

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

April, May & June 2008

<http://www.aaneoh.org>

Volume XX, Issue 6

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 18 2:00 PM
Unity Day, Brunswick, Ohio
- June 21 1:00 PM
ECR/State Planning Meeting
Area Committee Meeting 2:00 PM
Westlake Holiday Inn
1100 Crocker, Westlake, Ohio
- June 22 12:00 PM
Area Open House Picnic
Days Dam
2729 E. 31st St, Lorain, OH 44055
- July 20 1:00 PM
ECR/State Planning Meeting
Area Assembly 2:00 PM
Westlake Holiday Inn
1100 Crocker, Westlake, Ohio
- July 25-27
28th East Central Region and
52nd Ohio State Convention
Westlake Holiday Inn
1100 Crocker, Westlake, Ohio

Unless noted, 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 Delegate . . .



Just as Victor E is walking around reading these days, it seems like much of my free time is spent with my nose in the background materials, studying for the 58th General Service Conference. It's a relatively light year with only 600 pages compared to 900 last year! I will still be busy at the Conference, though. In February, I received a loving invitation from the Conference Coordinator to serve as moderator for the 2008 Conference Workshop topic "*Love and Tolerance, Now More than Ever*". Within a few days of that invitation, I was pleasantly surprised by a late night call from the alternate Delegate Chair, who wanted me to be one of three presenters at the pre-con Saturday evening Delegates Only meeting. I will be presenting *How to do a Delegate's Report* to the new delegates.

Leading up to the Conference, there is a beehive of activity, not just at your General Service Office, but right here in Ohio. We just finished our 33rd annual Mini-Conference, which was a success. During February and March, Danny F. and I travelled to Indianapolis, Toledo, Cincinnati and Cambridge, Ohio.

The trip to Indy was a bitter cold weekend with single-digit temperatures. The fellowship was warm and inviting in the hotel, though, as new Panel 58 delegates mixed with Panel 57 and past delegates from the East Central Region. Friday evening, Panel 58 delegates gave their two-minute area highlight talks and Panel 57s gave five-minute talks on their conference experience. Sharing the spiritual highlights of my GSC experience was like reliving the conference all over again and I was choked up.

I was honored to be elected to serve as the chairman of the mock conference

committee which met Friday evening from 10 pm until 12:30 am with the two trustees who reside in our region and a staffer from GSO. This is the heart of the training for new delegates as they learn about the committee process by experiencing an exact reproduction of the GSC. We have an agenda item to discuss and must recommend an advisory action to the floor of the conference on Sunday morning in front of the past delegates. The trustees and staffer all shared a little on the committee process before we started. My job was to lead this committee and provide background on an imaginary agenda item. We had to dream up a fantastical agenda item that would never come before the GSC. Otherwise, we might prejudice that item before it got a fair hearing in the areas.

During the day Saturday, various reports were given on past and upcoming regional events and we conducted some regional business as well. Area 54 can claim to be home to two of the four regional officers in the East Central Region. Bob McK. [47/54] serves as your regional program historian. The business meeting on Saturday was ably chaired by our very dedicated Rob S. [49/54], who has been regional non-trustee co-chair for the last two years. Sue F. [48/23] was elected to succeed Rob in that position and Larry S. [56/20] was elected regional secretary. Larry and I served together in NY last year. Each will serve for the next two years.

Saturday evening, Valerie O., our GSO staff visitor was the banquet speaker. Then on Sunday morning, our committee presented its recommendation to the body and debate ensued. The ballroom is set up to reproduce the look and feel of the hotel in NYC. Your regional trustee and I were on the dais answering questions from the floor. I'm glad that I wasn't elected chairman of my real assignment at the GSC - the grilling was intense.

A final sharing session on Sunday morning allowed many to come to the microphone. Valerie shared that she

(continued next page)

Area Officer Reports

FROM THE DELEGATE (cont'd)
never in 20+ years at GSO experienced a weekend like this. She declared that our regional training weekend is the most useful and rigorous training of new delegates she has ever seen in the US and Canada.

With a schedule spread out over late February through mid April, the four Mini-Conferences held in Ohio this year were not quite as grueling a task as in years past. For the first in four years, I was not traveling every weekend in March. Nevertheless, each mini-conference gives the Delegation from Ohio superb preparation for the GSC; as Valerie stated above, probably better than anywhere else. You can be proud of the fact that your delegates are always working for the betterment of AA-as-a-whole, particularly those of us from the Midwest. Those 600 pages of background get a thorough working over, each with a slightly different perspective, from the four Ohio areas! I'm very grateful that we can do this. Can you believe that there are areas which don't even have a mini-conference? Two delegates from outside Ohio traveled with the regional Trustee to the Area 55 mini-conference as observers. They are evaluating our mini-conferences for possible adaptation in their areas. We are fortunate, indeed, here in the Cradle of AA.

Upon my return from my second and last General Service Conference as your Delegate, I will be giving my conference report at Unity Day – May 18th in Brunswick. I would encourage all of you to attend. Committees will be giving presentations. We will have a potluck dinner and I'll bring you up to speed on the state of AA-as-a-whole. Those of you who would like me to visit to your district, club, or home group and give a conference report should schedule as soon as possible.
In Love and Service,
Jeff Y., Panel 57 Delegate

Hi Everyone,

My growth in recovery and spirituality has been enhanced due to the Mini-Conferences that I have attended this year. For the first time in my sobriety, I really feel like I am a part of the Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship. At the Area 55 Mini Conference in Toledo, while visiting the restroom I was volunteered by my service sponsor to chair a workshop and share my experience. At both the Area 53 and Area 55 Mini Conference, I was a vote counter during the mock conferences. I also assisted the Public Information Chair, helping to write the agenda and chair the meeting.

Being a part of the East Central Region means that we are represented by two trustee of the General Service Board. Bob M., East Central Regional trustee may be the most active member I have ever met. Gas stations and oil change facilities must love him. Dorothy W., trustee-at-large U.S., gave a presentation on worldwide travels. While listening, I don't think there was a dry eye in the house. We are very fortunate to have meeting close to our homes. Members in other counties may have to travel several days to attend the Area Assembly.

This year we will host the largest convention that the Area will see for many years. The 28th East Central Regional Convention is being held in conjunction with the 52nd Ohio State Convention July 25-27, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Westlake, Ohio. We encourage every GSR and AA member to attend. Some members can find support from their home group to pay the registration, a mere \$21 for an entire weekend of recovery, Traditions and fellowship.

In love and service,
Danny F., Alternate Delegate

————— ◆ —————
Hello to Everyone in Area 54,

When I think about where I came from and how I felt about myself not only when I was drinking, but probably the first year of my sobriety, I didn't feel

worthy of any Higher Powers' blessings, I didn't believe I had any purpose in life. Once I became involved with service, I slowly began to feel I had something to offer. Maybe just maybe, I just might be of use to someone or something. Shortly after getting involved, I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, but because I felt I was needed in Alcoholics Anonymous service I couldn't let this hold me back, it gave me the incentive not to let the disease take over. I believe that through service I had a purpose in life. Once I shared my medical diagnosis, I found others in Alcoholics Anonymous with the same disease. Because of Alcoholics Anonymous, becoming involved in service, I now was in contact with people who also had both of my diseases.

When people say that their higher power has a plan, just step aside and let him take over, this really works. I know it is not easy get out of the way, but I am constantly shown through this program that if I do, his plan far exceeds anything I ever imagined. I now understand a little better the portion of How It Works: **“At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely”**. This applies in all areas of our lives. I am learning this more and more each day. I can only share my experiences, with Alcoholics Anonymous and becoming involved with service. I don't know what or how I would have reacted to my medical situation without Alcoholics Anonymous and I don't want to know. I have peace of mind, and a serene life today. I love Alcoholics Anonymous. Try it, you might just like it.

Yours in Service Always,
Jamie B., Recording Secretary



Area Treasurer's Report

AREA 54 GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS DECEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2007

D	ID	Group	4th QTR	YTD
03	130711	Noetic Bloomers	\$ 45.00	\$ 45.00
04B	658436	Akron Mens B.B.	\$ 18.00	\$ 36.00
06	659183	Last Call Group	\$ 25.00	\$ 75.00
09	161884	Grapevine Group	\$ 40.00	\$ 90.00
10	172277	Dalton Mens Clsd Dc	\$ 30.00	\$ 70.00
10	135247	Doylestown Group (wed)	\$ 39.00	\$ 194.00
12	603466	Briar Patch	\$ 25.00	\$ 75.00
15	129846	Fresh Start (mon)	\$ 39.00	\$ 102.00
15	626384	Friday Night B.B.(Mercy Hall)	\$ 30.00	\$ 120.00
15	170513	St. Joe's Thurs Night	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
20C	168643	Alcoholics R Us	\$ 13.30	\$ 13.30
20C	633467	S.I.O.G.A.	\$ 50.00	\$ 100.00
21	111292	Newbury Sunday Night	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
41	664486	Wednesday Discussion	\$ 145.08	\$ 295.08
42	131797	Beachwood Wed Noon	\$ 150.00	\$ 230.00
42	131719	Tuesday Beachwood Noon	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00
56	637684	Medina High Noon	\$ 50.00	\$ 86.68
60	170755	North Hill Mens Big Book Stdy	\$ 69.00	\$ 69.00

Voluntary contributions for 2007 increased 51.2% over 2006. This significant increase reflects a very generous one-time contribution from the Akron Intergroup. Of equal importance is that it shows that the membership of Area 54 Northeast Ohio recognizes their responsibility to assist in carrying hope to the next suffering alcoholic.

"The monetary amount of our contributions is secondary to the spiritual connection that joins us in unity with our groups around the world." *The AA Service Manual*

In Love and Service,
Ola P., Treasurer

2007 - AREA 54 CONTRIBUTION OVERVIEW

# Districts	# Districts	% Dist	# Groups	% Groups	# Members	% Individual
# Districts	Contrib	Contrib	# Groups	Contrib	Contrib	Contrib
64	53	82.8%	* 1456	237	16.3%	* 22,103
						13
						.06%

Area Committee Reports

Area Registrar Report

Fellowship New Vision is the name of GSO's new enterprise system and it incorporates very secure on-line data entry by the area registrars. These updates are restricted and monitored, but allow this one person in NE Ohio to change group information and contacts, plus information on a few more of their area's contacts. We also use these data for our area's mailings.

By sending group changes to me, your updates will get into both our systems quicker and likely more accurately, since I am better aware of our geography than the data entry folks at GSO.

In love and service,
Bob McK., Area Registrar

CPC

On behalf of GSO, we hosted a booth at the North American Wardens & Superintendent's (NAAWS) Convention in Cleveland on April 10, 2008. GSO provided the CPC display. Jon E., Tammy Jo B., Bob McK and I shared the hosting duties. We had many inquiries

from other people hosting displays and shared the AA program with many.

In love and service,
Christine M., Chair

Grapevine

We have been busy planning the Area Grapevine Workshop for August 17, 2008. Attending the Lorain Intergroup Workshop on Committees helped me see how different committees work to carry the message. We will be displaying Grapevine literature at the Mini Conference and have been enlisting GVRs as volunteers. For the Ohio State Convention we plan a new, larger display and will be selling for two days. Again, as in the past, we will be hosting a display on Saturday at Founders' Day at Akron University. We are asking for volunteers.

In love and service,
Tammy Jo B., Chair

Group Services

As the new chair of Group Services, I will be making contact with the various central offices and Intergroups throughout Area 54. My hope is to establish communications with all the central offices. We were able to apply our Traditions in answering an inquiry

about 12 Step retreats and their relationship to AA. I look forward to working with members in Area 54.

In love and service,
Diane K., Chair

Special Needs

The special needs committee is accumulating large print literature and pamphlets to help where needed. We are designing an accessibility pamphlet to propose to the Mini Conference in hope that it will raise interest at the General Service Conference. We arrange meetings for shut-ins throughout Area 54. Look for us at the 33rd Annual Area 54 Mini Conference.

In Love and service,
Bob D., Chair

Treatment Facilities

We have much recent contact with Glenbeigh Hospital looking for temporary contacts from soon-to-be released alcoholics. Many have been released in Pennsylvania. In response, we have made contact with members in Erie, Ellwood City, Aliquippa, and Pittsburgh. This is an excellent demonstration of going to any length to carrying the message of recovery.

In love and service, Mike S., Chair

Mini Conference Mock Conference Results

The following are the result of the voting after committee discussions on a portion the 58th General Service Conference agenda items.

Cooperation with the Professional Community and Public Information Committees

1. The committee discussed the 2002-2006 General Service Conference Advisory Actions regarding replacement and production of television public service announcements. Additional considerations: Suggest reviewing PSA's before retiring them. Passed 42 for and 14 against. A motion to reconsider failed.
2. The committee discussed proposed modifications for a new section on posthumous anonymity in the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity," and recommended adding three questions and answers to pamphlet. The motion carried unanimously.
3. The committee discussed a request that a wall poster with information about Alcoholics Anonymous be created for placement in school guidance counselor's offices, recommending that the poster be redesigned with new graphics and the same text. The motion carried unanimously.
4. The committee reviewed the contents of Kit and Workbook and took no action.

Corrections and Treatment Facilities Committees

1. The committee recommended that "the trustees develop literature and/or service material to stimulate A.A. members' interest in Treatment Facilities Twelfth Step work and that a draft materials or progress report be returned to the 2009 GSC." After the motion carried, the minority opinion resulted in a motion to reconsider. A friendly amendment modified the motion, removing "and/or service material." The modified motion failed to gain a 2/3 majority (31- 24).
2. The committee recommended that the pamphlet, "Bridging the Gap" (BTG), be rewritten to reflect that the BTG program is used in both Treatment Facilities and Corrections service work. The motion carried. A minority opinion resulted in a motion to reconsider, which passed. The original motion was upheld.
3. Each committee reviewed contents of their Kit and Workbook and took no action.

Finance & Agenda Committees

1. The committee reviewed suggestions for the 2009 General Service Conference theme and recommended:
 - 1) Back to Basics: What are the Fundamentals of our Program?
 - 2) Spirituality: How to Live it in AA
 - 3) Our Gratitude for Service
2. The committee recommended that a Finance Kit be developed to assist group, Intergroup/central offices, districts and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition. The motion carried unanimously.
3. The committee discussed "the benefits and liabilities, both spiritual and practical, of funding the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous solely by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members and A.A. groups, that profits from literature sales will no longer be used to fund our General Service Office." The committee recommends that a procedure be developed for input brought to the 2009 Conference. The motion carried.

Grapevine Committee

1. The committee discussed and supported the staff report and recommendations addressing the 2007 Additional Consideration to "explore less expensive formats for the production of the Workbook." The committee felt that AAGV should provide a full version of original workbook online.
2. The committee discussed and supported AAGV publish two CDs of stories from La Viña on Traditions One – Twelve.
3. The committee discussed the 2007 General Service Conference Committee Advisory Action that stated: "*The Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer.*" The committee recommends that this section be removed. The motion carried 48-22. A motion to reconsider failed.

Literature & Report and Charter Committees

1. The committee reviewed a progress report from Publications Department on the revision of the pamphlet "The A.A. Member— Medications and Other Drugs" and took no action.
2. The committee recommends that the title of the pamphlet "44 Questions" be changed to "FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions about A.A." The motion carried.
4. The committee discussed a request to reinstate the pamphlet "Letter to a Woman Alcoholic" and took no action.
5. The committee recommended that the glossary of terms used in the *A.A. Service Manual* and the *Twelve Concepts for World Service* be placed after the text of the *A.A. Service Manual* directly preceding the index .The motion carried unanimously.

Policy and Admissions & Archives Committees

1. The committee recommended that the current secondary Conference Archives Committee be established as a primary Conference committee. The motion carried.
2. The committee recommended draft copyright language be added to the Workbook. The motion carried unanimously.
3. The committee discussed delegating to General Service Office management the responsibility for General Service Conference site selection. The committee recommended that the language state "tri-state CT, NY, NJ area." The motion carried.

Trustees Committee

1. The committee discussed a report from the trustees' Committee on Nominating regarding Nominating Procedure No. 9 ("Guidelines for Hiring General Manager, G.S.O.") and length of service of General Manager, G.S.O. The committee requested additional information on whether principles of rotation apply to the GM position and provide guidelines.
2. The committee discussed a request to revisit the 2007 General Service Conference Advisory Action to consider all eligible Class A and Class B trustees when selecting the Chairperson of the General Service Board and took no action.

Mini Conference Theme Summary

Sharing the Message of Service

Sharing the message means that we need to get active. If we are unsure, we can ask our sponsor or simply volunteer at the groups we attend. There is plenty of work to do in staying sober and carrying the message. The vast majority believe that we do as much as necessary to stay sober and to share the load. Many opportunities arise at many different levels of service in the group, the district, Area and Intergroup. Many members also realize that we remain active so long as we are capable.

Our Key to Keeping A.A. Strong

Most respondents agree that we carry the message as a means of staying sober ourselves and we do so by sharing our story, participating in discussions, reaching out our hand to the newcomer and by being a power of example to others. The level of commitment of respondents is high. However, it is important to remember that not all people that attend AA help others and they miss the best part of our program. AA members help others by showing up at meetings, sponsoring other, lending a hand in the many needs of the group and individuals, reading literature to stay informed, listening to others, and remaining active.

Leadership in A.A.: Building Communication

Respondents agree that building communication is important and the best place to get answers include from sponsors, other home group members, by forming a support groups, asking old timers, and read AA literature. Some of the most effective ways that AA has communicated with its members includes through sponsorship, the fellowship, meetings, AA literature, Web sites and newsletters. In response to the question, “does having so many responsible for AA water down the responsibility,” most respondents recognize that there is plenty of work to go around and share and that by working together and applying our principles we grown stronger everyday.

Our Common Welfare Should Come First

The vast majority of respondents agree that the best way to serve AA is to getting active in the group, sponsor others, attend meetings, helping keep the doors open and sharing our stories. If no one helped the newcomer, they would be doomed to an unhappy life as we were; a life of loneliness and death. Respondents agree that the group conscience is an excellent tool to placing our principles common welfare first by reminding us that it is a “we” program, insuring all members remain informed and giving everyone a right to participate.

Principles Before Personalities

Principles before personalities reminds us to place the program ahead of our own needs, helping us stay united through shared principles and teach us to listen to other points of view. The vast majority of respondents realize that they we are not qualified to judge other and leave that to their higher power. Judging other leads to conflict do so and creates harsh feelings. The best way to embrace the philosophy is through open-mindedness and remembering we are not in charge.

Diversity: Reaching Out to All Alcoholics

Respondents agree that the best way to carry the message to other countries and cultures is by applying our spiritual principles that universally are available to all and by acceptance of others. To carry our message to hard-to-reach populations involved financially supporting GSO so that literature can be translated and creation of literature for those with special needs. The short answer to “can AA count on me no matter who the hand is that reaches out” was yes.

Self-Supporting Through Members’ Voluntary Contributions Only

To communicate the principles of participation is best done through sponsorship, discussion, and by being a good example. Most respondents agree that it is our responsibility to participate, while we must accept that some will choose not to because they fail to understand the importance of contributions and their relation to keeping the door open and carrying the message. Communication and participation are keys to unity by building group cohesiveness that leads to personal and group growth.

Contempt Prior to Investigation

The vast majority of respondents are willing to go to any length. This willingness is a key to bringing about change in oneself. They also agree that recovery is available to anyone that reads the literature, follows some simple suggestions, practicing the steps and taking it “One Day at a Time.”

Responsibility to Communicate and Participate

Many respondents had not communicated with GSO, rather with the district, Area and Intergroup offices. Way to maintain contact with other groups in the district included district meetings, anniversary flyers, and lead sheets. Communicating with other groups is important to maintaining unity within AA.

In Memoriam

Area 54 lost one of its current officer and dedicated service workers April 7, 2008. The following recollection of Russ was written by one member, and shared by many.

Russ W.'s contributions to Alcoholics Anonymous in this area, and especially in Corrections work, cannot begin to be measured. Beyond his altruistic efforts with individual AA newcomers, people he sponsored, meetings he attended, and service work for the Area 54 Committee, he was truly the engine of the Cleveland Area Corrections Committee for years up until the moment of his tragic passing. He held many positions on the Committee over the years including Chairman, but those who attended a monthly meeting saw the level of dedication and commitment that marked Russ's involvement everyday.

He was active as a regular volunteer in at least eight different correctional facilities, most of which he volunteered on a weekly, and sometimes daily, basis. Some of the facilities that benefited from Russ's dedicated service are the Community-based Correctional Facility (CBCF in Elyria), Lorain County Jail, North Coast Correctional Treatment Facility, Cuyahoga County Jail (a.k.a. the Justice Center), Medina County Jail, Elyria City Jail, Lorain Correctional Institution, and the Grafton Correctional Institution (including the "Honor Farm"), amongst others. This is not a list of different facilities Russ participated over many years, he was active in every one of these institutions in the past month. Russ played a prominent role in starting meetings in facilities that had no AA activity at all before his involvement. He also saved several meetings, almost single-handedly, that would have passed off the scene due to a lack of outside AA volunteers.

If there were a need to summarize Russ in all aspects of his life to two words, they would be the two primary principles of AA service in Corrections: Commitment and Consistency. Anyone who worked with Russ knows that you could count on him for anything and what he said he would do been done; period. He remains in my mind the stalwart example of a principle I strive for, but only achieve in the most modest of measurements: Reliability. As Dr. Silkworth describes the founders and first members of AA in the Big Book, "You may rely on absolutely anything they say about themselves." You could rely on Russ as no other person I know in the rooms (or outside of them) and he will be sorely missed.

Russ leaves big shoes to fill and we can only each individually hope to lend a fraction of the commitment needed to maintain and restore the work that he was performing on a daily basis in these institutions. Going forward, it will take all of us and our efforts to cover the facilities and service commitments that he was committed to so there is no interruption of meetings and his service work and legacy will live on.

- Bill S., Cleveland Corrections

A MAN NAMED RUSS W.

I've met people that are doers
and talkers, but between me and you,
let's talk about a man -- his name is Russ W.
Let's talk about the things he did before he passed.
All of these things will most certainly last.
He started committees for our great fellowship.
He did that with deed and not just with lip.
He would go in to prisons and in to the jail.
They loved to see Russ even more than their mail.
He would share with these men his experience, strength, and hope
and most of them recovered from alcohol and dope.
His commitment to service was outdone by none.
That's easy to see by the things he has done.
Now I sit here tonight with tears in my eyes and a heart full of woe.
With this ache in my heart where should I go?
I don't feel like visiting so I guess I'll stay home.
I'll do what Russ liked and I'll write him a poem.
Now these words that I write I'll try to make rhyme.
It's really quit hard at this heart breaking time.
I've lost a great mentor, brother and friend
but for Russ it's the beginning and not just the end.
Now he's up there in heaven because angels are slacking.
Motivation it seems is what they are lacking.
They forgot what to do they forgot about service.
God got concerned - He really got nervous.
God needed a great doer and not just any ole' who,
God thought it was time to call up Russ W.
Now, Russ is up there serving that great service board.
That's one great group conscience just Russ and the Lord.
Russ took his committees and he gave them to God.
He looked and he grinned as he gave Russ a nod.
"I'll get you some angels to do what you need.
I'm so glad that I called you to help me to lead."
Now the angels are all working to spread love of others
and make us all act like sisters and brothers.
So if you are feeling more spiritual and don't really know why
Just thank Russ W. and wipe that tear from your eye.

We love you Russ
May your committees always be full

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

Lest We Forget by Glenn D., Districts 52 & 53 Secretary

I used to do some writing back when I was involved in activity other than AA. Having heard consistently of the request of members of the General Service Structure, or any AA members, for that matter is to write and submit articles for the Area 54 newsletter. I have decided as a result of this to go ahead and take action.....

Back when I first got sober the second time in 1991, my service sponsor, enlisted me in service as being a GSR of a young peoples group, where I received my roots. This group incidentally started a few years before my sobriety began. I think it began 20 years ago in 1988 resulting from the Ohio Convention of Young Peoples Convention that took place in Dayton, Ohio. I thought life was over not being able to drink for the rest of my life. Then I learned "Take it One Day at A Time". In addition, this was also time when there were the not numbers of young members (aged 15 – 19) entering in AA trying to stay sober.

Service

As for the Area Assembly, it was described to me ideally as a gathering of the Area Officers, Standing Committee Chairpersons, Past Delegates, of which there were much more involvement i.e. Joyce K., Terry L., John "Trouble" B., Joan A. The Area Assembly would include District Committee Members submitting reports as to the activity occurring with the District and the District meetings. The District Meetings should be attended by the GSR's to learn about the service structure, the 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts, and other important information brought back to the District by the DCM. The main purpose of the district meeting is to sustain activity among GSRs. I know recovering alcoholics need to go to any length. I think this relates to working all 12-steps. Here a GSR could become disillusioned and lose interest very quickly due to the Parliamentary and 3rd Legacy procedures. "AA ought never be organized" does not apply to the service structure, we need order or nothing would get done. The Traditions apply to the AA group. One aspect of service that is not emphasized is the enlisting a service sponsor to learn from. Hence, maybe an issue for a piece of literature could be brought to the agenda committee in New York to outline this. I do not know if there is such a piece. I have heard it said by my service old service sponsor that this is the least read book in AA, the Service Manual. Not exactly bedtime reading. This is a perfect world scenario, which we know does not always occur. Today we have a dark district dilemma where we lack willing GSRs getting involved in the service structure. Unity – Service – Recovery. I am not unique, there have been times I have been active and not. When I was active, we had a quad-district composed of 51, 52, 53, & 24. We met monthly and shared about the Area Assembly and service. The process prepared us for roles as DCMs, Committee chairs, or Area officers.

I don't remember which Mini-Conference was my first; it may have been at the Middleburg Hts. Holiday-Inn. I remember 12 stepping a newcomer with my service sponsor and another AA member at this weekend. I actively participated in numerous Mini-Conferences, State Conventions, and the last Regional Convention in Area 54 at the University of Akron, of which I have fond memories. Due to my service sponsor's wife chairing the Alanon/Alateen committee, I was a speaker at an Alateen. I learned much despite myself. I had the honor to be asked to speak on a Young Peoples Panel at the State Convention in Toledo and at Founder's Day, both wonderful experiences.

Young People and Service

Most of my sobriety I have been involved in the young people's movement. Specifically, the 35th International Convention of Young People in AA that took place in Cleveland in 1992. At the initial elections of our Delegate at the time Burt H., ran the elections for the Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Hotel Chair. I served as the General Service Liaison to this convention. We mailed out invitations to the 91 delegates and trustees. Three Trustees' attended, including the then-ECR trustee Jan W., who spoke at the convention. The trustees spoke about service on the service panel, chaired by Burt H. We provided about one hundred copies of the Young People editions of the Grapevines supplied to us by GSO. The then-new conference approved video "AA Rap with Us" was enjoyed by a packed house. In addition, the trustees were also asked to share a few words at the "big speaker" meetings.

Trends in AA

Lately, I have had numerous discussions within AA that this is an opportune time to transition young people into the mainstream of AA. One of the topics of these discussions was the abundance of conventions that could be contributing to the lack of attendance and the dark district dilemma we face. This dark district dilemma is not just us, it occurs nationally. I recently heard about younger members aged 20 – 29 becoming members of an adult group in Cleveland. Obviously, they are practicing AAs Traditions. One way the service structure does involve younger members is by placing on the program at the State Convention or Regional Convention.

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.

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