

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

Jul / Aug / Sept 2021

<http://www.area54.org>

Volume XXVII, Issue 3

A Word From Our Delegate

WOW! What an experience I had as part of the 71st General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous. I received a huge amount of support from my fellow delegates, the GSO staff, and Area 54 Panel and my partner, Bob D. Thank you all for "having my back."

The GSO staff was very well prepared and generous with their time. If there was a question, during discussion, the person with the information was available quickly and with complete knowledge or resources. The effort and success of the technology of this conference was amazing. The knowledge and skill of the tech support was good. If you had a problem, they called you to check if they could help.

Before the conference, we had several virtual meetings as a committee and with all the delegates. We learned hands-on how to operate the Zoom technology and "How A Conference Operates" instruction. We were given ample time to ask questions and learn how to update our Zoom so all the tools showed up.

The conference began Saturday April 17th at 11AM and started at 11AM each day. This was 5AM for the delegate from Hawaii (Area 17). We had Committee Meetings prior to the conference to discuss housekeeping and everything other than the agenda items. We started our official committee meetings on Sunday April 18th and the General Service Conference began on Wednesday. We had great presentations and staff reports. It became

were behind schedule.

The final total of agenda items was 110. The total Committee Recommendations were

47, total Advisory Actions were 49, total Committee Considerations were 89 and we finished with 6 floor actions. We

adjourned the 71st General Service Conference at 2:30 AM Sunday Morning April 25th.



NOTICE

We have a new Preamble!

"In keeping with the final advisory action of the 71st General Service Conference, the A.A. Preamble revision replacing the words "men and women" with "people" will appear in the July issue of Grapevine." and its translation will be in the July/August issue of La Viña. Both of these issues will be mailed, and posted online, on June 15, 2021. After June 15, as new Grapevine, La Viña and A.A.W.S. literature or reprints go to press, and as web pages are updated, the language will change wherever the A.A. Preamble appears."

Josh Eggleston
General Service Trustee
A.A. Grapevine Board Chair

One of those Floor Actions, which was unanimously passed, was for an updated pamphlet "AA for the Native North American." Our current pamphlet contained racial slurs. It had been banned from use in many areas in Canada and the northern states of the US. The Committee on Literature could not finish their agenda items and this was one of those 6 items forwarded to 2022. The delegates from the NW US and Canada brought this Floor Action. By a unanimous vote the following was passed. "The pamphlet "A.A. for the Native North American" be updated to include language that is both respectful and inclusive of all Indigenous peoples as well as

add fresh stories and update inaccuracies contained in the current pamphlet...."

I would like to share that a majority of the Fellowship requested the Grapevine Board, who owns and publishes the Preamble, address the need to change it to gender neutral language. Two different suggestions were proposed in 2 Floor Actions. The main argument for the change is paraphrased as follows: 'When the Preamble is used in the opening of AA meetings, if just one person is offended and

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necessary for us to start at 10AM on Saturday April 24th because we

“Return to Forever”

As we approach a post-COVID reality, sort of a return to what we once knew as life, the expression crossed my mind, “Return to Forever.” For the jazz *aficionadi* among us, that expression will be recognized as the name of a band that emerged back in the ‘70s. The recently deceased jazz legend who was the founder of that group once said,

The poetic thought behind [that title] was that in music and in art in general, when one puts their attention on creativity, what you're doing is returning to a very natural home ground of yourself, of the spirit, of something that everyone has in common.

I'm always trying to communicate from that place and return to it. You get into the survival aspects of your life and you can forget about that easily, so that was like a reminder: return to forever.

(Chick Corea, as quoted by Michael Dwyer, <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/journeymen-return-in-blast-from-the-future-20110206-1aiar.html>, February 7, 2011)

Chick's profound thought goes beyond music and art in general as well as putting our attention to creativity. It has relevance to those of us who “have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body” – the state we know as active alcoholism. That is not the “forever” to which we wish to return. Yet, the memory of that “forever” must stand as a constant reminder of “what it was like.” We must not regret that past, nor wish to shut the door on it.

We must also return to a place from which we are “always trying to communicate,” as Corea said. It is, after all, a place of the spirit, of something that we all have in common. That place, we thought, was a place of comfort - perhaps a home group that had been “shut down” for over a year, or an opportunity to share at a treatment facility, or participation in-person at a general service assembly. We may have felt comfortable because of familiarity of physical surroundings and people.

But there is an “inner place” that has no physical boundaries or friendly smiles, hugs and hand shakes. That is a spiritual place from within. That is the forever to which we must return.

For many of us, the pandemic exposed our lack of grounding in that inner spiritual place. We had no “forever” to which we could return, and we felt lost. Now that we are on the verge of returning to the physical place that we thought was our forever space, we should understand that nothing physical is forever. So let us return to a forever that no human or virus can remove, a space that does not need a chairperson or a secretary or a treasurer, or even a “lead.” They are all people. We must not forget the second and third of those “three pertinent ideas” that became clear to us as we read our Big Book and shared our stories: “that probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism, and that God could and would if He were sought.”

Let us remember that when we get into the survival aspects of life, we can forget about our true forever space. Having survived COVID-19 let us now go back to the solemnity of our inner space. But we must also remember that we cannot return to a place we were never in. Fellowship is great, and it has an important place not just in recovery, but also in each of our three legacies. However, people come and go, and buildings close. Then what? Then we must go to the inner space, the spiritual place. We must “Return to Forever.”

Submit your service-related contributions, comments and questions, or ideas and complaints to:
newsletter@area54.org



AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES

DELEGATE'S REPORT CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

leaves AA, we are not being responsible to that one person who reaches out for help.'

The 2022 GSC Theme is: "AA Comes of Age 2.0: Unified in Love and Service."

Here are few items we vigorously discussed here in Area 54:

- Committee on Corrections to make revisions to AAWS literature directed to members behind the walls removing terms "inmate" and "offender" replaced with "person in custody."
- Grapevine Board to implement Instagram Account.
- The pamphlet "AA for the Black and African-American Alcoholic" be updated to include fresh stories and a new title that is respectful and inclusive.
- Fourth Edition of the book, *Alcoholicos Anonimos* (Spanish) be developed, including updated of stories to reflect current membership.
- Draft version of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition), be translated into plain and simple language and be developed in a way that is accessible and relatable to the widest audience possible.
- A Committee Consideration also on the Fourth Edition. Committee on Literature to address and to find a common solution for: plain language, simplified language, accessible translations and large print versions of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous* as well as workbooks to help study the program of AA.
- A Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed including an update of stories to better reflect current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that: "The first 164 pages of the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion,' 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare,' and the Appendices remain as is," and a progress report be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature. Pending its development, the draft Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new foreword, an updated preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

The US/Canada General Service Structure recognize online groups, and encourage their participation, listing those groups who ask to be listed within the group's preferred district and area, with the default option being the location of the group's primary contact. This supersedes the 1997 Advisory Action that designated online groups as "International Correspondence Meetings."

In general, all committees with workbooks were given lists of items to change, update and include in the workbooks. Also, a majority of the committees asked that the workbooks be available electronically or digitally and portions in video format. Service material was repeatedly asked to be available electronically. In addition, video format was requested when possible.

It was requested that all our literature and service material to be reviewed for diversity and accessibility and updated to reflect our current membership. On the financial horizon, the Fellowship was profoundly thanked for their actions to increase the 7th tradition contributions to a record amount in 2020. With the reduction in expenses, the 2020 year ended much better than expected.

GSO electronically upgraded the staff so that they could work from home and the staff completed an amazing amount of work in 2020. GSO office is opening slowly and conforming to New York State Guidelines and other local and property guidelines. GSO will not be able to accept visitors for now.

The details of the 71st General Service Conference will be in the Final Report. This is to be release electronically and in print. I hope to get authorization from GSO to put on the website several reports that I have.

The ERP (our software data system) has successfully combine the financial and the contributions and the literature sections. I find the purchasing easier and the electronic contribution also easier. The Fellowship Connection portion is progressing. GSO would now like the Registrars to tell them what changes/modifications they need. GSO will then know what the users of this program need and add those items.

In addition, we are using a lockbox system now and saving the cost of 3 full time employees.

Financial Statistics for 2020:

7th Tradition Contributions \$10.26 million, Online Contributions = Individual 42%, Groups 39%, Other 20%,

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AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES, CONT.

DELEGATE'S REPORT CONTINUED

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Birthday Contributions = Individual 73%, Group 26%, Other 1%. Literature Gross Profit \$6.58 million, Grapevine & La Vina, Average Circulation 68,572, Net Income (Loss) was (\$299 Thousand), General Fund Support of LaVina Service Activity \$386 Thousand. Reserve Fund; Coverage Ratio 7.9 Months.

The 7th Tradition 2020 of \$10.26 million were from 24,779 Groups (34.8%) and Individuals gave \$4,286,383. This is the 2nd consecutive record of 7th Tradition giving.

Costs of services provided to the Fellowship in 2020 was \$10.8 million. Supporting Services 19.1%, Outreach 39.3%, Group Services 26.6%, Service Leadership 15%.

Impact of Pandemic on 7th Tradition:

Group Contributions in 2020 were \$6.0 million, Number of groups contribution was 34.8%. This was 3,401 fewer groups than 2019. Average Group Contribution in 2020 was \$238.95. Individual Contributions in 2020 were \$4.3 million versus \$1.9 million in 2019. Per capita contribution was \$6.81.

Please do not stop your contributions to GSO (NY), to Area 54, and intergroups. With the continued decline in print literature purchases, we as members need to be the financial support for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Here in Northeast Ohio Area 54 our contributions are lower than usual. The first six months of the year are our big spending months. Please ask your groups to send Area 54 what they can spare. All the entities will need more support this year too.

Love and service,

Susan R. - Delegate
Area 54 - Panel 71

ALTERNATE DELEGATE'S REPORT

Greetings Area 54

May 17th was Unity Day. We had a great presentation on unity and service by Mansfield OYPAA, and General Service Conference report by our Panel 71 Delegate Susan R. She gave a great presentation including slides of items that were approved at the conference. There are plenty of sober fun things to do this summer including a Founders day watch party at Firestone park on June 12th from 9am until 9pm., and Area 54 Open House Picnic on June 27th at Swine Creek park in Middlefield hosted by districts 21,61 23/39.

Our Open House Picnic will start set up at 12pm. Come out and bring your favorite potluck dish, and we will have a great time. It will include a service panel with 3p.m. with

panelists Mark P., Katie S., and Beverly F.

We have a hybrid assembly July 18th and will have Grapevine and literature sales at the club. We have a DCM College Virtual presentation on August 15th.

The Ohio State Convention will be a virtual event again this year it will be hosted by Area 55 August 20th-22nd. Events and log in information are available on our website. Area54.org.

There are plenty of other sober events also this summer presented by our districts and Intergroups please try and support these events if you can.

Yours in service,

Tim H. - Alternate Delegate
Area 54 - Panel 71

TREASURER'S REPORT

The service position of treasurer has had its rewards, from the groups that contribute and send notes thanking us for our service. It amazes me that a good number of the groups that contribute are from far flung corners of Area 54. Some of the places in our area that I am not familiar with, small and large groups that make the recommended contributions to our Area. I sometimes ask people who attend zoom meetings if they still donate to the group. The answer more times than not is -no we don't request contributions because we don't serve coffee or pay rent. This is true in that respect. Tradition 7 states that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We still need to support the fellowship which includes the area, district, GSO and the Inter-group. The survival of Alcoholics Anonymous depends on all our efforts. This program has saved my and my family's life, it is my responsibility to ensure it exists for my children and my children's children, as well as the millions that are outside my door who need our program.

Mark P. - Treasurer
Panel 71 - Area 54

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE REPORT

Four of us are currently on the committee—there's room for more. Three of us are going to the Nat'l AA Archives Workshop (NAAAW) in Texas: Tina C sent by Ohio AA, Jim B sent by Akron AA, and Jamie B sent by our area. Akron, the birthplace of AA itself, is also the birthplace of the NAAAW; therefore we've felt it's a responsibility of our area to support it.

The Cleveland District Office offered us some space on their archives server and we will be digitizing some records and placing them there for now.

Bob M. - Archives Chair
Panel 71 - Area 54

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AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES, CONT.

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Service Work

Being a trusted servant is an important part of our service structure and without it our fellowship will surely end. My service position has pushed me to follow my dreams outside of recovery. I have learned about my own issues with expectations of self and others and how important the Traditions are in working through this. By being in multiple service positions in my recovery it has helped me to learn to take my personal feelings out of the situation although tough at times, and put the best of AA first.

At first I didn't understand the importance of removing my feelings from the situations before us in our fellowship whether it be at the homegroup, district level or Area level. The 12 Traditions of our fellowship helped me to see it's not always about me it's about for the good of AA. I have learned a lot in the different positions I have held. How to have balance in all areas of my life, follow through with my commitment and dedication to our fellowship. Which in turn makes me a more productive individual. I am looking forward to whatever comes next in my journey. I am looking forward to sharing the experience of service work with those I sponsor with the hopes that they will get the bug and get active in the service structure no matter the level. The most important part in this journey is to remain teachable in all areas.

Love and Service

Tina C. - Mailing Secretary

Panel 71 - Area 54

ARTICLE FROM THE P.I. CHAIR

Somebody

When I attended my first meeting it was as though everything was all set up for me. Upon entering the room I was greeted and saw people talking and laughing. Something I hadn't done in quite a while. There was coffee ready and doughnuts to eat. There were pamphlets of all sorts about AA in a rack. There was a podium set up and there were three people sitting up front. All I had to do was come in and sit down. Everything was prepared as though they had been waiting for me. What a wonderful thing A.A. is for the next Alcoholic who walks through that meeting door.

I never thought that though everything was ready when I got there that somebody had to do the work. Somebody had to come early and set up the chairs and make the coffee.

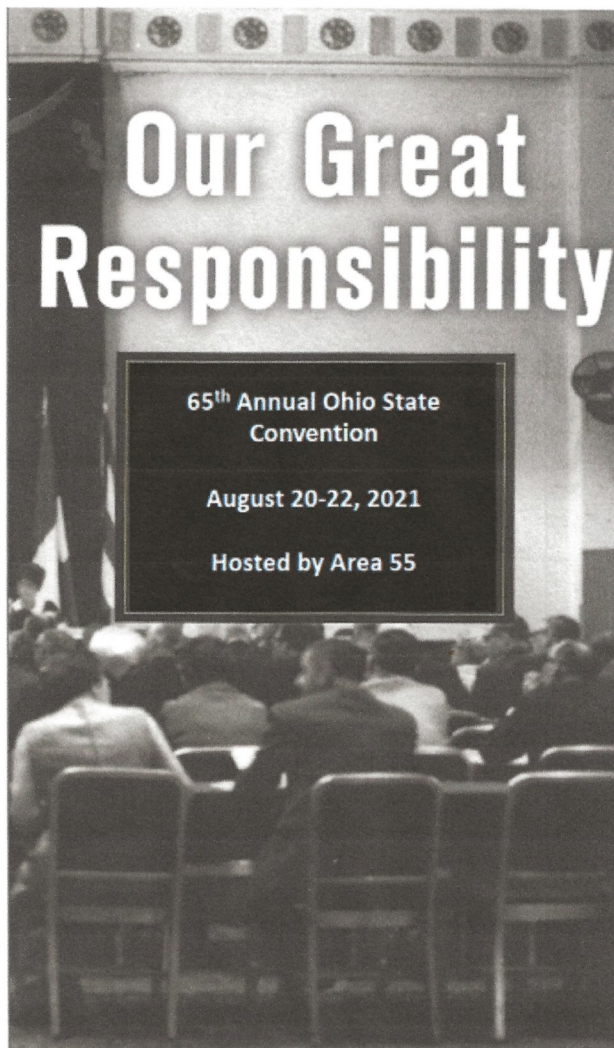
Somebody had to order and pick up the literature that was in the literature rack. Somebody had to come early and stand at the door to greet people. Somebody had to go to the bakery to get the doughnuts. The Secretary had to ask somebody to be the Chairperson. The chairperson had to ask somebody to be the lead. The lead shared their experience, strength and hope. They said they had to give it away to keep it. How strange is giving something away to keep something. Well that made no sense to me. Somebody told me to keep coming back. Somebody said "learn to listen and listen to learn." Then somebody said take the cotton out of your ears and put it into your mouth. Well I thought there is no cotton in my ears and I surely would not put it into my mouth. Somebody said "If you don't take the first drink you won't get drunk". Then somebody said keep coming back. I watched somebody pick up coffee cups and put up chairs. Somebody cleaned up after meeting. Somebody said we like to leave the place better than we found it.

Well I kept coming back and kept hearing these same readings at the meetings. There was a Preamble, Traditions, How it Works, Steps and then these Promises. I kept coming back and somebody kept reading them. Somebody said you need to get a sponsor and a home group. Then somebody said "If you don't have a sponsor then you are sponsoring yourself and you have a fool for a sponsor". Well that didn't seem to be a nice thing to say. But I certainly did not want a Fool for a sponsor. Then somebody said "If you don't have a home group then you are homeless." Well I didn't want to be homeless either as that didn't seem like a good thing. So I joined a group.

Somebody was the GSR (General Service Representative) for the group. They gave a brief report about attending a District and Area meeting. Somebody said our group has a voice in AA and we send our GSR to represent our group. I wanted to know what these other meetings were about. The GSR said come with me. So I went to the District meeting. There was somebody there called a DCM (District Committee Member) who was leading the meeting. Somebody said the DCM takes information from the GSR's to the Area and brings it back to the district. From there I went to the Area Meeting and met more of these GSR's and DCM's. I also met these Committee Chairs and Panel people. There is always something for somebody to do. There must always be somebody to do that something.

Does your Group have a GSR? Let the voice of your group be heard. There is somebody who can be the GSR. Does your district have a DCM? There is somebody who can be the DCM. Somebody is always there to keep the doors open. Will you be that somebody? Thank God for Somebody!

Calvin L. - P.I. Chair
Panel 71 - Area 54



The State Convention Will be Held on Zoom

Friday, August 20 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday, August 21 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 22 8:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

WEEKEND EVENTS INCLUDE:

- ◆ Service Committee Panel Discussions
- ◆ Archives Workshop
- ◆ GSR/DCM Informative Presentations
- ◆ ECR Trustee Report
- ◆ AA Speakers
- ◆ Al-Anon Speakers
- ◆ Sobriety Countdown
- ◆ Virtual Ice Cream Social (bring your own ice cream)

For More Information, Contact

- Jim S., Area 55 Delegate, at (419) 708-4408 or delegate@area55aa.org
- Sherry S., Area 55 Alternate Delegate, at (419) 309-0637 or alt.delegate@area55aa.org

2 Options to Register:

1. Complete the online form at <https://area55aa.org/20585-2>
Online registration is available up to and through the duration of the state convention.

2. Complete and mail this form to: Area 55
P.O. Box 401
Toledo, OH 43697-0401

Upon receipt of registration information, the Zoom connection information will be sent. Registration is free. Voluntary contributions to the state convention may be included with mailed registration or submitted online by clicking the "Make a Contribution to the State Convention" button on <https://area55aa.org/upcoming-events/>

65th OHIO STATE CONVENTION OF AA REGISTRATION

☐ AA ☐ Al-Anon ☐ Alateen ☐ AMIAS

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Voluntary Contribution (if included with mailed registration): \$ _____

Please check to indicate that you would like instruction for using Zoom

☐

UPCOMING DATES FOR THE AREA AND BEYOND

NOTE THE DATE

June 11-13 - Founders' Day Gv
Grapevine sales on Saturday one 6/12

June 27 – Area Open House Picnic
Swine Creek Reservation, Valley Shelter,
Geauga Park District
Additional information posted at www.area54.org

July 18 – Hybrid Area Assembly Gv Lit

August 15 – Virtual DCM College

August 20-22 – 65th Ohio State Convention And
the East Central Regional Convention a Virtual
Event

September 19 – Hybrid Area Assembly

OUTSIDE OUR AREA

September 30-October 3 -
National AA Archives Workshop
San Antonio, Texas

Gv = Grapevine sale days
Lit = Literature sale days

EXCEPT AS NOTED, Area Assemblies & Workshops begin at 2:00 pm and are held at The 12 Step Recovery Club, 1480 Pearl Rd. (in Brunswick Plaza), Brunswick, OH 44212. The club is on US Route 42, about 1/4 mile south of State Route 303.

Phone: (330) 273-7216

SAVE THE DATE

Area 54 Open House



Food • Fun • Fellowship

Hosted by Districts 61, 21 and DD 23/39

June 27, 2021 – 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Setup is at noon (12:00 PM)

Speaker's Topic *Growing in Service* 3:00 PM

Speakers - Bev F., Katie S., and Mark P.

Swine Creek Park, Lakeside Shelter

16004 Hayes Rd. Middlefield, OH 44062



The 2021 Archives Workshop Is In-Person!

For complete information and online registration
go to

<https://www.naaaw.org>

RECOVERY, UNITY AND SERVICE

These are the Three Legacies of our A.A. experience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern. God, expressed through 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, GSRs 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 69

Susan R., Panel 71 Delegate
P.O. Box 8, 50 N. Maple Street
Orwell, OH 44076
(216) 407-6049
delegate@area54.org

Tim H., Alt. Delegate
1944 Jefferson Eagleville Road
Jefferson OH 44047
(440) 415-2960
altdelegate@area54.org

Jim S., Area Chair
104 Sexton
Struthers, OH 44471
(330) 261-6256
chair@area54.org

Mark P., Treasurer
629 Wellesley Circle
Avon Lake OH 44012
(216) 406-1169
treasurer@area54.org

Katie S., Recording Secretary
7212 Saybrook Drive
Hudson, OH 44236
(216) 857-1540
recordingsecretary@area54.org

Tina C., Mailing Secretary
29 S. Maryland Avenue
Youngstown, OH 44509
(330) 531-2083
mailingsecretary@area54.org

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

Committee Chairpersons 2019-2020		
Accessibilities	Vincent W.	(303) 472-9318
	P.O. Box 4633	accessibilities@area54.org
	Akron, OH 44310	
Archives	Bob M.	(216) 970-2333
	1367 Grantleigh Road	archives@area54.org
	South Euclid, OH 44121	
Archivist	J. Steve K.	(330) 406-6603
	5657 Mahoning Ave.	archivist@area54.org
	Youngstown, OH 44515	
Cooperation with the Professional Community	Bev F.	(216) 624-9610
	1336 Hird Ave. #1	ccc@area54.org
	Lakewood, OH 44107	
Correctional Facilities	Bill R.	(440) 667-1112
	5473 Ireland Road	cf@area54.org
	Montville, OH 44064	
Finance	Mae R.	(216) 926-1238
	1259 Ansel Rd.	finance@area54.org
	Cleveland, OH 44108	
Floor Management	Sam P.	(216) 767-9588
	25597 Broadway Ave.	floormgmt@area54.org
	Oakwood Village, OH 44146	
Grapevine	Casey M.	(502) 640-1448
	4631 Deer Creek Court, Apt. 3	gvchair@area54.org
	Austintown, OH 44515	
Group Services	Shyrl B.	(216) 702-0572
	20651 Trebec Blvd.	groupservices@area54.org
	Euclid, OH 44119	
Hispanic Community Liaison	Wellington R.	(216) 287-6009
	209 East 216th Street	hispanicliaison@area54.org
	Euclid, OH 44113	
Literature	Dusty S.	(330) 620-9642
	4414 Point Comfort Drive	literature@area54.org
	Akron, OH 44319	
NE OH Recorder Newsletter	James T.	(216) 322-7005
	19104 Maple Hts. Blvd.	newsletter@area54.org
	Maple Hts., OH 44137	
OYPAA Liaison	Brian C.	(303) 690-7625
	1259 Roslyn Ave.	YPLiaison@area54.org
	Akron, OH 44320	
Public Information	Calvin L.	(216) 334-4594
	3571 Riedham Road	pi@area54.org
	Shaker Heights, OH 44120	
Registrar	Ola P.	(216) 408-0289
	4480 Granada Blvd. #22	registrar@area54.org
	Warrensville Hts., OH 44128	
Treatment Facilities	Karen S.	(216) 659-1528
	13404 Lambert St.	tf@area54.org
	Cleveland, OH 44112	
Website	Dan M.	(440) 853-6768
	PO Box 264	info@area54.org
	Middlefield, OH 44062	