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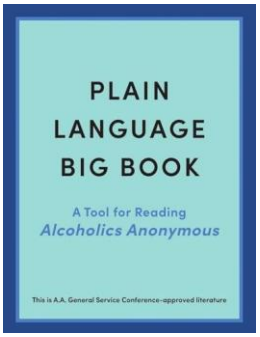
A Word from Our Delegate

By Beverly F., Delegate
Area 54/Panel 75

I just left Knuckleheads, 106 Thomas Blvd. NW, in Massillon. The meeting started at noon. I was welcomed by the attendees through Kevin G. and introduced by Terry M.

This was a little different, a lead and service work (service works, it really does).

I referred to the handout from the General Service Office on "Your Seventh Tradition Contributions Help Carry the Message." Here are ways the GSO helps carry the message:



1. Public Service Announcements
2. Grapevine/AAWS Publishing added 200,000 tablets in Jails and Prisons. At one location, out of 600 Plain Language Big Books sent, 350 were read completely.
3. Corrections Correspondence: Assists matching inmates with AA embers (Bridging the Gap).
4. Accessibilities Desk, American Sign Language and YouTube.
5. Technology: Streamlines workflows and the ability to view young people's videos.
6. Regional Forums and their continued importance.
7. Publishing department adjustments regarding paper shortages.
8. USA/Canada - AA Meeting App Guide which is managed by the Communications Department.
9. Staff members respond to thousands of emails, letters and phone calls.
10. The website launched December 2021. Site visits have doubled, reaching more than 5 million per quarter.
11. Cooperation with the Professional Community: Regular posts on the LinkedIn page and exhibits such as the Cleveland Convention Center right here in Northeast Ohio (human resources professionals attended.)
12. 10,000 pages of Bill W's correspondence were scanned to preserve our history.

Thank you, Area 54, for the honor of serving, and I am grateful for this opportunity to serve.

My Experience as Alternate Delegate

By Wellington R.

Here is how I see my roles in AA since I became aware that I represent our fellowship, from representing my home group starting in 1992, until now, as Alternate Delegate. Serving has been a normal task that encourages me to grow, as my character defects vanish little by little.

Early in my journey, I participated in my first International Conference of Young People in AA (ICYPAA) in 1992 in Cleveland. It gave me a vision of a new sober world that I could only dream of.

In 2000, I went to the International Conference in Minneapolis, Minn. There, I was asked if I could translate from English to Portuguese. I was assigned to a group of Portuguese speaking people. It also provided me with a sense of belonging.

After returning to Cleveland, I found myself skeptical and defiant, participating only in local groups as coffeemaker, secretary, treasurer, going on 12-Step steps calls, and doing other tasks. I visited various types of groups, and I started venturing into district meetings after I became a General Service Representative. Initially, I visited the meetings as a kind of research and observation. Today, these experiences allow me to share and talk with the newcomer about the real gift of serving, and walking side by side with me.

Throughout the 2000 years up the pandemic, I visited Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Nicaragua and participated in their meetings. These experiences made me want to help to improve their participation in AA and in Area 54 in Northeast Ohio. It also left me with a clear sense of how fortunate we are, not only for the large amount of literature but for knowledgeable mentors throughout the United States and Canada. Our structures, overall, provide us with fine teachings and guidelines, using many sources of communication such as the regional forums and mini-conferences. Today, I continue to participate and to pass along the messages I have received.

Our Area 54, through hybrid assemblies, has received many visitors who I have invited from other countries, to help them better understand AA's commitment to help alcoholics stay sober.

I would like to say thanks to all of you for the help and encouragement the NE Ohio Hispanic AA community is receiving. Since I was appointed Hispanic Liaison, I have tried to enlighten you about the many challenges this community has faced. One of them is their invisibility among us and many of you. Area 54, along with Area 53 in the southeast portion of Ohio, Area 55 in the Toledo area, and Area 56 in Dayton/Cincinnati, have decided to be more inclusive, by creating a linguistic intergroup at our State Convention. The other challenge that many Latinos feel is the "Unity or Pertinence." I have tried to educate them, and it appears that some results are blossoming. I am proud of my fellow Latino companions who are embracing this new freedom of belonging to the traditional AA and staying with us.

Our AA Service Manual states, "The Alternate (Delegate) serves as a valuable assistant, often traveling with the Delegate or giving reports for them." I believe I have been responsibly serving my Area and AA. I hope that Area 54, our Panel 75, and all the members have received from me the best of my knowledge, skills, experience, and the respect you all deserve.

New Committee Chairs for Panel 77

At the October Assembly, we held our elections for Panel 77. These are your new officers and trusted servants:

Katie S., Delegate
Jeff C., Alternate Delegate
DeVona S., Chair
Gary G., Treasurer
Tina C., Recording Secretary
Quinsetta M., Mailing Secretary
Jim S., Registrar

Contact information for these officers and Committee Chairs will be in the trifold that will be distributed at Gratitude Sunday on Nov. 15. Contact them if you are interested in serving on one of our 17 committees. Thanks to Amanda B. for sending us emails about each committee and its duties.

Tips for Making Contributions So We Know Who You Are



If you're a group treasurer or anyone who sends contribution checks or money orders from your group to Area 54, or you're making a personal contribution, we have a few suggestions on how to ensure that you receive our thank-you letter. It lets you know the money has been deposited safely into our bank account.

Please make sure your group name or group number is written somewhere on the check or money order, preferably in the memo section. If you don't know your group number, contact Tina C., our Panel 75 Registrar, at Registrar@Are54.org. If the contribution is yours, and not your group's, write "personal contribution" in the memo area. Some treasurers include a short note with their telephone number and email address. Very helpful!

If sending a check, make sure you have enough money in your checking account to cover it. We've had several bounced checks this past year. The bank charges us a $35 fee for each check that bounces.

Area 54 Northeast Ohio General Service is separate from **Cleveland District Office and** the **Akron Intergroup**. Both are within Area 54 but have their own offices, boards of directors and budgets. All three groups have the same mission: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

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Cleveland, OH 44101-3384

Akron Area Intergroup
2212 Romig Road
Akron, OH 44320

Cleveland District Office
1557 St Clair Ave NE
Cleveland, OH 44114

Give what you can until it feels good!

A Journey of Service: Reflections from the Chair of Panel 75

By DeVona S.
Area 54/Panel 75

As I prepare to write my final article as Chair of Area 54 Panel 75, I find myself reflecting on the journey that brought me here, the people who walked alongside me, the lessons I learned, and the experiences that challenged me in ways I never could have anticipated.

When I began this journey, I knew that service would require time, commitment, and a willingness to learn. What I didn't fully understand was just how much it would teach me about leadership, responsibility, unity, patience, and, most importantly, the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Serving on Panel 75 has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my recovery. I have had the privilege of working with dedicated trusted servants, participating in important discussions, helping carry our message, and witnessing firsthand how much work takes place behind the scenes to keep our Area moving forward. I have learned that service is not about a title, a position, or having all the answers. It is about showing up, listening, being willing to do the work, and remembering that we are here to serve a Fellowship that has given so much to us.

The journey hasn't always been easy

One of the most difficult challenges I faced as Chair was the discovery that a significant amount of money was missing from Area 54 funds in connection with the actions of a fellow panel member. That experience tested me in ways I never expected. Along with the financial concerns came difficult conversations, hard decisions, questions about accountability, and the responsibility of helping our Area navigate a painful situation.

As Chair, I had to remember that my responsibility was not simply to react to a crisis. It was to help ensure that the concerns were taken seriously, that appropriate steps were taken, and that we continued to act in accordance with our principles and responsibilities to the Fellowship. It was a reminder that trusted servant positions carry real responsibilities, and that protecting the trust placed in us is something we can never take lightly.

There were moments when the weight of the situation was difficult. It would have been easy to become discouraged or to allow the challenges to overshadow the good that service has brought into my life. But recovery has taught me that we do not get to choose every circumstance we face. We do get to choose how we respond.

I learned that leadership does not mean having every answer or being able to prevent every problem. Sometimes leadership means standing steady when things are uncertain, being willing to have uncomfortable conversations, asking for help, and continuing to do what is right even when the path forward is difficult. I also learned the importance of transparency, accountability, communication, and working together rather than trying to carry the weight alone.

Through all of this, I have been reminded that our principles matter most when they are tested. Unity does not mean avoiding difficult conversations, and practicing love and tolerance does not mean ignoring our responsibilities. We can hold ourselves and one another accountable while still striving to treat each other with dignity and respect.

These experiences have strengthened my belief that service is an essential part of recovery. Service is not always convenient. It does not always come with recognition, appreciation, or easy answers. Sometimes it means giving up an evening, stepping outside our comfort zone, listening when we would rather speak, or remaining willing when circumstances make us want to walk away.

Service is also incredibly rewarding

It gives us an opportunity to practice the principles we talk about in meetings. It teaches us how to work with people who think differently from us. It helps us grow in ways that sitting on the sidelines never could. It allows us to give back to a Fellowship that was there for us, often before we even knew how much we needed it.

To anyone who has considered getting involved in Area service, I encourage you to take that first step. You do not have to know everything. You do not have to be the most experienced person in the room. You simply have to be willing to learn, willing to listen, and willing to contribute what you can.

Get involved. Attend an Assembly. Ask questions. Volunteer for a committee. Talk to someone who has served before you. There is room for you, and your experience, perspective, and willingness matter. We need new voices, fresh ideas, and trusted servants who are willing to help carry the message forward.

Never underestimate what you can learn by saying yes to an opportunity to serve. Some of the most important lessons in my own recovery have come from situations I would never have chosen for myself.

As Panel 75 comes to a close, I am grateful for the opportunities I have been given, the lessons I have learned, the people I have met, and even the challenges that forced me to grow. I know I have made mistakes along the way, and I know there is still much for me to learn. That is part of the beauty of this journey: we never really finish growing, and we never stop having opportunities to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Although this is my final article as Chair of Panel 75, it is not the end of my service to Area 54. I stood unopposed for Chair of Panel 77 at the October elections. And I plan to continue serving wherever I am needed and wherever I can be useful.

For me, that willingness is what matters most. A position may end, a panel may change, and responsibilities may look different, but our responsibility to carry the message and support the Fellowship continues.

If there is one thing I hope others take away from my experience, it is this: **service is not about having an easy journey. It is about being willing to take the journey, learn from it, and keep showing up for something greater than ourselves.**

Thank you to everyone who has been part of my Panel 75 journey. Thank you for the opportunities to serve, for the lessons shared, for the conversations that challenged me, and for the work we have done together. I will carry these experiences with me long after this panel concludes.

It has been an honor to serve as Chair of Area 54/Panel 75. I look forward to continuing to be a part of the work ahead, because our service to Alcoholics Anonymous does not end when our terms do.

My Journey as Area 54 Registrar

By Tina C., Registrar
Area 54/Panel 75

As I rotate out of the position of Area Registrar, I find myself reflecting on what an incredible privilege it has been to serve our Fellowship in this capacity.

When I first accepted this responsibility, I understood the duties of maintaining records, updating group information, and helping keep our Area connected to the General Service structure. What I did not fully appreciate was how much I would learn about the spirit of service itself. The Registrar's work often takes place behind the scenes, yet it provides a unique view of AA in action. Through every group update, trusted servant change, and member inquiry, I witnessed the dedication of alcoholics carrying the message through service.

Rotation is one of AA's greatest safeguards. It reminds us that no position belongs to any individual. We are trusted servants for a season, entrusted with responsibilities that ultimately belong to the Fellowship. As we rotate out, others rotate in, bringing new ideas, energy, and perspectives. This continual renewal helps keep our service structure healthy and spiritually grounded.

Serving as Registrar has strengthened my appreciation for Tradition Two. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. Every record maintained and every report submitted supports the collective conscience of AA, allowing groups and trusted servants to communicate effectively and fulfill our primary purpose.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who has offered guidance, patience, and support throughout my term. Area officers, committee chairs, DCMs, GSRs, and members across our Area have made this service experience meaningful and rewarding. The relationships formed through service are among AA's greatest gifts.

As I rotate out, I do so with confidence in those who will continue this work. The future of our Area remains bright because it is built upon members willing to step forward and serve. I also leave with a renewed commitment to remain useful wherever the Fellowship may need me next.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your Area Registrar. The experience has enriched my sobriety, strengthened my faith in the AA service structure, and reminded me that service truly is gratitude in action.

In love and service,

"Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs." – Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 20

August Workshop & Potluck: Keeping Our Money Safe

By Joan S., Recording Secretary
Area 54/Panel 75



Our potluck on Aug. 23 had something for every appetite. Josh D., Delegate, Area 55, moderated the "Keeping Our Money Safe" workshop which was an exploration of ideas only, with no voting.

We had an enthusiastic response from those who attended. Here are some of the ideas we discussed:

- Set a cap on ATM withdrawals and debit card purchases
- Require two signatures for cash withdrawals.
- Provide a copy of the monthly bank statement at every Assembly.
- Have training and onboarding for treasurers and potential treasurers.
- Consider standing for a service position on Panel 77. And if you're not sure, pray on it. A service sponsor can guide you.
- Consider an alternate treasurer.
- Set up text message alerts from the bank.
- On our website, offer complete transparency on our finances.
- Bonding the treasurer. The bonding company will want to know what kinds of processes are already in place for guarding our money.
- Consider regular audits of our finances, either internally or from someone on the outside.
- Make it easy for people to contribute, and show them all the ways they can do that.
- Explain how the 7th tradition dollars are making an impact out there.
- Let's share our embezzlement story with the General Service Office. Josh says that what we went through will be experienced by another area. And if we can provide guidelines on how we go through this, they might even be incorporated into the General Service Manual.

Josh reminded us: "Adversity can lead to unity. What we inherit is what we inherit. But what the future inherits is what we give them."



Nov. 11: Lake County Women, 69th Anniversary,
11:30-2 pm, First Presbyterian Church, 4875 Shankland Road, Willoughby

Nov. 15: Gratitude Sunday, 2-5, 12-Step Club, Brunswick

Nov. 30: District 43 In-person Meeting, 6-7 PM, Grace Episcopal Church 36200 Ridge Rd., Willoughby

Jan. 17: Hybrid Assembly, 2-5 PM, 12-Step Club, Brunswick

Feb. 12-14: 53rd Annual East Central Region Council of Delegates Past & Present, Best Western Plus Milwaukee Airport

Your Trusted Servants Committee 75

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Visit us at Area54.org where you'll find an events calendar, district maps, publications, information about how to contribute, and more.

Our Committee Chairpersons (Confidential)

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We Need Your Talents and Time: A Great Way for You to Serve

If you have a talent you think we could use, and you want to serve on one of our committees, please let us know. We need help with technology, equipment, graphics, proofreading, contacts in the professional community, taking meetings into treatment centers and correctional facilities, working with young people in AA, helping organize materials in the archives, managing our literature, and many more tasks. There's plenty to do when it comes to carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. And service keeps us sober!