

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

MINI-CONFERENCE EDITION

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<http://www.area54.org>

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A Word From Our Delegate

Starting with the first weekend in March, I attended Mini-Conferences at Area 53, 54 & 55 in Ohio.

We headed to Area 55, Northwest Ohio first. I really got a sense of the concerns and opinions of the groups as I sat in on the Finance Committee. We enjoyed the opportunity to get to know the officers and committee members. They were very successful using a Google docs process of collecting the reports from each committee and bringing them to the Mock Conference in the afternoon. We were allowed to borrow their format which we modified to meet our needs.

The second week, we headed to Salt Fork State Park for Area 53, Central and Southeast Ohio Mini Conference. The temperature upon our arrival was 54 degrees. But by morning there was four to six inches of snow and 25 degrees. I found my committee and listened to the discussions and again gained more information and viewpoints from the mock conference.

The third week, we arrived in Dayton. We attended the Area 56, Southwest Ohio Mini Conference. I had an opportunity to be in committee and listen. My conscious was raised on a few of the agenda items. I heard several viewpoints in the mock conference.

The fourth week was our 47th Area 54 Mini Conference. Having had one zoom planning session, one in person planning session and taking some time at the March Assembly to fill in the openings, we presented our conference.

The Doubletree Westlake was very accommodating. We managed to have nine committees and were able to review 28 agenda items. As I roamed the halls and sat in all the committees, I was so impressed and delighted with all the interest and desire to communicate opinions on these agenda items. I heard many questions and discussions on agenda items and the concern for AA's future. I feel that from the Mock Conference I have a solid understanding of how the Area members want to proceed. I am grateful to all the participation.

Many thanks to all the unsung heroes, who stepped in and helped where needed. Our Conference Registrar tracked and recorded everything perfectly. Thanks to our Conference Treasurer; the monies are in order. The Alternate Delegate was flawless and did a great deal behind the scenes. All panel members were over the top in their presentations and whole heartedly worked hard behind the scenes. Standing Committee chairs were active and supportive. Many thanks to all our past delegates for their guidance and contributions. Thanks to all the GSRs and DCMs who came and demanded answers and explanations. Our Floor Manager/Technology Committee Chair was terrific. To anyone that attended that I did not mention thank you for attending and being part of the process to make this conference possible.

Area 54 Delegate 71st Conference Highlights

I gained knowledge and inspiration from the 71st General Service Conference. I was assigned to the Finance Committee. I found myself with a group of people that I did not know but they



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Mixing It Up

We are average Americans. All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as many political, economic, social, and religious backgrounds. We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful.

*(Big Book, p. 17) **

This statement sounds real nice. It comes from the beginning of Chapter 2 (There is a Solution) of our “Big Book.” However, I wonder, “Is it fact, or is it aspirational?” There is another similar statement that a dear friend of mine used to say “We may have come on different ships, but we’re in the same boat now.” That statement has been attributed to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was directing our attention to a problem. The Big Book writers were suggesting a solution.

These statements are recognitions that fall under the broad term “Diversity.” What is “diversity”? What are we really saying when we use that expression? If the Big Book statement is true, why does AA need separate pamphlets for so many different segments of our membership? What is the point of having “specialty groups”? Doesn’t all that fly in the face of our Traditions?

Tradition One reminds us that our common welfare comes first and that personal recovery depends upon AA Unity. Although anonymity may be the “spiritual foundation of all our traditions,” Unity is the overarching foundational necessity that keeps AA from falling by the wayside. It is the basis of, and the first of “Twelve Points to Assure Our Future.” Yet, in practice, we continue to divide our fellowship on the basis of some of the very things that we recognized early on as making us “people who normally would not mix.” Oh, I left out a very important word from that first tradition: “Our common welfare **SHOULD** come first...” That one word tells the whole story. The idea of unity - even in diversity - **IS** aspirational, not factual. That unity is what we aspire to have. It is not necessarily what we actually have.

* When these words were written, A.A. had not yet become international.

The concept of unity in diversity might be contrary to the principle of “substantial unanimity” that we cherish so much in General Service. The idea of “substantial unanimity” (in practice, “super majority”) is imbedded in the 12 Concepts for World Service. It is one of the General Warranties contained in the Twelfth Concept. Again, words are important. Warranty Four actually states “that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, **whenever possible**, by substantial unanimity.” The “whenever possible” part is a two edge sword. On one hand it recognizes that we are diverse; on the other hand, it recognizes that we are diverse! Because of our diversity the considerations of all must be included in order to make “important decisions.” Yet, our diversity may keep us from reaching substantial unanimity and could leave us unable to make an important decision.

These are just a few thoughts that come to mind when I think of the idea of Diversity. As you can see, my thoughts raise many unanswered questions. But on May 21, 2022 perhaps we can have a discussion to begin answering these questions. On that day, the Cleveland North Coast Multi-District will hold a workshop on the topic of Diversity. You, too, may have questions about the so-called commitment to diversity that AA claims to have. Come to the workshop. We might just learn something from you.

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.

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



AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES

DELEGATE'S REPORT

(Continued from page 1)

were friendly and jovial. I was not sure what all was so funny at first but just like coming into AA, I soon learned the language.

We had three items to discuss. It turned out I was the only one that voted in the minority twice. I will share I believe that AA needs to expand the limit on bequests and contributions. I feel that if only one person contributes the limit, then we will at least have that contribution. I discovered that I did not mind being in the minority.

We have the terrific Assistant Finance Director, Zenaida M, as our Committee Secretary. She is outstanding to work with. GSO is fortunate to have her.

From my experience in service, I have learned not to speak if my opinion has been given. I found that I did not speak often even in committee. Somewhat by default I ended up the Co-Chair of the Finance Committee.

I received excellent help from the GSO Tech group as my computer crashed and wi-fi cut out. Each time I successfully logged back in.

I was apprehensive, but when the Conference began I found others with Area 54 opinions. I became more comfortable and discovered my sense of humor was shared by others. There were many Points of Order the last two days. On the last day some of us began to call this the "POO" conference.

As I look back, I conclude that there are differences in our fellowship but much more commonality. The path to keep this fellowship available to anyone anywhere is difficult. Diversity has continued to challenge us. BUT consensus has brought us together.

I look forward to heading back to the Conference and to meet the challenges of the 72nd Conference. I am grateful to be allowed to serve.

Love and service,

Susan R. - Delegate
Area 54 - Panel 71

ALTERNATE DELEGATE'S REPORT

Greetings Area 54.

A busy first quarter of the year! On January 16th the Area Assembly established our annual budget. We also asked districts to host Unity Day and The Area Open House Picnic.

Mansfield OYPAA has taken Unity Day, but we still need a district to host the picnic. It's a fun time for fellowship and a great picnic. we provide \$300.00 seed money for the event your district. The host district would furnish a Park and need some help to cook hamburgers, hotdogs, furnish coffee, sodas, and some other cold beverages. Also plan for a service lead or panel. Members that attend will bring side-dishes and desserts. It will be held June 26th around 1:00 pm. We had a Mini-Conference planning meeting on zoom January 23rd and the weather conditions were treacherous that day. We filled some service positions for the conference. We finished the balance of the service positions at the February planning meeting and the March assembly. Mike A. volunteered to do registration and John D. was our treasurer.

Shyrl B. did an outstanding job with GSR School in February. She passed out candy to participants that answered questions or read and used her teachers voice to get the message across to us students.

I attended the mini-conferences in Areas 53, 55 and 56. Area 55 and 56 held their conferences at a church, and they are 2- day events. They have their voting sessions Saturday afternoon as we do and finish with a speaker meeting Saturday night with the East Central Regional Trustee. Area 53 has the same format as we do at a hotel, and it ends Sunday like ours with the ask-it basket and general sharing session. We are very fortunate to have so many committee chairs that support and attend our 47th NEOH mini-conference, where we also have literature and grapevine sales. Thank you GSR's, DCM's, committee chairs and past delegates who helped make our Mini-Conference a wonderful and informative event. You all have helped our Delegate Susan R. get a feel for the agenda items that she will be voting on at the 72nd General Service Conference in April.

Yours in service,

Tim H. - Alternate Delegate
Area 54 - Panel 71

(Continued on page 4)

AREA REPORTS AND ARTICLES, CONT.

(Continued from page 3)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Area 54's Mini Conference at the Westlake DoubleTree was really a great experience. By helping to plan our conference, I got a true sense of all the work that goes into it. Recently I was also able to attend two other conferences in Ohio and see how they put theirs together. That coupled with this year's planning, gave me some ideas on how we can make next year's even better.

I felt a great sense of fellowship during the conference. We had a good mix of GSRs and DCMs from Area 54. There were many GSRs from my district who had their voices heard by our delegate. By voting and attending the morning conference panels, they not only participated, but they were able to contribute their group's voice in the conference process. We heard from a number of our panel members and committee chairs about their service and how it helps their recovery. There were laughs and some tears and a lot of love in the room. I believe the attendees appreciated the committee's hard work and behind-the-scenes planning which makes the conference successful.

I am proud and humbled that I am able to serve Area 54 and hope to continue to do so in the future. Thank you for letting me help serve our fellowship. And I'm looking forward to next year's 48th annual Mini Conference for Alcoholics Anonymous for Area 54.

Mark P. - Treasurer

Panel 71 - Area 54

RECORDING SECRETARY'S REPORT

Be the change that sparks change.

While attending the Area 54 General Service Mini conference, I was moved when I was asked to speak on Love & Service. When we get involved in General Service and our Higher Power helps us connect the dots to see the importance of having a voice it sparks something inside us. This is when our candle inside us is lit. It is then our responsibility to go back to our groups and light someone else's candle by teaching them about service. They will then light the candle of the person next to them by sharing this gift. We surrender to love and we let our higher power work through others to light the candle within us.

For some of us it may be a bonfire! This is how we say thank you to God and A.A. for lighting our candle and giving us this beautiful life. The 3 legacies of Unity, Service and Recovery are the tools that allow us to do this work and share the love. We spark change and then we light up Alcoholics Anonymous. Thank you for lighting my candle.

Katie S - Recording Secretary

Panel 71 - Area 54

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Trustees' Literature Committee has opened a call for recovery stories in response to the 2021 General Service Conference advisory action regarding the pamphlet "A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic," stating that the pamphlet be updated to include current stories of recovery and a new title that is respectful and inclusive.

The committee is seeking stories of recovery from all African American, Canadian, and Caribbean A.A. members from the English, French and Spanish-speaking Black communities in the A.A. structure in the United States and Canada.

Stories of recovery may include:

- Experience, Strength and Hope
- Steps, Traditions, Concepts
- Ethnic, cultural, gender and LGBTQ diversity
- Diversity of social status
- Sponsorship
- A.A. Service
- Safety & Racism
- Military
- Black Mental Health and Diverse Abilities
- BIPOC A.A. meetings
- Atheist/Agnostics

Suggested format for typed manuscripts is 500-800 words, double spaced, in 12-point font. Handwritten manuscripts should be approximately 5 to 6 pages.

Please include your complete name, address, and email/ phone information on the first page of your manuscript. A copy of your manuscript should be retained for your files. The anonymity of all authors will be observed whether their story is selected for publication or not.

Deadline: October 31, 2022

Email: pamphletstories@aa.org

Subject Line: A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic

Postal Mail: Attn. Literature Assignment, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

On the envelope: The word "Pamphlet" should be written on the envelope and at the top of the first page of the manuscript.

2022 MINI-CONFERENCE

On Saturday afternoon, March 26, 2022, the Area 54 Mini-Conference attendees conducted a “mock” conference to receive the results of committee deliberation. Here is a report of the action taken by the “mock” conference upon the committee deliberations.

ITEMS VOTED UPON BY THE AREA AT THE 2022 MINI-CONFERENCE

AGENDA & C.P.C.

B. Review presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2023 General Service Conference.

C. Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2023 General Service Conference.

D. Consider creating a new pamphlet designed to help C.P.C. committees to reach as many doctors as possible. Approved 55-0

CORRECTIONS

B. Reconsider use of the term "person in custody" in AA literature. Approved 55-1

*Additional consideration to use the words “member on the inside” as this is used in other literature – Be consistent, inclusive, not exclusive with our language.

C. Consider requests to limit changes to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Approved 52-8. Motion to reconsider 40-3. Motion to send it back to trustees 62 - 0

D. Discuss request to make A.A. literature changes slowly and with A.A.'s primary purpose in mind.

GRAPEVINE/LAVINA & FINANCE 1

C. Consider the list of suggested Grapevine book topics for 2023 or later.

D. Discuss the wide-ranging impact the AA Preamble change has had on our Fellowship.

B. Consider request to add a historical disclaimer to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. – No action taken

LITERATURE 2

F. Review the progress report regarding the pamphlet “Too Young?”

N. Discuss the existing version of the pamphlet "Twelve Traditions Illustrated."

R. Discuss changes to the text of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* as directed by the 71st General Service Conference.

S. Consider an update of the book Experience, Strength and Hope -No action taken

POLICY/ADMISSIONS

C. Discuss the procedure: "Process for Approving Observers to the Conference."

F. Consider request to restore a paragraph in the story "Freedom from Bondage" in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

G. Consider request to revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" to reflect shared experience on service sponsorship. Approved 49-1

PUBLIC INFORMATION

J. Discuss Public Information pamphlets/materials:

1. Consider suggestion to revise the flyer “AA at a Glance.” Approved 47-0

3. Suggested revisions be made to the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity." Approved 46-0

4. Consider request to retire and replace the “AA Fact File” Approved 51-0

K. Review request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media. No action taken.

MINI CONFERENCE, CONT.

REPORT & CHARTER / FINANCE 2

D. Consider request to include a G.S.R. preamble in the pamphlet GSR Your Group's Link to AA as a Whole. Defeated 22-18

E. Consider requests that the chapter titled "The Doctor's Opinion" be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition. * No action taken.

C. Consider request that all proposed changes to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* be handled in footnotes. Approved 43-6.

TREATMENT & ACCESSIBILITIES

Review progress report on pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic."

*No action taken.

F. Consider request to revise the pamphlet "The A.A. Group" to reflect the importance of the group as a "spiritual entity" as stated in the Long Form of Tradition Five. Approved 29-9. Motion to reconsider 39- 3. Approved 38-14

* Additional motion to add the long form of Tradition 5 , removing the short form on page 7. Approved 50 – 2

G. Consider request to revise text in the chapter "Getting plenty of rest" in the booklet.

Living Sober, specifically to remove the language "no one has ever died of lack of sleep" from Essay 12. Approved 51-7

TRUSTEES & LITERATURE 1

F. Consider revising text highlighting service roles in the group level in the pamphlet "The AA Group ". Approved 44-1

G. Consider request to revise the pamphlet "Do you think you are different?" to include stories reflecting greater diversity Approved 59-0

I. Review the progress report for the pamphlet "AA for the Native North American".



UPCOMING DATES FOR THE AREA AND BEYOND

NOTE THE DATE

April 10* - Hybrid Area Assembly **Gv Lit**

May 14 - Cleveland North Coast Multi-District

Workshop - Topic: "Diversity: The Color Line, Where Culture and Recovery Meet" Noon-2 p.m. Hybrid; Cleveland District Office, 1557 St. Clair Ave. Cleveland OH.

Zoom ID 832 1361 7438

Case sensitive passcode CNCMD

May 15 – Hybrid Unity Day Workshop & GSC Report (Potluck)

June 10-12 - Founders' Day **Gv**
Grapevine sales on Saturday one 6/11

June 26 – Area Open House Picnic **TBD**

OUTSIDE OUR AREA

April 23-30 - 72st General Service Conference
Brooklyn, NY

May 5st - Ohio State Convention
Planning Meeting in Columbus, OH

* Changed to 2nd Sunday

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

The Cleveland North Coast Multi-District
(Districts 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, and 45)

Presents

A Spring Workshop

DIVERSITY

"The Color Line"

Where Culture and Recovery Meet

Saturday May 21, 2022

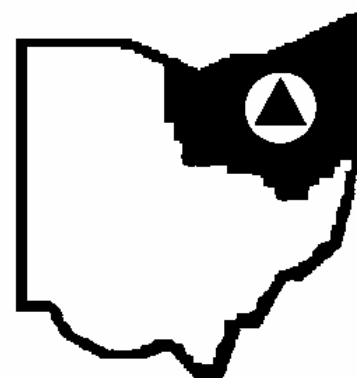
Noon until 2:00 p.m. (Hybrid)

Cleveland District Office

1557 St. Clair Ave NE

Cleveland, OH 44114

Zoom Meeting ID 832 1361 7438 Passcode CNCMD (all caps)



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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