

# The Northeast Ohio Recorder

October, November, December 2008

<http://www.aaneoh.org>

Volume XX, Issue 8

## UPCOMING EVENTS

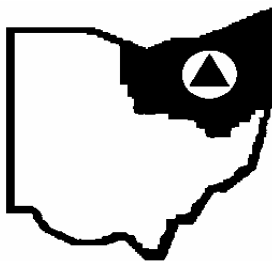
**October 19** 2:00 PM  
**Area Assembly**  
**Panel 59 Election**

**November 16** 2:00 PM  
**Gratitude Sunday Dinner**  
**Sacred Heart Church**  
**3409 North Main St (St Rt 45)**  
**Rock Creek, OH 44084**

**January 18, 2009** 2:00 PM  
**Area Assembly**

**April 3 - 5, 2009**  
**34th NE Ohio Mini-Conference**  
**Hilton Cleveland East**

**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 . . .

Trust the process! If I had a nickel for every time I heard that phrase as I grew in my understanding of service work, I'd be a rich man today. I was such an impatient boy, wanting what I wanted when I wanted it. To my eventual amusement, my early sponsors said I was acting like "King Baby", sitting in my highchair, wearing a crown cockeyed on my head and beating on the tray with a wooden spoon. "Patience, my boy, patience!" they would say, "You can't give away what you haven't got..." So, I eventually buckled down and did the leg work. To anyone who has felt this way, I suggest that you read our history and read that Service Manual, especially. It is a treasure trove of experience, strength and hope for present and future leaders in AA. "Wait a minute," I once heard in a meeting, "there are no leaders in AA. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern, right?"

Bill W addresses this the essay, *Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need*

"a leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with his job. When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own—well, he really isn't a leader at all..."

One of your up-and-coming leaders in AA, approached me at a meeting one night. Several younger members of his home group brought to his

attention one evening their concerns about language and word choice in a conference-approved pamphlet. I agreed that this should get a hearing at the area assembly. The assembly listened and voted to submit this idea to the General Service Conference for next year.

In a letter dated early August, Eva S., GSO staffer on the Literature Desk, wrote to inform me that:

...at the August 2008 meeting of the General Service Board, the trustees' Committee on Literature agreed to forward to the 2009 General Service Conference Committee on Literature your area's request, "That the language and tone in the pamphlet Questions and Answers on Sponsorship be reviewed toward eliminating or revising ethnic, cultural and vocational references that are outmoded."

This agenda item will appear on the background for the 2009 Mini-Conference for discussion at that time and for deliberation by the 59th General Service Conference.

### SEE? THE PROCESS WORKS!!

We, in Northeast Ohio-Area 54, should be proud that once again the voice of even one member can be heard and recognized on issues of concern. At the 58th Conference this year, many delegates noted, with frustration, how hard it was to get their items accepted on to the agenda. Most agenda item submissions are rejected by the trustees for various reasons. During the previous four years, our area has successfully obtained a place on the agenda of the GSC four times, with little to no difficulties.

(continued on page 2)

### From the Delegate (cont'd)

- 2005 – request to add information on service sponsorship to Q&A on Sponsorship
- 2007 – request to increase the maximum individual contribution limit from \$2K to \$3K
- 2008 – request for development of a Finance Committee Workbook
- 2008 – request for sharing; became direct action item by Corrections Desk to collect local sharing on the use of Corrections DVD
- 2009 – request for revisions to outmoded language in Q&A on Sponsorship

I believe this speaks to the quality of sobriety and service work being done in Northeast Ohio. It underlines the essence of the Conference structure – to operate for the

good of AA-as-a-whole and ever keeping in mind our primary purpose, that of carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic wherever s/he may be.

This will be my last message to you as your delegate. My experience over the last two-plus years in this role has been nothing less than the ride-of-a-lifetime. “It is an experience you must not miss...” Thank you all for making it possible for this gutter drunk to clean up, suit up and show up – One Day at a Time – to learn and then try to pass on the wonders and gratitude of my involvement in AA as-a-whole.

In grateful service,  
Jeff Y., Panel 57 Delegate

### Alternate Delegate Report

At the State Convention, I was given the opportunity to talk on my “Growth through Love and Service.” I started my panel talk with “Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.” My journey began as a member of Alcoholics Anonymous on April 4, 1990. According to others, I am a fortunate member because, with God’s help, I have stayed sober since attending my first AA meeting in Cape Coral, Florida.

I had many questions at that time that have since been answered, and I have had many “new discoveries.” It’s this simple program that has saved my life.

As with many new members, I thought I knew all of the answers when I got here, so I didn’t ask any questions. I did *hard time* in AA. Later on, I realized that I had both a superiority and inferiority complex. After being twelve-stepped by two members, I attended my first AA meeting eight hours later. I approached the literature rack and selected *Do You Think You Are Different?* Even without reading it, I had my answers. If you had my girlfriend and you had my boss - you’d drink too.

While I understand how silly that sounds today, it helps me realize how selfish and emotionally crippled I had become. In AA, I learned that my

emotional growth stopped with my first drink, and stayed that way through fifteen years of drinking. I needed to grow up and obtain tools that would enable me to live life on life’s terms, not seek temporary cures in the bottle.

Action has been the key for me. From the very beginning in AA, my sponsors put me to work. I joined their home group and they put me to work, setting up and cleaning up. There was plenty of work to go around. Back then it was porcelain coffee cups and dirty ashtrays. I was taught how to make pots of coffee. My sponsors lead by example.

In my early sobriety, my arrogance subsided as I realized that the fellowship provided me many teachers all ready to teach me how to live. “Welcome to the game of life,” a retired Detroitter would always say. At times, I felt like a mouse in a maze. Whenever I seemed off the beam and began making selfish decisions and remarks, a member of my home group would pull me aside and share their experience with love. They truly loved me until I could love myself.

That group took a commitment every Wednesday at a detox center in Fort Myers, which served five counties in southwest Florida. At eight months, and after some humility, I was honored with the job

of home group secretary. I agreed so long as the chairman would help – a big difference from my egotistic days when I didn’t need anyone. From that day on, it seems my pride began to vanish and I reached out for help many times. I also chaired the detox meeting. At this time, I began to feel a part of AA. These jobs taught me to *pass it on*.

I used to wonder what the catch to AA was. The con artist in me seemed to wonder why members in service were happy and seemed to have an inner peace. I wanted that too. Then my sponsor shared the catch - *in order to keep it, you had to give it away*. Working with other alcoholic keeps me busy and serves as a reminder of where I came from, and where I could return if it were not for these twelve steps and this fellowship.

Getting involved in Service has forced me to examine all three legacies of AA. By God’s grace, I have a better understanding of myself. Today, I am a child of God who has lost his selfishness, looks for the good in other people, knows what’s good for me and what’s bad for me and how to forgive—one of my great assets today. With this knowledge, I try to carry the message to other alcoholics and to practice the principles in all my affairs.

In Love and Service,  
Danny F., Alternate Delegate

## Area Officer and Committee Reports

### Recording Secretary

It's hard to believe that summer is over and so is this year! These past two years have taken me through many feelings and experiences, some good, some sad; and some I can't remember ever having before. This is all part of life.

Because of Alcoholics Anonymous and being involved in service, I have been able to accept life on life's terms. I have attended many meetings, conventions and conferences where I learned more about Alcoholics Anonymous and, most importantly, more about myself. I have met many new friends and enhanced friendships I have already made. I truly believe that nothing happens by coincidence.

It was not by chance that Ola P., who was originally elected as the mailing secretary, replaced Rose as the treasurer. This allowed Russ W. to become the mailing secretary and afforded us a chance to get to know him. These past two years have also reaffirmed the concept that we should live each day to its fullest and that we should not put off until tomorrow that which we can do today. Many long timers that have passed this year and we who remain must continue to carry the message that they showed us and shared how it works.

I hope to do this to the best of my ability as my Higher Power would have me do it. I don't know what his plans are for me, but I want to be open to whatever they are. This is when I can truly apply the HOW of the program (honesty, openmindedness and willingness). As these next few months approach, I know I must take them ONE DAY AT A TIME. I love this program.

Yours in Service Always,  
Jamie B., Recording Secretary

### Treasurer

With the end of Panel 57 rapidly approaching, I wish to express my sincerest thanks and my deepest appreciation to all of you for your support and encouragement. I am forever grateful to God for allowing me the opportunity to be of service. I am especially grateful for those with whom it was my privilege to serve with.

It was truly a pleasure and an honor to have served as the treasurer for the 52nd Ohio State and East Central Regional Convention. This was a new and wonderful learning experience for me. Going into the convention on that Friday, the number registered was about half of what was projected. Our Delegate advised that on-site registrations would be approximately 25% of the number we had so far. Well, and I am pleased to report that on-site registration far exceeded the 25% approximation on Friday. On Saturday on-sites were even higher and all meals except the Sunday Brunch were completely sold out. With the final numbers showing more than 300 registered, the convention was indeed a success. Thanks to all.

My journey thus far as a part of Northeast Ohio General Service has been one of immense and significant spiritual growth and mental restoration. Again, my sincerest thanks to all of you. It has been a pleasure, an honor and a privilege to serve.

In Love and Service  
Ola P., Treasurer

### Mailing Secretary

In July, I connected with Jim P. in Lorain and retrieved the mailing equipment and supplies. We have an abundance of birthday envelopes,

which will be included in the January mailing. A physical inventory has been taken and everything is in order.

As registrar at the East Central Regional & Ohio State Convention held in July, I am happy to report that we had 308 registered attendees, including a very encouraging 107 walk-ins. My hat is off to all the volunteers that lent a hand and to my registration partner, Christine M. In addition, thanks to Ola P. who counted all the "beans" and made all the nametags and meal tickets.

During the convention, I was privileged to chair the panel on "Participation and Communication." All the panelists were well-prepared and shared enlightening experiences as delegates and past-delegates. I was nervous about my position but their enthusiasm and creativity was informative as well as encouraging for me personally.

Yours in service  
Bob D., Mailing Secretary

### A Special THANK YOU

Area 54 would like to thank those home groups that hosted the hospitality room during the Ohio State Convention and East Central Regional Conference held in July in Westlake. The groups did a great job. They are as follows:

Elyria Sunday Night, Highland Hills Serenity, Lee Road Wednesday, Let Go Let God, Lorain Monday Night, Metro-Friday, Mustard Seed, New Way of Life, Oberlin Women, St. James, St. Mary Saturday Midnight, St. Phillips Sunday and Twelve Steps Up.

These groups are to be commended for the outstanding job they did representing Area 54.

**Again, our heartfelt thanks to all.**

## A Guide to Rotation

(with thanks to the Area 38 *Gazette*, Summer 2002)

The Gazette offers some of the Area experience on the upcoming election & rotation season, bearing in mind:

1. You're autonomous, so you can hold your elections as you think best.
2. The new rotation begin January 1st.

### The Election Schedule

The *AA Service Manual* suggests that district elections should take place *after* the group elections and *before* the Area election (p. S29). We'll be electing our new Area officers at the October 19<sup>th</sup> assembly, so District elections should be held at the last district meeting before October 19<sup>th</sup>, and group elections should be held at the last group conscience meeting before the District election. A nice feature of doing it this way is that the newly-elected GSR's can help choose the people they'll be working with for the next rotation. Some Districts and Areas allow both the new and the old GSR's to vote at the elections, perhaps to reward a good turnout. In our Area, each voting position only gets one vote, but we encourage the newly elected to attend and participate. Who gets a vote in your District is a matter for your District to decide – preferably before the election begins.

### Appointing v. Electing

At the Area, we elect a Delegate and Alternate, a Chairperson, two Secretaries, Recording and Corresponding, and a Treasurer. We do not elect the numerous committee chairs; they are appointed by the new officers acting as a Panel. In many cases, their decision is guided by the outgoing committee chairs, who often recommend replacements. In some districts, committee chairs are elected rather than appointed. This takes some of the load off of the DCM, prevents "playing favorites", and seems to put the results more in the hands of a higher power. The disadvantage is that people might not get elected to the job they want most, or are best suited for. For example, if I want the job that is being elected last, I might choose to stand for jobs I like less, rather than wait for the job I want most and take a chance on not getting a job at all. One possible compromise might be for people to indicate in advance which positions they'd like to stand for, and then do the electing in

order from most popular job to least popular job.

### What do you stand for?

Some say the decision comes down to just one question: Are you qualified? Others make it more complicated, considering their schedule, health, finances, transportation, and factors like "Which job would I prefer?" or "Who would I be standing against?" Many of us have found ourselves asking these questions right up until the last second. And in the excitement of an election, people have been known to over-commit. So it's good to give it some thought in advance. The qualifications for most jobs are in the *AA Service Manual*, the Area Fact File, or the *AA Group* pamphlet. There are exceptions to every rule; for instance, we've seen some good GSR's who had less than the recommended sobriety time. But we've also seen people hurt by jobs they weren't ready for. So you may want to talk with past officeholders, and discuss possible commitments with your service sponsor (or sponsees). If family members might have to make sacrifices, they should also be involved in your decision. Remember that the point all along is to stay sober and help others, and we can do this in almost any AA job. So, many people simply stand for whatever they are qualified for, and let the group conscience work out the details.

### Wearing more than one hat

Debate goes back and forth as to whether a person should hold more than one job in AA. Nearly all would agree that it's okay to have a voting job at the District or Area level and also make coffee or fold chairs. Many would approve of being a GSR while also doing committee work, such as speaking at a PI presentation or attending an institutional meeting. But almost no one would approve of holding two voting positions at the same time, for obvious reasons. One possible guideline: "Keep the job you committed to first."

### Speaking of hats

Before you attend an election at the District or Area level, be sure to read the "Third Legacy Procedure"  
(Continued on next page)

Quiz Answers: A1, B2, C9, D3, E4, F9, G10, H11

## A Guide to Rotation (cont'd)

for elections, up to and including the part where we sometimes pull the winner's name out of a hat. You can find it in the index of your Service Manual. Elections carried out in this manner are among the most enjoyable experiences in AA service work.

### Who to Vote for

It can be tough to decide who to vote for, especially if you don't know all the candidates personally. Prayer may help, as well as knowing the qualifications and duties of the job (ask if you don't know). Candidates typically announce their qualifications for the job, usually including their service history (other AA jobs they've performed in the past). Bear in mind that you're electing a "trusted servant", and elect someone you can trust.

### Leaving a Legacy

In AA we'll sometimes hear of outgoing service workers who hand their successor a grocery bag of "files" and disappear. That's not rotation, it's going AWOL. Much better to pass them your notes (including contacts, service volunteers, procedures, decisions you've made, etc.), and any actual files in a filebox (under \$5 at discount marts and office-supply stores). Then, "stick around but let go" – be available to help without trying to run the show. It can be harder than it sounds. This is your chance to practice being an elder statesman.

### Rotating out v. Rotating on

It's often said around the Area that we rotate out of a given job or service project, but we never rotate out of service. Why would we stop doing what works? "If you keep on doing what you're doing, you'll keep on getting what you're getting." If you don't have time to chair a committee or attend assemblies, maybe you can occasionally volunteer as a speaker for PI or CPC... or make one of your weekly meetings an institutional meeting. And then from time to time drop in on the district meeting, just to see how things are going, and possibly to be of service to the new kids on the block.

### Heartbreakingly Difficult Rotation Quiz

Are you prepared for election season? Find out with our screamingly rigorous Traditions & Concepts quiz. The answers are on the previous page where

this material was presented.

- A We insist on electing workers by a 2/3 majority, or else going to the hat, to preserve unity in AA. Which Tradition discusses this need for unity?
- B One of the reasons we rotate is to keep people from getting too powerful in any one job. We hope to avoid human authority, and to instead have "elder statesmen" as discussed in which Tradition in the 12 & 12?
- C Another Tradition also talks about the dangers of too much power, warning us in the Long Form that "Rotating leadership is the best." Which Tradition is this?
- D It would be impractical if we had to go to the Assembly to see who is standing for office, return to our groups to discuss the candidates, then return to the Assembly to vote. Which Concept gives us the right to vote at elections without checking with our groups?
- E We give GSR's a vote because they represent the groups. Which Concept gives some other service workers (e.g., committee chairs) a vote?
- F Which Concept warns us against electing ineffective workers by discussing the vital need for good leaders at all levels in AA, and explains some of the principles of good AA leadership?
- G Which Concept advises us to carefully define the jobs to which we elect people, and to "always be clear where the point of final decision is located", avoiding "double-headed" management?
- H Which Concept suggests the importance of getting "the best possible" workers?

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

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## District Committee Member Reports

### District 15

District 15 encompasses the cities of Canton, North Canton, East Canton, and Canal Fulton. On August 9, 2008, the Canton Area Intergroup Hospitals & Institutions (H & I) Committee held a “Carry the Message” workshop at Mercy Medical Center in Canton. There were Panel discussions and the Area 54 Treatment and Corrections Chair had an opportunity to discuss what their jobs entail. The Bridging the Gap program has integrated its efforts with the Impact Program at Mercy Hospital. The Area 54 Alternate Delegate also discussed the history of treatment work and how the Traditions are applied to H&I work in treatment facilities. Mary S, who has 26 years of sobriety, gave a lead explaining her work carrying the message at Quest House, where Mary takes women to outside meetings three days a week.

On August 30th, 2008, the Covenant Group celebrated its 68th Anniversary. This is AA’s fourth oldest group! The speaker was Joe R., a long time member from Akron who has been sober since October 11, 1956. He had attended the Covenant Group for the first time in 1959.

An ad for DCM is being published monthly in the Canton Sober Messenger as we are trying to find District Committee members for both District 15 and 16.

In Love and Service,  
Danny F., Alternate Delegate

### District 7

The multi-district 7-8-48 will hold a banquet on October 18 at Sacred Heart Church. The speaker will be Sharon F., Panel 57 delegate from Area 53. There will be a dance afterwards.

In love and service,  
Joel T., DCM

### Districts 19-20

We would like to thank everyone that attended and helped with the Area 54 picnic in July. The turn out was great and we were told everyone enjoyed the event. It was an honor to serve the Area by hosting the picnic.

In love and service,  
Judy S., DCM

### District 29

We were grateful for the opportunity to host the hospitality room at the Ohio State Convention in July. We were able to return the \$200 seed money to the convention, as well as \$234 additional. All the supplies were given to districts 23 and 39 for Gratitude Sunday.

In love and service,  
Calvin L., DCM

### District 48—The 11th Concept

In the Eleventh Concept, Bill W. explains the composition, functions and relationships of the standing committees of the General Service Board, and its subsidiary operating boards, the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine – as they existed in 1962. Outside of the discussion related to the specific of these factors, several principles have emerged.

The first principle concerns the “status of executives,” and states that no service can function well unless it has competent executive direction. This must always be implemented by one person, with assistance. They need ample freedom and authority to do their job, and there should not be little interfered, so long as the job is done well.

The second principle discusses “paid workers and how they are compensated.” Our executives, staff members and consultants should be

paid in reasonable proportion to the value of their similar services or abilities in the commercial world. Cheap help is apt to feel insecure and inefficient and it is likely to become costly in the end. This is neither good spiritually nor good for business. Assuming that ample money is available, our workers should be compensated well.

The third principle discusses “rotation among paid staff members.” It enlightens us of the reasoning behind the decision that resulted in rotating staff members at the General Service Office. When a staff member is hired, they must possess the ability to do, or learn how to do, many different jobs at the office.

The final principle concerns the “importance of full participation of paid workers.” Here Bill explains the rationale for giving key staff personnel voting representation on our General Service Committees and corporate boards. As Bill stated, “they should enjoy a status suitable to their responsibility.”

What have I learned from studying this concept, and how can I apply this knowledge at the local level? Most importantly, I believe that we need to ensure that the positions of our representative on the district level and the group level are rotating as this Concept states. Not only will this allow our groups to continue if a member is lost, but it will allow no single person to be “stuck” doing a job no one else wants. I also believe that we should approach our positions, whether it be GSR, DCM, or home group members, with as much energy and dedication as Bill W. spoke of and saw present in the early non-trustee positions that inspired his thought in 1962.

In love and service,  
Tina G., DCM

## Area Committee Reports

### Archives

The archives committee attended the National Archives Workshop in Niagara Falls, NY in September 2008. We arrived later Thursday night, but jumped right into the late-night panel discussions. On Friday, we attended many hands-on workshops that teach how to handle and repair archive documents so as not to ruin them. These workshops include encapsulating documents, removing staples and replacing with thread, repairing book spines, removing adhesives and torn page repair. Most importantly, we learned no to do harm to sensitive documents by making copies that can be handled for research and seeking help from others before harming the documents. We were provided many resources for additional supplies and education handling archival documents.

On Saturday, the focus of the discussion was on gathering personal histories, setting up repositories and cataloging archives in databases. Gail L, from Akron Intergroup Archives presented a timeline of the activities for AA's first archivist, Nell Wing, a long-time non-alcoholic secretary of Bill W. Our own archivist, Jay M, presented his research on

Extraordinary Times: How the Rockefellers Saved AA. This year-long research project included visits to the General Service Office, Stepping Stones, The Wilson House and many more historical locations. The workshop will be held in Los Angeles next year.

In love and service,  
Richard U., Chair

### Corrections

We have responded to several mail inquiries from inmates. I get many requests for literature. Fortunately, our chicken roast raised adequate funds to meet these requests. We have begun a pink can program for literature as well. We are trying to get more people involved to make that a reality. An inmate approached me at a meeting behind the walls to thank me for carrying the message. It reminded me, the only difference between us and them is we get to go home at night.

In love and service,  
Joel T., Chair

### Grapevine

The turnout at the Grapevine Workshop was good and provided an opportunity for the area assembly to

gather information and get involved. The committee is very pleased with the event and appreciates everyone's participation. A new Grapevine publication was released this month called "Beginners Getting & Staying Sober." The Grapevine committee held sales at the Ohio State Convention selling \$142 worth of material.

In service,  
Jeff N., Alt Chair

### Special Needs

I attended the Hear and See Meeting of Hope at St. Augustine Church on West 14th, a meeting that is held every Monday evening at 7:30 pm. I was impressed to see a non-member helping the group by providing signing services for no reason except to help others. This was inspiring to me.

We are thankful to Donna and Gloria for providing sign services at the Ohio State Convention in July. I have been in touch with Donna. She has made some useful suggestions that the committee can use for future events.

In love and service,  
Quinsetta M., Chair

## In Memoriam—Andy T.

On August 22, 2008, Alcoholics Anonymous lost one of its great assets, Andy T., panel 53 delegate from Area 53, Central and Southeast Ohio. Since attending the General Service Conference in 2003-04, Andy went on to serve as an appointed committee member and non-trustee AA Grapevine Director.

Andy's life can be measured by his dedicated and generous work in and out of the rooms of AA. Andy will be missed not only in Ohio, but in cities scattered throughout the country, including his hometown of Chicago, Illinois and his current residence near Boston, Massachusetts.

On a more personal note, I barely knew Andy when we embarked on a trip to represent our

respective areas at the General Service Conference in New York City in 2003. At the Conference, I found a friend and a mentor. I will always remember Andy's big smile and a bow tie and cigar to match. Never at a loss for words, Andy was deeply humble to his higher power and very grateful to the fellowship that saved his life more than three decades ago.

Sometime today, take a moment to remember Andy and his family in your prayers. In addition, remember those that came before us - those that opened the door - and those that kept it open when we passed through. These are my giants in AA. I list Andy among these people in my life.

*From the editor, Dan M. (53/54)*

## 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.

### Confidential Contact List

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#### Committee Chairpersons 2007-2008

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