

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

January, February, March 2016

<http://www.area54.org>

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"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."

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

A Word From Our Delegate

Greetings and Salutations to all! My hope for you is a Happy Holiday Season and a Peaceful, Joyous and Prosperous New Year. May the sun shine warmly upon your face, may the wind blow gently upon your back and may our path rise up to meet you. May the year 2016 be filled with Abundant Blessings for you and yours.

In September I attended the National Alcoholics Anonymous Archives Workshop which was held at the Double Tree in Independence, Ohio. What an awesome learning experience. "The primary purpose of those involved in archives work is to collect and preserve the message of Alcoholics Anonymous." Bill says "We are trying to build up extensive records which will be of value to a future historian... It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion..." I am grateful that our GSO, Area, Districts, Groups and Intergroup/Central offices have people who have dedicated themselves to this great responsibility. I encourage groups to write and/or update their histories to be included in AA history.

Recently I attended the East Central Regional Forum, which was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There were Presentations, Workshops, Ask-It-Basket and General Sharing Sessions. Regional Forums provide an opportunity for communication with some members of the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, Inc., A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board, G.S.O. and Grapevine Staff. It is an opportunity to communicate/question both hired hands and trusted servants of A.A.

I was asked to be moderator for a workshop and the topic was "Singleness of Purpose." One question for discussion was "Why all this insistence on Singleness of Purpose?" The general consensus was that A.A. has been successful helping alcoholics to recover for 80 years with Singleness of Purpose. It was also mentioned that another organization (Washingtonians) was established in the 1800's to help alcoholics. However they began to get involved in other causes and disappeared from the scene. Bill states "Since recovery from alcoholism is life itself to us, it is imperative that we preserve in full strength our means of survival."



Gratitude Sunday is where we come to come together to break bread, fellowship and celebrate this way of life. The

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Akron Multi-District hosted our Area 54 Gratitude Sunday this year. There was much delicious food and desserts for our consumption. It was hard to choose what to put on your plate as there were so many choices. Plates overflowed and fellowship abounded as our Gratitude Sunday was well attended. We heard messages from two DCM's and two GSR's expressing their gratitude for Alcoholics Anonymous. The Akron Multi-District did a GREAT job of hosting Gratitude Sunday and we are most grateful.

The year 2016 will be a very busy one for our Area. In February we will have our GSR School. In January we will be accepting bids for our May Unity Day and

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GRATITUDE IN ACTION

In this issue of the *Northeast Ohio Recorder*, we focus on Gratitude for our recovery through unity and service. Gratitude in A.A. is a noun AND a verb. The old-timers taught me “Don’t just tell me about your gratitude, show me...” and “Your actions speak so loudly, I can’t hear what you’re saying.”

All groups have a right to a say in how A.A. operates. You express that right with the election and participation of a General Service Representative (GSR). But without that voice and vote, the A.A. group is powerless to participate in A.A. as a whole; “*Every A.A. member has a right to be involved with how A.A. is run through the well-informed group conscience.*”

Speaking of which, our area conscience is best informed when YOU participate in the structure of Northeast Ohio A.A. Before we know it, spring will be slowly pushing winter’s icy blast back from our doors and it will soon be time for the Area Mini-Conference.

WHY SHOULD I ATTEND THE NORTHEAST OHIO MINI-CONFERENCE?

Here are just a few good reasons why everyone, whether you are involved in General Service work or not, is encouraged to attend the Northeast Ohio Mini-Conference.

Exercise your voice and vote in A.A.-as-a-whole.

Don’t let others make decisions for your group! 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 provides 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.

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. Concerning any given service, we ask 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 ... our growth since early times are directly traceable to this cluster of life-giving activities.

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

Oh, and your delegate will be there, too. He’d like to meet you and hear your views on the pressing agenda items of the day. He 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 at your home group? Other General Service Representatives (GSR) and District Committee Members (DCM) have already faced those same difficulty and have great ideas to share with you.

See how your generous contributions are being used to help carry the message.

New literature has been released in recent months, new public service announcements and DVDs, too. These will be shown or will be available for sale.

Where else can you go for \$20 and get three days worth of sobriety, service, and fellowship?

Come find out what you’ve been missing.

~Your editor,
Jeff

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



Area Officer Reports

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the Open House Picnic in June. The November Gratitude Sunday bid will be put forth later in the year.

Our Mini-Conference will be held April 1-3, 2016 at the Double Tree Hilton in Independence, Ohio. This is the Conference where each group has a vote on items that will be voted on at the General Service Conference. Your group's voice will be heard at the Conference, if you send a member. In addition we will have a General Service Office staff member Clay R. who sits on the Public Information Desk and General Service Trustee/AAWS Director William N., both who will give reports. I encourage all members of A.A. to attend this conference.

Also our Area will be hosting the 60th Ohio State Convention August 19-21, 2016 at the Double Tree Hilton in Westlake. There will be Speakers, Panels, food, fun and fellowship. I encourage all A.A., Al-Anon, Alateen and OYPAA members to attend this Convention. Hope to see you at one or both of these Events.

**Calvin L., Panel 65 delegate,
Area 54 — Northeast Ohio**

Happy New Year to all in Area 54:

One of my objectives is to begin my year by looking at and following some of the things alcoholic anonymous is teaching me to believe. These are a few of my beliefs:

I believe - That I can do something in an instant that will give me a heartache for life.

I believe - That it's taking me a long time to become the person my Higher Power wants me to become. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly – it will happen if I continue to do the right thing)

I believe - That I am responsible for what I do, no matter how I feel.

I believe - That either I control my attitude or it controls me.

I believe - That sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

I believe - That it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes I have to learn to forgive myself.

I believe - That no matter how bad my heart is broken the world doesn't stop for my grief.

I believe - That our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

I believe - Two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

I believe - That credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being.

I believe – That the Promises will come true when the talk is changed to the walk... by being honest and humble and always ready to learn. It doesn't matter if a person has thirty years of sobriety or thirty minutes... we are all students and we are all teachers.

I believe - That we will have a spiritual awakening as the result of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. That is "Gratitude"!!!

How exciting to know that life's lessons are unfolding. How wonderful that each day inspires new growth.

Yours in Love, Service, & Gratitude,

**Jamie B.
Area 54 Alternate Delegate**

Thanks to the Akron Multi-District for the great job hosting Gratitude Sunday. I appreciated the abundance of food (Yum Yum) and the excellent panel. I was glad to see so many folks in attendance.

I am looking forward to the Ohio State Planning meeting December 6th in Brunswick. I know you are reading this after the fact. But I ask everyone try to attend these planning meetings. Announcements will be at the Assemblies. I have asked folks to put it on their calendar and find ways to help host the convention August 19, 20 & 21, 2016. The committees include Entertainment, Program,

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Hospitality, and more. "Working with Others Through Sponsorship" is the theme. Many volunteers are needed.

Not to confuse you but the 4th Sunday in January at 2 pm will be the first planning meeting for the Mini-Conference coming up April 1, 2 & 3, 2016. This is not an April Fool's joke. The theme is "Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts". All members of A.A. are encouraged to attend this conference. Please bring a friend. See you on January 24th at 2pm at the Double Tree Hilton in Independence.

Several people tell me that they really enjoyed the Mini-Conferences and liked being a part of the business of A.A. as a whole. Those same people may not be GSR's nor have the time for more activity in service but they attend. This is a great opportunity for fellowship and to be on the ground level of what happens at the General Service Conference in New York. Obviously, I find this exciting. I just want to remind you that the members and the groups are the "bosses" of A.A." This Mini-Conference gives the membership the opportunity to tell our delegate how you feel on the upcoming Agenda items that will be voted on at the General Service Conference. I know we all have opinions so be there.

I recently read the Keynote Address of the Chairman at the General Service Conference in April 2015. I was totally impressed. He summarized the key issues and challenges ahead for A.A. One was that the biggest challenge for the future years is Singleness of Purpose. I summarize his comments this way: How can we be **inclusive** and keep A.A. about alcoholism and help the new person who comes to us. Several other issues included diversity, finances and more. I encourage you to find the 2015 General Service Conference report. Read the whole keynote address and the other Special Reports (including a report on Safety in Meetings) and the actions of the Conference.

Happy New Year and see you all at the Assembly Sunday, January 17th, 2016 at 2pm at the 12 Step Club in Brunswick. Check out the 2016 Schedule and Area Events on the website: <http://area54.org>.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve you.
Susan R., Panel 65, Area 54 Chair

How grateful I am to be able to share with you this thing we call recovery. I apologize for not writing as often as I should. I'm still learning how to manage all of the things I have to do in my professional and personal life, along with all of the things I have to do is your trusted servant. I'm so grateful that you have allowed me to be a part of this awesome fellowship serving as a treasurer.

Before I go any further, I want to give a shout out to all of those many, many groups that are sending donations. Regardless of the amount, it is greatly appreciated. Your donations go far in helping us carry the message throughout the area and the state. So if your group has not already donated, please think about sending donations to all of the four entities which the area is Included because they would be appreciated by everyone.

This past year has been a learning experience for me. It keeps reminding me of what I think I know and the longer I stay involved, I realized I know only a little. In this experience I'm learning new things, tech-wise skills and I'm also learning new business skills. Besides that I'm really learning new people skills. There are times I'm inside my head and I will hear Mary B. or Ola P. sharing something that I need to put in place and I'm learning how to do that today, I am so grateful. Also, I appreciate a lot of our literature, books like "AA Comes of Age" or "Dr Bob and the Good Old-timers". These books shares about the early beginnings and how service structure and other things got started. These readings helps me appreciate this fellowship even more.

As this year races to an end, I really encourage everyone to enjoy the life they are living right now. Embrace the lessons or blessings as opportunities to learn and grow. Find time to do something for someone (and don't tell). Just live your life One Day at a Time.

Love and Service,

Shyrl B.

Area 54 Panel 65 Treasurer

As Mailing Secretary, it is my responsibility to coordinate the items for mailing and execute the steps necessary to accomplish the mailing process.

Items for mailing are submitted to me in advance for each of the 5 mailings each year (January, April, June, September and December). The items are sent to the printer, and after I receive the addresses from the Registrar, I take

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Area Officer Reports

the envelopes to the Presort Printer . I am also responsible to arrange the location and host district for each mailing date for a folding party. Each mailing totals some 1,200 pieces, so it is great to find eager participants to host the folding parties, as well as volunteers to participate in the folding parties.

The behind-the-scenes work that goes on—the meetings with the PreSort people, the emails with the printer, the PreSort people, the arguments with the Post Office, the time spent with the printer, the time spent with the PreSort people, the picking up and dropping off—stuff that no one knows about, that is where I find my personal rewards.

Asking others how to do my job was a humbling and rewarding experience. Asking, "Can you help me? I don't know where to start?" And it amazed me to think they took the time to show me! When I asked for help at the general service meetings to get the folding parties scheduled, I got the whole year filled in short order. It has been very rewarding to be able to go into different districts for the folding parties and meet people from different home groups. It gives me an opportunity to meet new people and share our stories. I also enjoy sharing my experiences about Founder's Day, Dr. Bob's House, Ignatia Hall. I am surprised at how many people have not been to Akron to see these sights or have not experienced Founders' Day.

I want to thank everyone for all their help and look forward to next year. In love and service,
Ron O., Mailing Secretary
Area 54, Panel 65

Let's Go Green!

Area 54 General Service is inviting you to Go Green! Get your Area flyers, information, and an EXPANDED web-only version of the *Northeast Ohio Recorder*. All the information that comes to your USPS mailbox now can come to your inbox.

The *NE OH Recorder* you're reading now is 8 pages long—that's the page limit to keep postage weight within our budget and so that it can be folded to fit in an envelop. But we have so much more Area 54 news for you! The web version of the last issue of *NEOHR* was 14 pages packed with experience, strength, and hope.

Let Ron O., your Area 54 Mailing Secretary, know that you would like to save a tree or three (and save the area some \$Green\$) with a message at mailingsecretary@area54.org

Please note: if you do nothing, you will still get your Area mail by USPS and by email (if we have your email address) as you always have.

Expanded Content (13 pages!) and a Color-Enhanced version of this newsletter is now online at <http://area54.org/NEOHRRecorder.html>

A reprint from the March 1961 issue of Area 74's newsletter, "Now and Then" :

John Donne, an old English poet, once wrote that no man is an island, separate and independent from the rest of the world, but that all of us are part of the same large body of mankind. He went on to say that if something happened to any one of us, all of us are in some way affected. And if someone dies — "Do not ask for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

The same is true for us in AA. Sometimes we think that our own little AA group is the only thing that matters, and is all we need to keep our sobriety. This is not true. No group could exist for very long without the help and guidance and services it receives from the whole world-wide structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. AA is like a vine with one root and many branches. If blight attacks one part of the vine, or if the root is cut, the whole thing dies. Each part is dependent on every other part.

That is why it is important for every group in our Area to be active in Area affairs. That is the only way we can be active, and a healthy part of AA as a whole. It is the only way your group or mine can avoid the likelihood of ending up as a dead and withered leaf on the vine.

The General Service Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Greg T. as the new General Manager of the General Service Office, effective October 1, 2015.

Greg has been A.A.W.S.'s Publishing Director since 2013. Greg comes to this position with 35 years of experience in leadership positions in corporate publishing and non-profit management. He has a strong professional background in the book publishing field, both editorial and managerial. He is a published author and is active in a variety of professional and community associations. Since 1986, Greg has been continually involved in service and has served on the A.A. Grapevine Editorial Advisory Board, A.A. Grapevine corporate board as director and chair and as a General Service Trustee on the General Service Board. Sober since July 11, 1986, Greg is active in his home group and in step and service sponsorship.

Please join us in welcoming Greg as our General Manager.

Sincerely,
Terry Bedient, Chairman
General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous

Corrections

This has been a very interesting year for me. I've contacted people throughout the U.S. for suggestions and ideas. I have contacted a dark District to get them active. I pray next year will be very busy and rewarding for me. Yours in Service Marilyn H.

Literature

In the past month \$57.40 of books and literature has been sold. Gratitude Sunday will be held November 22nd, 2015. All books and literature will be stocked up for that day. If you need any books or literature, feel free to contact me at any time. If you are interested in joining the Literature Committee, you can see me after the meeting and we'll get you signed up. Thank You.

In Love and Service,
David W.
Literature Committee Chairperson

Group Services

The Group Services Committee acts as liaison between Area 54 General Service and Inter-



group & Central Offices to foster cooperation. Group services assists new GSRs at the Area Assembly by providing a post-meeting orientation. Group Services implemented a GSR School program to enhance the understanding of General Service at the area level.

The GSR School Workshop is held the third Sunday in February at the Brunswick 12 Step club. This workshop is open to all GSRs, incoming and outgoing and to all interested A.A. members. It is the aim of the workshop to provide correct information and to assist new GSRs in becoming comfortable in their new role.

Throughout the year, the committee is available to bring the GSR School Workshop to any District upon request. On December 13, 2015 the committee traveled to District 10 (Wooster), to do a presentation. In addition, the committee upon request can arrange for a service panel to visit your district or home group.

If you would like to schedule the workshop or a service panel, or for any questions and concerns, you can email us at: groupservices@area54.org or phone 216-408-0289.

I am responsible.....
Ola P., Group Services Comm.
Chair

There's an old saying that "one man's cake is another man's poison" and it's a sure thing that we don't all enjoy the same things. But we still feel that those groups which don't attend our Area conferences and those members of any groups, who never take in an outside meeting, are missing some of the best fun in AA. To us they seem like people who live in a big house, but spend their entire lives in one room, never venturing into the rest of the house to get acquainted with the others who live there.

AA friends are something special -- they've gone down that same dark road we travelled and we understand, respect, and love each other more because of it. Some of our AA friends we see only once or twice a year, but there's a bond of kinship between us that time and distance cannot erase. As we look at a map or hear the name of some city, the picture of a smiling face flashes into our mind and the thought comes — "that's where so-and-so lives,*" that's part of what those stay-at-homes are missing. We wish more of them would wonder out of the confines of their solitary group and see what the rest of the AA world looks like.

Reprinted from the June 1962 issue of Area 74's newsletter, "Now and Then"



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.

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