., we three spoke to an assembly of 25 including 8 new GSR's.

Alice H., our delegate, returned home from the 56th General Service Conference in New York City with lots to tell the area. Unfortunately, her untimely passing cast a pall over this otherwise important event. I gave the conference report to the assembled GSR's and DCM's on May 21st to the Area Assembly.

The Heights Hub multi-district hosted the Area Open House picnic on June 25th at Horseshoe Lake in Shaker Heights. It was a great site for the picnic with lots for family members to do and an excellent fellowship opportunity.

July 16th is the annual DCM Workshop. Interested in becoming a DCM? Do you live in a 'dark district'? Have you met your DCM? Come to the workshop and find the answers to all these questions. Bob D., our area mailing secretary and registrar will be hosting this event in Brunswick at the 12 Step Recovery Club.

Two important conventions will be held this summer as well. The Ohio State General Service Convention will be held July 21-23 in Perrysburg, OH. The East Central Regional Convention will be held in conjunction with the Michigan State Convention in Troy, MI during the weekend of August 11-13. Yours truly has received a 'loving invitation' to chair one of the sessions that weekend.

On August 20th, the annual General Service Representative [GSR] Workshop will be held. Rose M. will be hosting this event in Brunswick at the 12 Step Recovery Club.

Our next Area Assembly will be held on September 17th, but as you can see from the above, we in service don't go on hiatus during the summer months. There was no vacation from our disease, and there is certainly no vacation from recovery, unity or service.

Jeff Y., Alt. Delegate

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we report the loss of our friend, our mentor, our Panel 55 Delegate for NE Ohio, Alice H., who passed on June 18 shortly after noon. Alice worked tirelessly to serve Alcoholics Anonymous for the past thirty years, beginning in California and for the past dozen years in Ashtabula County and Northeast Ohio.

We express our deepest sympathy to her family. We feel blessed to have had Alice as a part of our lives.

Area Officer & Committee Chair Reports

SERVICE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE KEPT A SECRET

A number of years ago, someone handed me a button that said, "Service is the Secret". I understood what it meant. The secret to staying sober long-term is always to stay active in the Fellowship. But not so long ago, a past delegate saw one of those buttons on a service worker and commented, "It shouldn't be a secret."

He had a point. Too often we engage in contempt prior to investigation when it comes to service work. We've heard someone else in a meeting give their opinion about this or that aspect of service, and we've taken their word for it. Kind of lazy on our part, don't you think?

Sponsorship and service have made all the difference for me. At the risk of offering my opinion, let's glance down "the road not taken" just a bit. I was introduced to my first service position about 2 months sober – making coffee. I had no idea whether or not making coffee for a bunch of drunks would keep me sober. In fact, I was still in the fog and just went along with the person who offered the job to me out of curiosity. But what if I had said "No, I'm not sober long enough." or "I'm too busy", "I don't know how", "I don't want to" or any other of the myriad excuses we hear in meetings? What might have happened to me? Would I have stayed at the fringes of the program? Would I have met as many people as quickly? Would I have finally started belonging and feeling useful? Probably not. Eventually, I would have lost interest in those boring meetings and your lousy coffee, and quit going altogether. I would have drank again, and I'd be dead by now.

My sponsor encouraged me gently to take this or that service position. He would put his head together with someone at a meeting, and the next thing I knew, he'd be waving me over to them. "Charlie needs a ride home – it's on your way – can you do that?" or "Say, why don't you go over to the

door and greet people as they come in." You could say I was sponsored into service. In fact, I was sponsored on to the panel of area officers, but that's a story for another time.

Emptying ashtrays (way back when), making coffee, greeting at the door – all these activities kept me out of myself back when I first came in. Funny thing is, they still work that way. I didn't think of these things as 'giving back'. Heck, I was flabbergasted that you even noticed me and wanted my help. "Who me?" took on a whole new meaning suddenly. After a year, you asked me to moderate a table and eventually lead a meeting. Part of me was elated, but much of me was scared to do it. "Good," my sponsor told me, "you're learning some humility." I just didn't want the old-timers yelling at me – which they never did. A firm hand, yes. A well-deserved constructive criticism, always and tempered with love and tolerance, usually an arm draped over my shoulder, quietly instructing or informing me.

At some point, my home group sent me to Intergroup as their Representative. We called the meetings once a month, "Saturday Night at the Fights." Boy, did I learn about the Traditions! I learned how to sit and listen to others' opinions. I was active on a young peoples conference committee for several years. I rotated out of those positions and found my way to General Service. I've served in three Areas in Ohio and Michigan over the years. What an adventure it has been!

What has driven my success in service work? Willingness and openness as well as a little curiosity about what "those people" do over in that other room. Service sponsorship has been a big help along the way. Late night bull sessions where I'd sit on the outer part of a conversation, listening to the past delegates talk about New York and the conference. I was honored to be included. They answered my silly questions lovingly and honestly.

It has made all the difference in the world for me.

Which would you rather do? Sit on the edge or jump into the middle of the bed? I'll take the comfortable middle every time.

- Jeff Y., Alternate Delegate

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN "SERVICE WORK" WORK ?

A while ago I spoke at a group where a fellow approached me afterwards with the statement, "Remember me?" I alluded that he looked familiar but I couldn't place him, so he explained, "Last year you showed the video 'It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell' to us in the workhouse and it got me thinking. When I got out I started meetings right away and am six months sober now."

I felt great. It is not often I hear how something I did made a big difference in someone's life. But I didn't do this alone. The Corrections Committee of the Cleveland District Office that started that meeting played their part. The video player I used was purchased by our area and loaned to me. And the video itself was roughed out by our GSO staff and then refined by the delegates at the General Service Conference. This involved many services from many groups all ultimately aimed at the same target: carrying our message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

- Bob M, Panel 47 Past Delegate

The work in service isn't really work, it's an opportunity. We see first hand how our Traditions and Concepts play an important role in carrying the message of recovery. We become a little more open minded and learn to listen to others. Service work challenges us to think and express ourselves.

The work of the home group is the most important work we can do to insure that AA continues to carry the message. The work of the district, area and the General Service Conference insures that AA will survive for many years to come, that the message will remain consistent in our literature, and that when someone needs help the hand of AA can extend far beyond the meeting room. The hand can extend in a courtroom, a doctors office, or in a classroom.

- Dan M, Panel 53 Past Delegate

Am I grateful enough? God and AA have given me a life today. I try to do what I am asked in this program in an effort to try to give back what was so freely given to me. Service has helped me to stay sober and improved the quality of my sobriety. As long as I am doing something besides thinking about myself I am in a much better state of mind.

- Joe H, Area Treasurer

The value of service in my personal sobriety has proved to be a priceless spiritual tool. Being a part of service has opened up a whole new world for me, and shown me that carrying the message is not just limited to my home group, my area or my state. But, is indeed an opportunity to reach the still sick and suffering alcoholics wherever they may be.

*Since becoming a part of service, I feel that my spiritual growth in all areas of my sobriety has truly been enhanced. Today I have a deeper understanding of the A.A. principles and the Traditions. I have a better understanding of just how vital it is to continue to pray for the willingness to **keep an open mind**.*

I am grateful to know that by keeping an open mind, I will not become a part of the many whose contempt of Service prior to any investigation of Service has left them in complete ignorance of just how vital and important the Service Structure really is.

- Ola P, CPC Chair

Area 54 NE Ohio General Service Mini Conference Committee Reports and Conference Action

April 1, 2006 Cleveland, Ohio

Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

- A. The committee unanimously recommended that the Trustees' CPC develop three short video segments that could be streamed on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site and directed to professionals in the employment/human relations, legal/criminal justice, and medical fields, with a total cost not to exceed \$60,000. Additional considerations: DVD/VHS format would be helpful; mention availability of 12 Step work; discuss stereotype of an alcoholic. **The motion passed with 3 dissenting votes.**
- The committee discussed ways C.P.C. committees present A.A. to professionals, such as slide presentations, demonstrations of G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site or local A.A. Web sites, and the use of A.A. booths at professional events and made no recommendation. Additional considerations: Make presentation available for powerpoint; make posters available for professionals "Helping your employee/Patient/Client;" give professionals meeting schedules to pass on.
- C. The committee did not have time to review contents of Kit and Workbook.

Committee on Corrections

- The committee recommends the trustees' Committee on Corrections Progress Report develop an Informational Media Presentation Introducing A.A. to Training Academies and In-Service Training Programs for Corrections Personnel.
- B. The committee reviewed the trustees' Committee on Corrections report on the revised manuscript of *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate* and thanked them for their report.
- C. The committee did not have time to the kit and workbook.

Committee on Finance

- Unanimously recommend that the draft "Finance Card" created by trustees' Finance Committee be approved and forwarded to the Publications Department.
- Unanimously recommend that the word "donation" be replaced with the word "contribution" in A.A.W.S. literature. **The motion passed with 1 dissenting vote.**
1. Unanimously recommend that the Publications Department add references about other A.A. information for group treasurers in the "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" pamphlet. **The motion passed unanimously.**
 2. Discuss a request to remove the pie charts from the pamphlet and made no recommendation. Additional consideration: The committee recommends that the following paragraph be added to the pamphlet: Self-Support: Where money and spirituality mix: "In keeping with the Fourth Tradition, each group is encouraged to create a contribution plan that meets their needs according to their group conscience. Many groups revisit this plan from time to time to ensure that it is a reflection of the current group conscience."
 3. The committee discussed the request to add an additional pie chart reflecting a 25/25/25/25% distribution and made no recommendation.

Committee on Grapevine

- A. The committee recommends that the A.A. Grapevine produce an anthology of La Viña stories in the year 2007 or later.
- B. The committee reviewed the Grapevine Workbook and recommends that it be included in the New Group packet distributed to newly registered groups.

Committee on Literature #1

- C. The committee discussed a suggestion to revise the pamphlet "A.A. for the Native North American" and made no recommendation.
- D. The committee recommends that the word "largely" be inserted before the word "unchanged" in the Foreword to the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, in the Introduction page ix of "Experience, Strength and Hope," on page 3 of "A Brief History of the Big Book", & in the artwork for the boxed set "Experience, Strength, and Hope." After extensive discussion the motion failed 33-37.

Committee on Literature #2

- F. The committee unanimously recommends that the trustee's Committee on Literature develop a draft manuscript of an inter-group/central office pamphlet and return it, or a progress report, to the 2007 Conference Committee on Literature. **After discussion the motion passed with 3 dissenting votes.**
- H. The committee discussed the request to develop an A.A. history book covering the years 1955-2000 and made no recommendation.

Committee on Literature #3

- I. The committee considered the proposal that the pamphlet "Letter to a Woman Alcoholic" be discontinued and made no recommendation. The committee feels the pamphlet has a niche and gives more information for the female alcoholic.
- J. The committee discussed a request to develop a pamphlet concerning Alcoholics Anonymous, religion and spirituality and made no recommendation.

Committee on Public Information #1

- A. The committee discussed the 2005 annual report from the trustees' Committee on Public Information regarding G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site.
- C. 1. The committee discussed ways to get more Area Delegates involved in the distribution of the 2007 Alcoholics Anonymous Membership Survey and suggest that Delegates visit the surveyed groups in their Area, promote better communication, ask DCMs and GSRs to assist in distribution, and add the survey to the Delegates agenda to increase awareness.
2. The committee recommends that the following categories to the "Length of Sobriety" section be added in the "2007 A.A. Membership Survey" pamphlet: Sober between 11 - 20 years and Sober more than 20 years. **The motion was passed with 4 dissenting votes.**
3. The committee discussed the request to add "Domestic Partner" to the "Marital Status of Members" section of the 2007 A.A. Membership Survey Questionnaire and made no recommendation.
4. The committee discussed a request to add a "Sexual Orientation" category to the 2007 A.A. Membership Survey Questionnaire and made no recommendation.
5. The committee unanimously recommends that the 2007 Alcoholics Anonymous Membership Survey Questionnaire be approved and conducted. **The motion was passed with 2 dissenting votes.**

Area 54 NE Ohio General Service Mini Conference Committee Reports and Conference Action (cont'd) Committee on Public Information #2

D. The committee recommended that the list of early symptoms derived from outside literature on page 17, item #19 in the pamphlet "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings," be replaced with a list derived from A.A. literature. **After short discussion the motion passed 78-1. After the minority opinion a member decided to change her vote. The motion to reconsider failed 3-76.**

F. The committee reviewed the contents of Kit and Workbook.

Committee on Treatment Facilities

A. The committee unanimously recommends that the name of the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities be changed to the Conference Committee on Treatment but the scope not be revised. **After discussion the motion failed 23-42. A member of the majority decided to change his vote. The motion to reconsider passed 40-29. After discussion the motion passed with 1 dissenting vote after the committee clarified the recommendation.**

B. The committee reviewed a summary of the 2004 Treatment Facilities committee survey for inclusion in the Treatment Facilities workbook and took no action.

The committee did not have time to review the Treatment Facilities Kit and Workbook.

Area 54 NE Ohio General Service Mini Conference Theme Discussion - April 2, 2006 *Passing It on in a Changing World*

After several small group discussions, a summary of each group was submitted and compiled. The number of respondents appear in parenthesis.

1. How does a changing world affect what your group is doing today to carry the AA message to newcomers?

- A. Promote primary purpose (9)
- B. Stick to the Traditions (7)
- C. Tolerance (2)
- D. Greet and pay attention to newcomers (11)
- E. Sponsorship (4)
- F. Stick to the basics (5)
- G. More information on the internet
- H. The world does not change the message (6)
- I. What happened to 12th Step calls?

2. Bill W. originally called the Traditions "Twelve Points to Assure our Future." How are the Traditions fulfilling that purpose 60 years later?

- A. Promote primary purpose (4)
- B. Gives us structure
- C. If you follow them they work (18)
- D. Unity
- E. Keeps groups honest (2)
- F. We must teach the newcomer (3)
- G. They are not because they are not followed (5)

3. How does your group convey that the responsibility for self-support includes giving of time and effort in addition to money?

- A. Keep the newcomers active (4)
- B. Come early and stay late (3)
- C. Have people make coffee and setup (4)
- D. Sponsorship (2)
- E. Elect service workers (2)
- F. Regular group conscience meetings
- G. Volunteer at intergroup (4)
- H. We don't (4)
- I. Outside social activity
- J. Did not answer the question (9)

4b. Why do you feel they are important?

- A. Message gets watered down (4)
- B. Involvement in service helps recovery (3)
- C. Controversy (2)
- D. Newcomers are the most important
- E. Without singleness of purpose we have nothing (16)
- F. Without support we cannot carry the message
- G. To keep groups strong

4c. What changes would you like to see as a result of these discussions?

- A. Don't change AA (2)
- B. Better inform members (6)
- C. Don't sentence addicts to AA (4)
- D. Do this part at the start of the conference, not the end
- E. Keep it simple (2)
- F. Keeps established groups strong rather than starting a new one
- G. Better communication and help from GSO
- H. Better participation (5)
- I. Enforce the Traditions (6)
- J. Better teaching of newcomers
- K. Better cooperation with other fellowships
- L. Peace, love and harmony
- M. Unity
- N. Teach courts and treatment centers about AA (2)

*When anyone, anywhere
reaches out for help
I want the hand of AA
always to be there
And for that ...
I am Responsible*

OUR THREE LEGACIES: UNITY, RECOVERY & SERVICE WORLDWIDE

"The event we now open is indeed wonderful. We have gathered because, in spite of all our differences, we have something in common that binds us together with strong ties. We have known the process of a painful sickness. We have achieved, by the grace of God, a recovery which now allows us to live and to love again. We are involved in the spirit of unity that gives us strength. We are impelled by a desire to give service. We are the inheritors of the Legacies of A.A.

The astronomers speak about certain bodies in outer space which, having lost their generating function, shrink slowly and inexorably, concentrating themselves in such a way that they shrink to infinitesimal size, but acquire an impressive gravity. They are the so-called "black holes," of very small volume, with terrific weight. Their density becomes so concentrated that a gravitational vortex is formed around them, a ghostly and catastrophic hole that devours everything that passes by; light and radio and energy waves are absorbed and drawn by that irresistible whirlpool.

The same thing happened in our alcoholic life. Emotional overload led to a shrinking of our mentality. A gloomy emptiness surrounded us. A tremendous storage of negative energy took place, aided by our own guilt and suffering. The greater our emotional load, the smaller our spiritual dimension. The greater the density of our selfishness, the shorter the scope of our horizons. Black holes in the space of our lives were sinking and paralyzing our willpower, our capacities, our dreams, our ambitions, goals, and outlooks.

Unlike those surreal bodies, we did have a way out of our condition. The lifesaving message of A.A. came to us. And the tiny universe that confined us started to expand again. We began to untie our imagination, our mind, and our good will. We were ready to live and let live. Spiritual life was reborn. We found harmony with brothers, God, and ourselves. And we called that Recovery.

What, then, is Recovery for me?

It is not perfection, but the search for it. It is not lethargy, but a state of awareness. It is realizing that there is a place for us in the world. It is acknowledging that we, alone, cannot do anything, but with the help of God we can accomplish everything. It is being sure that we walk along the path, even though we make our path as we walk. It is living today as we would like to have lived yesterday, and as we wish to live tomorrow. It is knowing that our journey has a meaning, a reason for being. It is a constant spiritual awak-



Editors Note:

There was no publication of the April, May and June 2006 NE Ohio Recorder. We apologize for the delay in providing the Area 54 Mini Conference reports.

ening. And, above all, recovery is a working faith.

We alcoholics have already suffered at the hands of a powerful enemy. We do not wish to fight against anybody, not even against alcohol. We have endured our illness physically, mentally, and morally. When we awoke to reality, we stood amidst the ruins of a shattered life, a destroyed morality, and a smashed dignity.

Through the grace of God, however, we have survived by joining a society of equals. We need each other in a harmonious environment in order to survive. We needed Unity.

What is Unity for me?

It is not a monody, but a symphony of individual voices. It is not a compact law, but a mixture of different opinions. It is knowing that our alcoholic brother or sister has the same right to life, happiness, and peace as we have. It is feeling that the word "we" stands before the word "I." It is admitting that we are all equal before God. It is acceptance that different paths can lead us toward our final destiny. It is a stripping of our pride, so we won't feel greater or lesser than our fellows. It is not doing to our neighbor what we wouldn't like done to us. And, above all, unity is a working humility - humility to accept the ultimate authority that expresses itself in our group conscience; humility to welcome anybody who wishes A.A. membership; humility to understand that our service tasks do not grant us power, command, or authority; humility to keep anonymity that reminds us to place principles before personalities.

In our drinking days, when the world was only a large "nobody's land" we had selfishness as compass and our own fulfillment as schedule. Money, intelligence, imagination, and initiative were used only as tools for constructing a universe fitted to our size. When our castle made out of cards fell down on our own heads, someone else came to rescue us, understood us, and delivered the message that saved us. So much was put at our disposal - literature to read, experience freely and gladly given, and a meeting place where a cup of coffee was waiting for us.

At first we received and used these services, taking them for granted. But gradually we began to feel that a treasure, which we had no right to hide away, was being placed in our hands. We had to give to someone else the light of hope that had illuminated our darkness. It was unfair to let the fruits we had harvested rot in the barns of our laziness. And so we turned to Service.

What is Service for me?

It is not altruism, but a need for survival. It is not charity, but an expression of gratitude. It is the responsibility of lending a hand to our brother or sister who is drowning. It is recognizing that, by giving ourselves to others, we will find our own souls. It is learning that they who give the most, receive the most. It is extending to other alcoholics the sobriety that was bestowed on us. It is working so that others get a permanent place in the new world we have discovered. It is remembering the words of Bill W.: "We must carry A.A.'s message; otherwise we ourselves may fall into decay and those who have not yet been given the truth may die." And, above all, service is a working love.

It is love that works - unselfish, patient, tolerant, anonymous love, love that doesn't have a price tag on it. Love that has no envy and that endures everything."

Keynote Address by David P., Delegate from Columbia
Fifth World Service Meeting 1978 Helsinki, Finland

RECOVERY, UNITY AND SERVICE

These are the Three Legacies of our AA experience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern. God, as He may speak in 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, GSR's 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.

Your Trusted Servants Committee 55

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Committee Name	Chairperson & Address
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	Bob M, Archivist South Euclid, OH 44121
Correctional Facilities	Rick C Spencer, OH 44275
Cooperation with the Professional Community	Ola P Warrensville Hts OH 44128
Finance	Jamie B Cleveland Hts, OH 44118
Grapevine	Ed B. Cleveland, OH 44113
Group Services	Dan M Chardon, OH 44024
Literature	Tony V Cleveland, OH 44103
Newsletter	Rob S. Akron, OH 44312
Public Information	Klaus K Newburgh Hts OH 44105
Special Needs	Ray S. Seville OH 44273
Treatment Facilities	Clarence G Cleveland, OH 44103

Visit the NE Ohio Area 54 Internet Website at



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