

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

July, August and September 2005

<http://www.aaneoh.org>

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August 12-14 — 49th Ohio State Convention, Columbus OH

August 21 — GSR Workshop
Brunswick OH—All are welcome

September 18 — Area Assembly
Gv Lit

October 16 — Area Assembly

November 4-6 in Houghton, MI
East Central Regional Forum

November 20—Gratitude Sunday
Hosted by Akron Multi-District
Location TBA *Gv Lit*

Gv Denotes Grapevine Sales Days
Lit Denotes Literature Sales Days

Unless otherwise 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**



Inside this Issue:

Delegate's Report	1
Area Officer's Reports	2
Announcements	3
Area Officers & Committee Chair Contact Information	4

from the Delegate:

Hello Northeast Ohio Area 54

I really do not believe that I can find the words to describe the feelings and thoughts of experiencing the 55th General Service Conference to be a part of the history of this Program. Humbled is probably the best one I can think of. I was overwhelmed during the Roll Call when hearing all the names of those Delegates, Class A and B Trustees, G S O and Grapevine staff present so willingly and lovingly ready to serve the whole.

I have always believed that this is a We program, but now after the experience of the General Service Conference I have an even deeper understanding and conviction of what A.A. as a whole means.

Thank you all the individual A.A.'s, strong Sponsorship both individual as well as a Service Sponsor, Groups, Districts and Area Trusted Servants as well as a strong East Central Region that made it possible for me to serve as your Delegate and be a part of the process.

The 55th General Service Conference consisted of 136 voting members. 93 (68.4%) are Delegates from the U.S. and Canada. The Delegates constitute at least two-thirds of the voting members. 27 (19.9%) are Trustees (Non-Alcoholic, Class A – total 7 and Alcoholic, Class B – total 14), A.A. World Service Directors (3), and Grapevine Directors (3). 16 (11.2%) General Service Office and Grapevine Staff.

The average age of the Delegate this year was 54, the oldest being 68, the youngest 33. The average length of sobriety was 17 years, longest sobriety, 35 years and shortest sobriety, 8 years. Average length of service in A.A. was 15 years, with the longest trusted servant of 33 years and the shortest time in service, 7 years.

We were reminded to trust the group conscience of our committee, to trust the Conference process. That even with our Area conscience, feelings and opinions to put our own agendas aside and remember this is for AA as a whole.

Theme for 2006 General Service Conference
“Sponsorship, Service and Self-Support in a

Changing World.”

The workshop topic for the 2006 General Service Conference:

“Passing It On in a Changing World.”

Since returning from the 55th GSC I have given invited to give four Post Conference reports. The first was the day after I had returned home minus luggage, that went on to Houston for a visit, so minus all folders and information other than an Early Bird Box 459 and a couple of notes off we went Monday night to Celebrate Sobriety. They were really warm, interested and understanding. Then Dual Districts 23 & 39, Area Assembly and the Cleveland Heights Hub Multi-District meeting again warm and a lot of questions. What a delight that is when we see the spark of service awaken.

I am looking forward to meeting with you if not at your Home Group then at the Area Open House picnic on June 26th. There is also great a DCM and GSR Workshops planned for in July and August so come out and enjoy these exciting and informative days. Be a part of the solution.

Thank you all for being a part of the Committee Workshop. I have been told it was really wonderful.

Below is a question that was sent to all of the 55th GSC Delegates that I thought you might enjoy.

AREA 31 QUESTION

I KNOW THIS WILL BE HARD FOR AN ALKIE TO DO, IF YOU COULD ONLY USE ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE THE CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE, WHAT WOULD THAT WORD BE?
THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED.
3 AWESOMES, DEDICATION, HOPE, 2 WOWS, LOVE, 3 HUMBLES, HAPPYJOYOUSFREE[ONE WORD IN LOUISIANA I WAS TOLD], PROFOUND, 2 SPIRITUAL, HOPEFUL, 4 GREATFULS, LOVENSERVICE, 2 INSPIRATIONALS, SAD, REJUVENATING, SOUL-STIRRING, LIFE-CHANGING, SPIRITUAL-EUPHORIA, FAMILY, NURTURING, SUBLIME, MEMORABLE, GROOVY, AMAZING, INDESCRIBABLE, PASSIONATE, AWE, UNITY, AND ASTOUNDING. AFTER READING ALL OF THESE THE WORD THAT CAME TO ME WAS GRACE.

Yours in Love and Service
Alice H.
Panel 55 Delegate

Area Officer Reports

THE LITTLE AGENDA ITEM

THAT COULD ... or a firsthand history of an alcoholic's idea and how we can all impact A.A. the world over.

An idea, suggestion or subject comes from A.A. members and sometimes friends outside A.A., and is first discussed by G.S.O. staff or A.A.W.S. and then forwarded to appropriate trustees committees (1. If concept is accepted a writer is assigned; 2. manuscript is reviewed). The matter is then referred to appropriate Conference committee which meets during General Service Conference week and makes a recommendation that goes in the committee report to the General Service Conference which, if approved after full floor discussion, becomes a Conference Advisory Action that becomes binding when approved to the General Service Board. Unedited manuscript goes to editor to copy edit and rewrite where necessary, implementing changes made by the staff and committee, then to production.

At the July 2003 East Central Regional Forum, Andy T., Area 53 delegate Panel 53, gave a presentation entitled, "Service Sponsorship: Guides to AA's Future." Responses to Andy's presentation were lively and numerous. He states, "Service sponsorship helps us understand a new language of GSR's, DCM's, minority opinions, and disagreeing without being disagreeable...We are not alone in our personal recovery, and through service sponsorship we are not alone in giving back to AA."

One response to his presentation was a comment from the floor wondering if AAWS had a service piece or pamphlet explaining this important aspect of AA service work. Area 54 members present that weekend picked up on that question. On the way home from Columbus, Indiana they began thinking and talking about how to submit a formal request to the General Service Conference for such a piece. This article will give one member's eye view of how that process moved through the committee system and ultimately became part of a revised piece of Conference-approved literature.

Jeff Y., Area 54 registrar at the time, was intrigued by the idea of service sponsorship. He had heard the term used years before when he was active in Area 55 (NWOH). Andy T's presentation reminded him that just as we encourage newcomers to AA to work the Steps with the guidance of a sponsor, so too, a service sponsor helps the newcomer in service work to understand the interconnectedness and historical context of our Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, Six Warranties and Three Legacies.

Some AA's are fortunate to have a 'recovery'

sponsor who integrates 'unity' and 'service' into sponsorship; others less fortunate must seek out additional individuals when they are ready to explore AA service beyond the group level.

Jeff discussed these ideas with our delegate, Dan M., (54/53). Dan encouraged him to develop some background material based on Andy's talk and present it to the Area Assembly that fall. Andy graciously forwarded the original talking points that he used for his presentation, expressing how honored he felt to be the impetus for an agenda item.

A few emails around the area elicited comments from GSRs, DCMs, and other officers. The background material was made up of several emails, Andy's original text, and a formal request to develop a service piece or literature item addressed to the Trustee's Agenda Committee.

In late September, the delegate received a communication from GSO. The staffer gave us some feedback on the exact language of our agenda item request and pointed out some current literature which addressed service sponsorship. GSO was kind enough to email out a copy of the service material right away for our review. After looking this over, we agreed that the present literature on service sponsorship came up short and needed revision and amplification. GSO also asked us to reword our request more specifically – did we want a service piece that could be revised easily or did we want to pursue the more rigorous path of Conference-Approval? A lively discussion burned up the wires among the officers and the past delegates on the merits of each. In the end, the wisdom of the past delegates prevailed. In October 2003, the Area Assembly listened to a presentation of the item and voiced their approval to forward the agenda item request to the Conference Coordinator at GSO. The request was re-submitted to the Trustee's Agenda Committee requesting that the 2004 General Service Conference Committee on Literature develop a separate pamphlet to address "service sponsorship".

"The Area motion to create a pamphlet on service sponsorship was discussed at the Board Weekend in November. They tabled further discussion until the January Board Weekend. So it is still alive and kicking." - from an email communication from Dan M. to Area 54 Committee 53, on Nov 26, 2003. "... motion on a "service sponsor" pamphlet has made the agenda for the 54th GSC." Dan M., in an email communication to Jeff Y., 5 Feb 2004.

Here is the text of the Trustee's Agenda Committee report of 3 Feb 2004:
Consider request that the trustees' Literature Committee develop a Conference-approved pamphlet on "service sponsorship." [acting on a] Suggestion to develop pamphlet on "service sponsorship": The committee discussed and agreed to forward the suggestion that the trustees' Literature Committee consider the development of a Conference approved pamphlet on "service sponsorship" to the

2004 Conference Literature Committee.

The agenda of the 54th GSC Conference Committee on Literature included the following item:

Consider request the Trustees' Literature Committee develop a Conference-approved pamphlet on "service sponsorship."

At the 2004 GSC, the Conference Committee on Literature reviewed the current section on service sponsorship on page 28 in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" and reported back to the Conference the recommendation that

The trustees' Literature Committee broaden the section titled 'Service Sponsorship' on page 28 in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" to reflect current shared experience and present a revised draft to the 2005 Conference Literature Committee.

This became an Advisory Action of that year's Conference.

The 2005 Agenda for the Conference Committee on Literature included:
E. Consider revised draft text for the section titled "Service Sponsorship" on page 28 in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship."

The following recommendation was approved by the 55th General Service Conference and the General Service Board:

13. The addition of the following four paragraphs to the current section titled "Service Sponsorship" in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" be approved with minor revisions to the current pamphlet text suggested by the committee:

a)...A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer – ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service – The AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, page S1.

b)A service sponsor is usually someone who is knowledgeable in A.A. history and has a strong background in the service

Continued on Page 3

Area Committee Reports

2005 Mini Conference Side Bar Experience

While at the Area 54 Mini Conference my friends and I were approached by a gentleman in need of some help. If it hadn't been for our chairperson I never would have known that what my friends and I were doing was a twelve step call. During our time at the Holiday Inn there was another function going on at the same time as our Mini Conference. This gentleman's room just so happened to be right next to ours. We kind of bumped into him on Friday night. The three of us were headed to the Alcathon at about 12am when he came stumbling lightly down the hall toward us. After chatting for a bit he actually invited us in his room for a dip (chewing tobacco). We declined and went on ahead to the meeting. Saturday night I was chairing the 4am Alcathon meeting. We were listening to an awesome lead when I walked my friend and the guy in the room next to ours. He was visibly intoxicated. The lead ended and we began our discussion. When it got to his turn the gentleman asked if he could tell his story. We said, "of course". The story he began to tell was of strange and bizarre things happening to him only when he was on a bender away from home. He wanted to know from the group if was he an alcoholic. Of course we told him only he could answer this question. Being at the Area 54 Mini Conference we was able to go downstairs and get him some pamphlets that might help him to answer the many questions that he had. We were also able to get him a Big Book to take back on the road. We were sure to tell him to pass it on if he felt he didn't fit the description of an Alcoholic. The gentleman and I exchanged e-mail addresses and promised to keep in touch. I heard from him about two weeks later and he reports that he is doing fine and he was glad to have the literature and doesn't feel the need to pass it on... yet.
Lisa B.

5th Annual Area 54 Committee Workshop April 17th, 2005

The Area Assembly meeting was replaced by a Committee-Workshop, while Our Delegate Alice H. was at the 55th Annual-GSO Conference in New York.
This was a covered dish and everyone who attended bought a delicious meal and we ate like Queens and Kings.
There was a Panel that consisted of four speakers, Jeff Y., Alt. Delegate of Area 54 Panel 55, Al J., Past Delegate Panel 43 Area 54. We had 2 speakers that drove up from Area 53 (Columbus, Oh) Dave C., Chairperson Area 53 and Peggy, Alt. Corresponding Sec., of Area 53.
There were 6 questions which each of these speakers had their turn to answer and they all did a great job. Any one who had extra questions, they were answered.
All the Area Committee's had their displays set up so everyone could see what their Committee was all about.
Each Chairperson explained what their Committee does and why the Committee needs your help.
I thank all person's who participated to make this Workshop a success.
Thank you Alice H. for asking me for chairing.
Everyone has a great time.

Chair: Carol T., DCM District 3

Service
Is
The
Secret

If you were on trial for being a member of AA;

Would there be enough evidence to convict you?

REACHING OUT TO THE "DARK DISTRICTS"

Many of our groups do not actively participate in Area 54, nor are their voices heard within AA as a whole. We encourage you to reach out to those districts without active GSR's or DCM's, sharing your experience of service beyond the home group and carrying the message one-on-one.

Area 54 welcomes your ideas on how we can best do this and offers our support. An ad hoc committee has been formed at the Area level to reinvigorate some of our "dark districts".

Contact Walt W. (DCM 13) at 330.332-5442 or wwilliams18@neo.rr.com or Jeff Y. (Alternate Delegate) at 216.691-0917 or jyour@jcu.edu for more information.

AGENDA ITEM continued from page 2

- structure. The A.A. member is introduced to a new language: GSR, DCM, area assembly, minority opinion. They will become familiar with the Traditions, Concepts and General Warranties, as well as the A.A. Service Manual/ Twelve Concepts for World Service, A.A. Comes of Age and other A.A. literature.*
- c)Co-founder Dr. Bob said, "I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:*
- 1)Sense of duty.*
 - 2)It is a pleasure.*
 - 3)Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.*
 - 4)Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.*
- d)The basis of all sponsorship is to lead by example. Service sponsors can impart to their sponsees the pleasure of involvement in the work of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is best done by stressing the spiritual nature of service work and by pointing out the usefulness of simple footwork and faith.*

From this point, the Publications Department will begin revising the printer's copy and get it ready for printing. The older version will be used up and the next printing will incorporate the revised text. Look for it at a Central Office or Intergroup near you!

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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