

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

January, February, March, 2013

<http://www.area54.org>

Volume XXIII, Issue 1

"Let us remember that great legion who still suffer from alcoholism and who are still without hope. Let us, at any cost or sacrifice, so improve our communication with all these that they may find what we have found - a new life of freedom under God."

AA Co-Founder, Bill W., February 1961, From: "The Shape of Things to Come", *I Am Responsible: The Hand of AA*, © A. A. Grapevine, Reprinted with permission

NOTE THE DATE

January 20, 2013

Area Assembly 2:00 pm

January 27, 2013

Mini-Conference Planning Meeting, Radisson, N.Olmsted 2:00 pm

February 17, 2013

Workshop 2:00 pm

February 24, 2013

Mini-Conference Planning Meeting, Radisson N.Olmsted 2:00 pm

March 17, 2013

Area Assembly 2:00 pm

April 5-6-7, 2013

NEOH-Area 54 Mini-Conference
Radisson North Olmsted

~~ Watch area54.org for details~~



Unless otherwise noted, Area Assemblies & Workshops are held at:
The 12 Step Recovery Club, located at 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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A Word From Our Delegate

Warmest Greetings:

My sincere thanks to Area 54 - Northeast Ohio General Service for electing me to serve as your Panel 63 Delegate. It has been an incredibly amazing journey and I am so very grateful to all of you for the love, tolerance, and support expressed over the years.

I am indeed very excited and so looking forward to serving the Area for the next two years (God willing) as your Delegate. I am sure, that with your continued help and support, I will as before, always strive to be of maximum service to our fellowship. Being ever mindful that in "thought and action," "that our common welfare must come first" and of our spiritual principle of anonymity; to place principles before personalities. Finally, that "a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere." (Service Manual pg. S51).



(Continued on page 4)

Alternate Delegate's Report

I am both fearful and excited as I begin to serve as your Alternate Delegate of Area 54, Panel 63. There is some fear as I embark on this new path. However, I venture forward knowing that I am not alone. The Alcoholics Anonymous Program has taught me that I have a Higher Power (God of my understanding) who I may call on for guidance. There is also help available to me from past Delegates and Area members of Alcoholics Anonymous. I must always remember that Alcoholics Anonymous/General Service is a "We Program". When the Pupil is ready, the Teacher will appear. Thank God for the Teachers in Alcoholics Anonymous. We Journey together as our Primary Purpose states, "To Stay Sober and Help another Alcoholic to achieve Sobriety."

There is excitement because there are many new frontiers to explore. Yet I must always stay on the Path, the Road of Happy Destiny. There will be Area Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings, Workshops, District Meetings, Mini Conferences, Conventions, Picnics, Meetings and more Meetings. These are the things that I know exist. There is

(Continued on page 5)

From the Editor...

WHY SHOULD I ATTEND THE NORTHEAST OHIO MINI-CONFERENCE?

That's an interesting question and I hope that I can provide an adequately engaging answer. Below I offer some good reasons why everyone, whether you are involved in General Service work or not, is encouraged and welcome to attend the 38th annual Northeast Ohio Mini-Conference.

Exercise your voice and vote in A.A.-as-a-whole. Don't let others make decisions for you! Express your opinion on the items of business that will be discussed and voted on by your elected delegate at the General Service Conference in New York City at the end of April. The mini-conference is designed to provide a forum for understanding the issues concerning the future of A.A. that will be decided, on your behalf, whether you choose to participate in General Service or not.

Learn about service beyond the church basement steps. Every service job in A.A. is important. Ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a 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. An A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer, whether sponsorship of a new member or sponsorship of A.A. in a new country just getting started. Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good public relations of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences.

Why can't we just 'keep it simple'? These services, whether performed by individuals, groups, areas, or A.A. as a whole, are utterly vital to our existence and growth. Nor can we make A.A. more simple by abolishing such services. We would only be asking for complication and confusion. Concerning any given service, we therefore pose but one question: "Is this service really needed?" If it is, then maintain it we must, or fail in our mission to those who need and seek A.A. The most vital, yet least understood, group of services that A.A. has are those that enable us to function as a whole, namely: the General Service Office, A.A. World Services, Inc., The A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and our board of trustees, known legally as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our worldwide unity and much of our growth since early times are directly traceable to this cluster of life-giving activities.

Meet your Regional Trustee and a staff member from your General Service Office in New York City. Oh,

and your delegate will be there, too. She'd like to meet you and hear your views on the pressing agenda items of the day. She will carry your ideas and the conscience of the whole area to the General Service Conference.

Meet other A.A.'s who are interested in service beyond the group level. Having trouble convincing some members of your home group that all that alphabet soup stuff is more than just 'AA politics'? Other General Service Representatives (GSR) and District Committee Members (DCM) have already faced that difficulty and have great ideas to share on how to build interest at your home group. Come and learn!

See how your generous contributions are being used to help carry the message. New literature has been released in recent months, including a revised edition of the Spanish Big Book. New public service announcements and DVD versions of your favorite conference approved videos have been produced this year. These and more will be shown or will be available for sale at the mini-conference.

So, hopefully, one or more of these has sparked an interest for those of you who aren't sure about attending the 36th Northeast Ohio Mini-Conference on the weekend of April 5-6-7, in North Olmsted, Ohio. If you are a GSR for your group, or even if your group has no representative to General Service, please ask your group for a little financial assistance. Maybe they would be willing to pay for one of your nights at the hotel. Join us on the 'broad highway' of service to A.A.-as-a-whole and find out what you've been missing.

[Substantial material from the 2011-2012 *General Service Manual* combined with *Twelve Concepts for World Service* was used in writing this article.]

~Your editor, Jeff

We welcome your service-related contributions, comments and questions. Send topic ideas or complaints to: newsletter@area54.org



Northeast Ohio-Area 54 Elects New Delegate and Area Officers

Area Election Results

The Panel 63 Delegate and Committee of officers for Area 54 were elected on October 21st, 2012 in Brunswick, OH. These officers will serve for a two-year term, beginning January 1, 2013. Congratulations to all! A heartfelt thanks to all who were willing to stand for an office.

Ola P., Panel 63 Delegate Jamie B., Area Chairperson Shyrl B., Recording Secretary
 Calvin L, Alternate Delegate Susan R., Area Treasurer Jim S., Mailing Secretary

Vote Tally from the Third Legacy Procedure

Standing for Delegate				Standing for Treasurer				
	<i>1st ballot</i>	<i>2nd ballot</i>			<i>1st ballot</i>	<i>2nd ballot</i>	<i>3rd ballot</i>	<i>4th ballot</i>
Ola P.	63-0			Diane K.	7	-		
				James T.	26	29	25	conceded
				Susan R.	29	32	34	to Susan R
Alternate Delegate				Recording Secretary				
Calvin L.	37	44		Quinsetta M.	17			
Diane K.	7	1		Shyrl B.	35			
Joel T.	18	18						
Area Chairperson				Mailing Secretary				
Diane K.	15			Jim S.	29			
Jamie B.	45			Steve B.	23	conceded to Jim S.		



Area 54 assembly unani- mously endorsed:

Bill F. (47/53) for East-Central Regional trustee and Jean S. (59/53) for trustee-at-large, U.S.

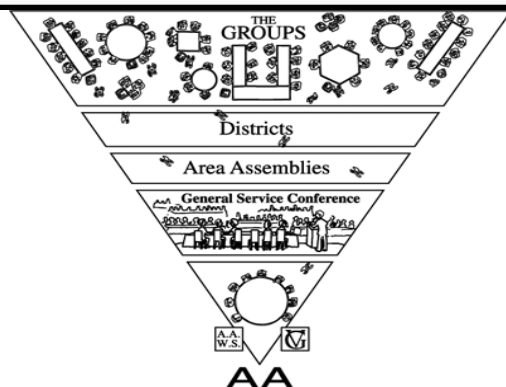


Delegate's Report Cont'd

On my most recent review of our service structure (the upside-down triangle), it occurred to me, how ironic it seems that one would work so hard to get to the bottom. "Humility in action."

God I love Alcoholics Anonymous and I truly love all of you.

In Love and Service,
Ola P., Area 54 Panel 63 Delegate



Area Officer Reports

First of all, I would like to thank all of you, for giving me the privilege to serve as Area 54 Chairperson. I certainly look forward to working with the incoming panel and committee chairpersons and all of Area 54.

Some of my first thoughts were, I must not make any mistakes, (ha! I'm human, we all make mistakes) if, and I'm sure there will be mistakes, I have the panel, committee chairs, and all of you to help me rectify any mistakes or errors I do make. This is a WE program. We are all in this together. As I am writing this, several thoughts are going through my mind, one, being that I have received so many blessings, throughout this journey in life. I truly believe one of the major blessings is learning myself and then accepting myself. This is not an easy task; I can only accomplish it "one day at a time".

I've learned that it's okay to ask for help; it's ok to admit that I don't know something. I must be willing to accept criticism without becoming furious. If I do go into the furious mode, then I my mind will block anything I might learn from the criticism. I anticipate an enjoyable, interesting upcoming year of service in Alcohol Anonymous. I LOVE AA.

Yours in Service Always,

Jamie B.
Area Chairperson

In the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, there are at least 13 definitions of the word "serve". Therefore, it safe to say it can be used in many ways, but for me the first definition works best, "to be a servant". Throughout my years of sobriety, I have given many opportunities to serve the fellowship of A.A. In the early days, I swept floors, made coffee (I still make coffee) and clean tables at the club where my home group resides. Once I started driving, it was taking newcomers and old timers to meetings. As I continued to grow in recovery, becoming a trusted servant in the group became another way of me to be of service. For a while, being a "servant" on the home group level was good for my recovery. I have met so many people and have received so many available life "tidbits" because of those opportunities. In my mind, this fellowship has given me my life back, and the best way I could show how thankful I am is to serve. However, little did I know when I received a call a few years ago about becoming a general service rep for my home group that being a "servant" would bring another level of commitment to my sobriety. For me, general service work is about serving the fellowship, making sure that the next drunk man, woman or child will have somewhere to come and learn about a better way of life.

Thanks so much for allowing to me serve.

In service,
Shyrl B.
Area Recording Secretary

Report on National Alcoholics Anonymous Archives Workshop
October 4-7, 2012 in Cocoa Beach, FL – Bob McK., Ohio Archivist/Historian

I flew into Orlando Airport early afternoon on Thursday, October 4th—which incidentally was my 28th AA Anniversary (yes I made my Birthday Plan donation). I then drove to the International Palms Convention Center in Cocoa Beach. The evening program was on Florida history. Thomas S. got sober in the late '30s and started AA in Florida. He later served as a Panel 1 delegate. Folks at that time traveled lengthy distances between cities to attend meetings, make 12th step calls, and help other groups get started. By 1947, Florida had 850 members in 41 groups. In 1948, they hosted the Southeast Regional Convention—the first gathering of this type.

Friday began with an open air AA meeting 7 AM by the beach. We had these each day and I never missed one. At 9 AM we broke into 2

(Continued on page 5)

Area Officer and Committee Reports, Cont'd

camp: conservation and other types of preservation. Dave C. from the Seattle area ran the continuing conservation (mostly repair) while the other topic varied. Digital Preservation was the first topic of the other camp. I was asked just 2 weeks prior to be one of the two panelists on this 2-hour session. I managed to make a PowerPoint and also get together some samples. It was well-received.

After lunch a demonstration and talk on oral histories was presented followed by an early dinner. Then Michelle Mirza, the non-alcoholic archivist for GSO's Archives, spoke on their activities. She strongly urged any new archives to first create a mission statement and collection policy. They have thousands of recordings that have been converted to stable media but have to listen to them individually to properly catalog them. Former staff member Susan U. is helping with this.

A special event graced the evening—a presentation of the recent documentary titled "Bill W." by Page124 Productions. Director Kevin Hanlon was present for a Q&A session following the film. This was an accurate portrayal of Bill's life—warts and all. This was particularly poignant to me since I'd met with Producer Dan Carracino when he discussed this project with Gail L. in Akron. Gail was shown (in shadow) in the film. More info on the flick is available at BillW.com and a DVD version is expected to be ready in December.

Saturday started with a copyright talk by attorney Don F. in

conjunction with Michelle Mirza (non-alcoholic archivist at GSO). Basically any item prior to 1923 is in the public domain. Later items may be. Writings by an author are copyright until 70 years after their death (that is unless they were registered with the copyright office and the renewal was not done as happened with first two editions of the Big Book). Thus all of Bill W.'s writing will become public domain in 2041.

This was followed by a great panel on getting started in archives. I was particularly impressed by the portion by Michael M. (from Alabama) who is an archivist by profession. He described the accessioning process in detail.

Dave W. from N. FL (area 14) presented a professional grade PowerPoint presentation on Richmond W. the author of *Twenty-Four Hours a Day*—Hazelden's best seller.

The planned outdoor Luau got moved indoors by a series of thunderstorms.

Tommie D., an old-timer from S. FL (area 15) and a friend of Bill and Lois W. was the scheduled speaker but had to cancel due to health. He was replaced by dynamic Nancy H. from California who is a General Service Trustee, on the Grapevine Board, and Chair of the Trustee's Archives Committee.

Sunday started with bid packages by both Philadelphia and Northern NJ preceded by NE Ohio's "Intention to Bid" for 2015. Our bid by our area (supported by most of our eight

Central Offices) was quite well received. We will present a full bid in 2013 at this workshop in Springfield, IL. I'm already registered for this. By a small margin, Philadelphia won the bid for 2014.

The workshop ended with a business meeting making some few tweaks to the conference guidelines. It then adjourned to Springfield, IL for next year.

My sincere thanks to Ohio General Service for making this trip much more affordable and to the Ohio support I've received in our bid to bring these Ohio-grown workshops back home!

Bob McK.

Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.'s future; to place our common welfare first; to keep our Fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come.

(Continued from page 1)

much more to do in and for Alcoholics Anonymous. I look forward to the Tasks.

As I previously stated "I am both fearful and excited". Oh but the good thing in all of this is that I am not alone. I have the God of my understanding and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous as my companions on this journey. Thank You for helping me and may God Bless you with a Peaceful, Joyous and Prosperous New Year.

Love and Service,
Calvin L.
Alternate Delegate

Step Six inside Tradition Six inside Concept Six

The Reverend Sam Shoemaker, one of the early benefactors to Alcoholics Anonymous when speaking of Step Six said, “This step separates the men from the boys.”*

Doctor John Norris, affectionately known as Dr. Jack, another benefactor when asked his opinion about Alcoholics Anonymous’ service structure said, “A.A. is a benign anarchy.”

I was not privileged to meet Reverend Shoemaker, but I met Dr. Jack and was privileged to have many conversations with him over the years before his passing. We first met in 1976 at the General Service Conference. Having been curious about his reference to A.A. being a “benign anarchy,” I asked where or how he had come to this conclusion. As close as I can remember he shared these thoughts, the idea we in A.A. need no government or central authority to rule over our services or service structure gives you and me the ultimate freedom to surrender our egos to each other, thereby allowing God to perform His work.

While not remembering the exact words, he made reference to the fact no society ever placed more emphasize on the individual than Alcoholics Anonymous. In order to recover, the individual must turn their life over to an unknown power; thus escaping “this seemingly hopeless state of mind and body”. This odd sense of empowerment of our individuality coupled with our need to find help from outside our own resources reminds me of the words of Jillian Bray:

*“In the mirror of earth’s madness let us see our ravaged face,
in the turmoil of all people let compassion find a place,
touch our hearts to make amends, see our enemies as friends.”*

There are no demands in the Sixth Step; only that the individual, if he so choose, after considering what has happened in his lives, decides he can no longer help himself without outside aid. Having made the choice of choosing another power to come to his aid; he has learned something of releasing his ego and humbled himself. This is the mirror Jillian’s words reflect back on the shattered lives of that individual and to all of us.

Generally society demands a corporate policy one needs to adhere too, at least a set of rules that must be obeyed. “You must toe the company line or leave,” even religions demand we follow a creed or doctrine, but not A.A. This seemingly counter-productive attitude rests clearly in Step and Tradition Six.

When O’Brian, my first sponsor, suggested I try this step, he was not surprised when I fought the idea that GOD could or would help me! I was still adhering to the “existential life style”, therefore, as a self determining agent,

*Reverend Shoemaker’s quote written in 1938 was never intended to be sexist. It reflected the gender use in prose at that time.

not needing nor wanting any help from his or any other god. I passed on his suggestion.

O’Brian watched as I struggled with page seventy-six (76), not accepting help from anything other than the Hematite Group and him, but trying my damndest to fit in with their understanding of recovery. It would be years before I could understand “turning one’s life over” was not abandoning “my role” in the service of A.A.!

O’B and the other members were attempting to teach me “my primary purpose” without taking my individuality away. Those members “honored” me and my thoughts, not demanding any rigid doctrine I must obey. Allowing me to grow at the pace I was capable of growing. Offering their love and understanding during this time of trial and travail, I will be forever thankful for the honor they showed. That type of sponsorship that allowed the student to learn at God’s pace and no other was the only sponsorship that could have helped me. The Hematite Group turned me over to God when I was incapable of believing in God, thus they, not I, recognized their primary purpose. Needless to say on this issue I have been a slow learner, but allow me to further quote Ms. Bray:

*“Let our strength be in forgiving as forgiven we must be,
One to one in costly living, finding trust and growing free,
Gentle God, be our release, gentle spirit, teach us peace.”*

If alcoholics are going to continue to find the same safe and protective harbor from their ravaged lives, they need this same tolerance that was shown me. Whether in our groups, our districts, our areas, or our General Service Conference, including our corporate boards, we need to follow the leadership provided by Step and Tradition Six into our future.

Our leaders must show us what our primary purpose is. We will never grow spiritually if “it has to be done my way!” By being intolerant, how can we teach tolerance, without trusting others, how can we teach trust, without being servants, how can we teach service? Sponsors can teach, but as Ms. Bray suggests, only God can change.

Concept Six demands confidence; a sense of “faith or trust;” and when that confidence is eroded for any reason, we who are engaged in the service structure have lost our “spiritual compass.” This erosion did not start at the General Service Conference with the delegates and corporate board members. Either the message handed down from our elders has been forgotten or our refusal to follow their wisdom has greatly exacerbated the service structure.

We need our GSRs to take our recovery message out from our groups; this is our primary purpose. We need our GSRs and our DCMs sharing with each other this recovery message from our groups, bringing them back to their individual groups and taking them on to our area assemblies.

Our area assemblies need to form committees to help articulate the message they are receiving from the groups through the districts. The committees, in reporting back to the assembly, offer the GSRs and DCMs an even greater understanding of our recovery message.

Step Six—Tradition Six—Concept Six

The elected Delegate, Alternate, and Area Chairperson glean from the GSRs, the DCMs, and committees through the assembly what our areas are offering to the “Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous;” the recovery message they wish to offer “A.A. as a whole”!

Your elected Delegate shares this message at the General Service Conference with other delegates, staff members, directors, and trustees. This process is known as the “will of the membership.” Your trustees attempt to do “the will of the membership” through the three corporate boards.

Reverend Shoemaker was correct; it takes men (adults), not boys (children) to accomplish this task presented to each new generation of A.A. Dr. Jack was also correct, it takes a “benign anarchy” to keep these ladies and gentlemen on task so the life-saving message that gave you and me a sense of belonging to something greater than anything we could dream begins in Step and Tradition Six. I still have confidence in each and everyone who accepts this way of life.

In closing, let Ms. Bray take us home:

*“Gentle God, when we are driven past the limit of our love,
when our hurt would have a weapon and the hawk destroy the dove,
at the cost of seeming weak, help us turn the other cheek.”*

ELD

Ishpeming, MI—Area 74



2013 Area Events

January 20 – Area Assembly
January 27 – Mini-Conf planning
Radisson, North Olmsted – 2pm
February 17 – GSR School
February 24 – Mini-Conf planning
Radisson, North Olmsted – 2pm
March 17 – Area Assembly
April 5-7 – 38th NEOH Mini-Conference — *Radisson Hotel – North Olmsted*
April 21 – Area Assembly
May 19 – Unity Day
June 7-9 – Founders’ Day
June 23 – Area Open House Picnic
July 21 – Area Assembly
August 18 – Workshop
September 15 - Area Assembly
October 20 - Area Assembly
November 17 - Gratitude Sunday

EXCEPT AS NOTED, Area Assemblies & Workshops begin at 2:00 PM and are held at the 12 Step Recovery Club, 1480 Pearl Road (in Brunswick Plaza) Brunswick, OH 44212

The club is on U.S. Route 42, 1/4 mile south of State Route 303.

Upcoming Events...

[Ohio, Regional...and Beyond](#)

Elsewhere in Ohio

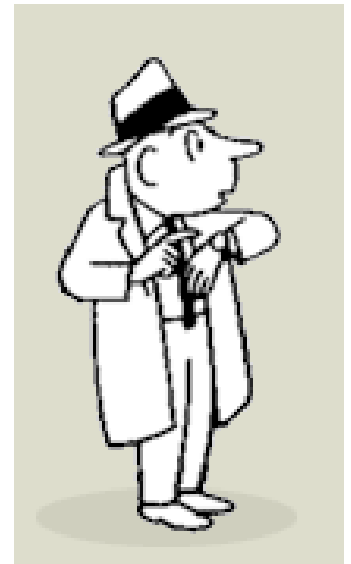
March 8-10—Deer Creek St.Park
Area 53 Mini-conference
March 15-17—Perrysburg, OH
Area 55 Mini-conference
March 22-24—Piqua, OH
Area 56 Mini-conference
May 11—Columbus, OH
Ohio State Convention Planning Meeting
@ 11 am
August 2-4—Worthington, OH
57th Ohio State Convention

U.S. and Canada

April 21-27—New York, NY
63rd General Service Conference

East-Central Region

February 15-17—LaPorte, IN
Conference of Delegates, Past and Present
July 19 – 21 – Appleton, WI
East Central Regional Conference
November 15-17—Fort Wayne, IN
East Central Regional Forum and Ohio State Convention Planning Meeting



[CHECK AREA54.ORG FOR UPDATES AND DETAILS!](#)

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

Your Trusted Servants Committee 63

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