



Area 53 Assembly of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous

**VOLUME 1
ISSUE 2**

Area 53 News

The Area 53 newsletter is published quarterly by Area 53. It is for AA members only. Any opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily that of Area 53 or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

Distribution

A PDF copy of the newsletter is available at www.area53aa.org. It can also be sent digitally to members by subscribing to the newsletter on the website: area53aa.org.

Submit Area news to contact@area53aa.org.

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Area 53 News

From the Delegate

Steve S. | Area 53 Delegate, Panel 69

The 69th Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference took place on May 18-25 in New York City. It was an honor to participate. What follows is a brief sharing of my experience and some of my observations.

First Impressions. I arrived in New York on Saturday morning and had some time to walk around Manhattan. It seemed quieter and less hectic than I remember it. But maybe I'm the one who is quieter and less hectic. There was a reception for the conference members and their guests on Saturday afternoon and a "Delegates-only" meeting on Saturday night. I was uncomfortable walking into both rooms, but in the end, it was like going to any new A.A. meeting. Soon, I was with old friends.

Time to Work. The Conference officially convened on Sunday morning. It was a busy day. The opening session was a welcome and orientation and the roll call of the conference members. The first tough decision for each of us seemed to be whether to answer "here" or "present."

Our two Trustees-at-Large (U.S. and Canada) gave presentations on the World Service Meeting, an annual conference of representatives of general service organizations outside the United States and Canada. It was "right-sizing" to realize to what lengths people in other countries are willing to go to get what is so convenient and available to us.

OUR BIG BOOK

80 YEARS
71 LANGUAGES

On Sunday afternoon there were joint meetings of the Conference and Trustee committees. I was on the Grapevine Committee. We met with the Board of Directors of AA Grapevine, Inc. A great reminder: when I complain about "New York," I am complaining about hard-working, dedicated people trying their best to serve our Fellowship, not a magazine, a pamphlet, or a policy.

Committee Work. The Conference Grapevine Committees met on Monday and Tuesday mornings. There were nine delegates on the committee. Five were second-year delegates and four of us were in our first year. We had four assigned Agenda Items. And we had six hours to do the work. Piece of cake! ... Wrong!

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Ask the Delegate by email, voice mail, or text:

delegate@area53aa.org

(614) 323-1150

From the Delegate

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Items that I thought would be simple to resolve turned out to be unexpectedly complex. The discussions took longer than I expected, but they brought out issues and viewpoints that would have never occurred to me on my own. And we found a way to resolve our differences and arrive at surprisingly wise decisions. This was another reminder of the power of the group conscience. Contrary to everything I have ever learned outside A.A., WE DO think better than I do.

Reports, Presentations, Elections and G.S.O. On Monday afternoon, we heard reports from the General Service Board, A.A.W.S., Inc, and AA Grapevine, Inc. These presentations will be published in the Final Report of the Conference.

Here's what struck me: the business of A.A. is in the good hands of our Trusted Servants and Special Workers. But we need the Conference to be the final arbiter to resolve the inherent tension between practicing principles and achieving short-term results.

We had a field trip to the General Service Office on Wednesday morning. I have been there several times before, but I always leave impressed by the commitment and hard work of our staff.

Election of new trustees took place Wednesday afternoon. The delegate of each area in a region nominated a candidate for that region's trustee. The Third Legacy procedure was used to select the region's nominee for appointment by the Board of Trustees. Only in A.A.: one of the delegates had to hold back her tears – when she nominated her father.

The work of the Conference: Let the fun begin! The committees presented their reports on Wednesday through Friday. These reports were interspersed with a

few presentations and General Sharing Sessions. At least they were supposed to be.

There were 13 committees presenting a total of 105 items. We got through two of the committees and seven items on Wednesday, working around the G.S.O. visit and the trustee elections. The Public Information Committee began its report on Thursday morning. They had eleven items to present. We finished the P.I. session at 5 pm – hungry, angry, and tired. We were just missing lonely.

This discussion disabused me of any hope I had that the Conference debate would necessarily elevate principles over personalities and reason over emotions. Hoping for a mature rational discussion, at times we got emotions on steroids. But, here's the deal: the angriest and most accusatory of us later made amends - to the Conference as a whole. And, the outcomes of the group conscience were, in the end, remarkably rational.

With only one day left, however, we had covered just three of the thirteen committee reports (18 of 105 items.) So, the Conference voted to reduce the speaking time from two minutes to one, skip some sharing sessions, shorten the re-

maining presentations, and work later than planned on Thursday evening. By 10 pm, we had completed roughly half of the committee reports. The rest we got done by dinner on Friday.

We still worked late on Friday because we had seven Floor Actions to deal with. There was some objection to the very idea of Floor Actions, asserting that they by-pass the agenda setting and committee processes. I concluded that while the Floor Action process can be abused, it demonstrates our intense respect for the Minority Opinion.

The Bottom Line. Occasionally, I attend multi-day silent meditation retreats, spending several days in self-examination, prayer and meditation. On the trip home from these retreats, I always experience a remarkable sense of inner peace and calm.

The activities this week at the Conference were as far different from that experience as I can imagine. But the sense of inner peace and calm on the trip home was the same.

Stephen Shelton
Delegate, Panel 69 Area 53
Central & Southeast Ohio

Don't Miss the
Ohio State Convention
August 16 @ 2:00 pm - August 18 @ 3:00 pm
Holiday Inn Eastgate
4501 Eastgate Boulevard, Cincinnati OH 45245.
Registration at aaarea56.org

The 69th Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous

MAY 18-25, 2019 | NEW YORK CITY

General Service Conference – Structure and Process

The structure of the General Service Conference is illustrated by the upside-down triangle, with the groups at the top and the trustees on the bottom, found on page S-16 of The A.A. Service Manual, 2016-2018. The groups, through their General Service Representative (GSRs), elect delegates to the annual meeting – which serves as the collective group conscience of U.S./Canada A.A. In 2019, there were 135 voting members of the Conference: 93 Area Delegates, 27 Trustees, A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Directors, and 15 General Service Office and Grapevine staff members.

This year's Conference opened on Sunday morning, May 18. The Conference adjourned about 9 PM on Friday night – when all the business of the Conference was concluded. Scattered throughout the week were business sessions that included committee meetings, presentations on a wide variety of subjects, workshops, and new trustee elections.

The main activity of the Conference is addressing matters of policy for A.A. as a whole. The agenda items considered had been suggested by individual A.A. members, groups, delegates, trustees, area assemblies, area committee members, or directors and staff members of A.A.W.S. and the Grapevine. Regardless of source, there are “tried-and-true procedures” that are followed for placing an item on the Final Agenda. Background material is developed for each of the final Agenda Items. This year, 75 items – with nearly 800 pages of background material - made up the Final Agenda.

To deal efficiently with this volume of work, each Agenda item was assigned to one of thirteen Conference Committees. [Chapter Eight of The A.A. Service Manual provides more information about the committees and the purpose of each.] Each committee generally has nine Area delegate members, with four or five coming from each of the two panels represented at the Conference.

The committees met on Monday and Tuesday morning to review and discuss their assigned agenda items. The small size of each committee allowed for an extensive review and evaluation of each assigned item. Each committee summarized their conclusions in a Committee Report. Some items became recommendations to the full Conference. Other items became “Additional Committee Considerations,” non-binding suggestions to the appropriate trustees' committee or staff department.

Over the final three days of the Conference, the various committees presented their report to the full Conference. The full Conference discussed and voted on Committee Recommendations. Those items that received “substantial unanimity” support from the full Conference became Advisory Actions – generally viewed as “binding recommendations” to the General Service Board. The full Conference is given the opportunity to question the committee regarding its “Additional Committee Considerations.” These are not subject to debate by the full Conference.

When all of the committee reports are completed, motions can be introduced and seconded by any of the Conference members. There were seven “Floor Actions” introduced at this

year's Conference. One of them was approved with Substantial Unanimity by the Full Conference and became an Advisory Action. The General Service Board met on the day following the close of the Conference and approved all of the Conference Advisory Actions, officially converting them into A.A. policy.

NOTE: A handout from the Conference Report presented at the June Assembly was posted to our website, “area53aa.org.” It lists – by Conference Committee - all of the 2019 Conference Advisory Actions and Committee Considerations.

2019 Conference Approved Literature Process

The 2019 Conference Literature Committee was the most active of the thirteen Conference committees and the outcome of its work will be visible to the Fellowship as a whole. The Conference literature approval process illustrates the workings of the full Conference.

Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous

Probably the Agenda Item that generated the most interest from the Area 53 Fellowship was the request by four areas in the United States and Canada to initiate the process of developing a Fifth Edition of our book Alcoholics Anonymous. The rationale for the requests was to update the stories and make them more representative of today's fellowship.

It was one of the agenda items at the Area 53 Mini-Conference. The background information was distributed to the Fellowship through the DCMs and GSRs, and the item became the topic of many group and district discussions.

The 69th Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous

MAY 18-25, 2019 | NEW YORK CITY

The Mini-Conference recommended, with substantial unanimity, that development of the book be initiated. Feedback from the groups and districts was generally in favor of starting the process, but there was not an overwhelming sense of urgency. The one universal concern expressed was that the first 164 pages be left as is.

The Conference Literature Committee recommended to the full Conference that: "A draft Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous be developed and a progress report be brought to the 2020 Conference Literature Committee, 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.'"

The recommendation failed to achieve the substantial unanimity of the full Conference. While there was significant interest in a Fifth Edition, it was felt that the timing was not right. The critical issue was priorities and resource allocation. Starting a Fifth Edition could divert needed resources from several major technology-based communication strategies that could help us better reach the newcomer through the use of technology. It is probably a safe bet that we will see this item again in 2020.

The Other Literature Considered

A.A.W.S. is one of the largest non-profit publishing operations in the world. All of the publications must be "conference-approved," whether new or revised. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Conference Literature Committee had the largest workload (16 agenda items).

The Publishing Department is charged with carrying out the recommendations of the Conference. To get a feel for their workload, here is a list of the books and pamphlets being developed or revised as a result of the 2019 Conference. Some of these projects were started by earlier Conferences but were continued by the actions of the 2019 Conference.

- New pamphlets in development: pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women, pamphlet based upon A.A.'s Three Legacies.
- Specific changes being made to existing pamphlets as a result of Conference recommendation or suggestion: "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community," "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship," "Understanding Anonymity," "A.A. at a Glance," "Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers," "The A.A. Group Treasurer".
- Existing pamphlets to be reviewed and a report made to the 2020 Conference: "The Twelve Steps Illustrated," "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated," "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic – Never Too Late," "Too Young?," "Young People and A.A."
- All pamphlet covers to be updated to display the G.S.O. website "www.aa.org."
- Redesign of The A.A. Service Manual will continue.

The Conference Literature Approval Policy Issue

The volume of this work and the growing inventory of pamphlets resulted in an Agenda Item to modify the "Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Material." The new policy would allow A.A.W.S. to undertake additional revisions of existing pamphlets – without prior Conference approval – "to keep such materials current and relevant."

The Literature Committee Report expressed support for the "proposed policy and its intended impact to support more effectively carrying the A.A. message" and that the final version of policy be included as background for future General Service Conference committees."

The Literature Committee did not bring this item to the full Conference for discussion and vote. The result was a Floor Action to recommit the Policy "to the trustees' Literature Committee with an updated proposed policy to be brought back to the 70th General Service Conference." The Floor Action passed with substantial unanimity and became an Advisory Action.

Literature is but one of thirteen Conference Committees and dealt with only sixteen of the seventy-five Final Agenda Items. The Final Conference Report that will be issued in late summer will contain details of the actions taken on the other forty-nine Final Agenda items.

Additional Resources

- The A.A. Service Manual – for more information on the Conference structure and process.
- Handout from the Conference Report to the June Assembly posted on "area53aa.org" – for more information on the actions taken by the 69th General Service Conference.
- Stephen S., Area 53, Panel 69 Delegate (delegate@area53aa.org) – for (digital) background material on any of the Agenda items or with questions and comments.

2019 General Service Conference Report

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS BY COMMITTEE

Agenda Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that the theme for the 2020 General Service Conference be: "2020: A Clear Vision for You."
- The committee recommended that the following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2020 General Service Conference:
 1. Recovery – Who is Missing in Our Rooms?
 2. Unity – Practicing Our Principles
 3. Service – Keeping A.A. Relevant
- The committee recommended that the following be the workshop topic for the 2020 General Service Conference: "Attraction Through Action"

Committee Considerations

- The committee ... encourages Conference committee chairs to communicate with their committees before and after the Board weekend conference calls.
- The committee reviewed the 2019 General Service Conference evaluations and noted that improvements were implemented.
- The committee suggested that Conference members be given the option to select the Conference Manual format – hard copy or digital.
- The committee requested the results of the 2019 participant survey be reported to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee.

Archives Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that the 1940s home movie of the co-founders and their wives be added to the Archives video "Markings on the Journey" at an estimated cost of \$5,000.

Committee Considerations

- Avoid gender-specific language in the Archives Workbook, when possible.
- Expressed concerns that including reproductions of archival material being distributed by the Archives department in the A.A.W.S. Literature Catalog would increase the workload of the Archives staff and trivialize the archives material.

Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that the text "They may help arrange hospitalization" be removed from the section "What can you expect from A.A.?" in the pamphlet "Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community."

Committee Considerations

- The committee discussed the progress on implementing a static LinkedIn page and felt that the overall goal ... had not yet been achieved. The committee requested that the trustees' Committee ... revisit the plan for implementing a LinkedIn page and made seven suggestions to be considered.
- The committee requested that the trustees' committee review the pamphlet "A.A. in Your Community" and bring report back to 2020 Conference.
- The committee suggested that a section be added to the C.P.C. Kit and Workbook where local experiences can be noted.

Corrections Committee

Committee No Action

- The committee considered a request for a review of all corrections-related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive and took no action.
- The committee considered a request that G.S.O. establish and help maintain a U.S./Canada database of correctional facilities and the meetings held within and took no action.

Committee Recommendations that did not achieve Conference substantial unanimity

The committee recommended that the Scope of the Conference Committee on Corrections which currently reads: "The purpose of the committee will be to encourage A.A. members to assume responsibility to carry the message to alcoholics who cannot, of their own free will, seek A.A. help" to: "... carry the message to alcoholics who cannot seek A.A. help outside the walls."

Committee Considerations

- The committee suggested that G.S.O. request shared experience from the Areas on tools being used to create local databases of correctional facility meetings and consider its use in a service piece for the Corrections Workbook/Kit to help local areas create their own database
- The committee reviewed the Corrections Kit and Workbook ... and requested that the Publishing Department give priority to pamphlets used in corrections service for publication without staples. The committee suggested nine pamphlets to consider.

2019 General Service Conference Report

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS BY COMMITTEE

Finance Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that the level of \$5,000 for individual bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members be raised to \$10,000.

Committee No Action

- The committee reviewed and discussed area contributions for delegate for the conference and took no action.
- The committee reviewed and discussed the Conference-approved maximum annual contribution to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member and took no action.

Committee Considerations

- The committee reviewed area contributions for delegate expenses, discussed the costs of the Conference and suggested that the trustees' Committee ... provide a detailed breakdown of Conference expenses be included as background when delegate expenses are reviewed every two years.
- The committee requested that additional information regarding statistical information on delegate fees and contribution limits be available as background when reviewed every two years.
- The committee reviewed the self-Support packet and suggested:
 1. The language in the Finance Guidelines mirror the language on how to make a contribution in "The A.A. Group Treasurer" pamphlet.
 2. Include the regular contribution envelop in the packet.
 3. Revise the back of the Self-Support card and suggested seven changes.

Grapevine Committee

Advisory Actions

The Grapevine produce 3 titles in 2020 or later: "The Early Days of A.A.," "Getting Involved in General Service," and a LaViña book "Surrender and Hope."

Committee No Action

The committee considered a request to remove the Alcoholism at Large section from AA Grapevine and took no action.

Committee Considerations

- The committee affirmed Grapevine and LaViña's editorial freedom as expressed in the Grapevine Charter.
- The committee requested that the disclaimer for the Alcoholism at Large section be printed more prominently and visibly.
- The committee reviewed the progress report on the AA Grapevine Workbook revisions and ... forwarded suggestions to the Grapevine office including expanding shared experience and how to use GV/LA as a recovery tool.
- The committee reviewed the AA Grapevine Fellowship Survey and summary and noted the actions the Grapevine Board and staff have taken ... and looks forward to a progress report at the next Conference on further actions taken.

International Convention/ Regional Forums Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that an anonymity-protected photograph of the flag ceremony be taken at the 2020 International Convention.
- The committee recommended that an anonymity-protected internet broadcast of the 2020 International Convention Opening Flag be approved.
- The committee recommended that anonymity-protected video footage with highlights of the 2020 International Convention be produced for maintaining archival footage ... and sharing the spirit and enthusiasm of the 2020 International Convention.

Committee Considerations

The committee discussed ways of encouraging interest in Regional and Local Forums and attracting first time attendees and made seven suggestions.

2019 General Service Conference Report

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS BY COMMITTEE

Literature Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” be revised to add text regarding anonymity to two sections.
- The committee recommended that the trustees’ Literature Committee update the pamphlet “The Twelve Steps Illustrated.”
- The committee recommended that the trustees’ Literature Committee update the pamphlet “The Twelve Concepts Illustrated.”

Committee Recommendations that did not achieve Conference substantial unanimity

The committee recommended that a draft of a Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous be developed.

- The committee recommended that text [describing the Twelve Concepts] be added to the forward of the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.
- The committee recommended that “Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers” be added to the end of the “Open Meeting” side of the Primary Purpose (blue) card.

Committee No Action

- The committee reviewed the request for development of a Fifth Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous which would include a section of stories comprised of individuals who got sober under the age of 25 and took no action.
- The committee considered a request to add information regarding safety to the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” and took no action.

Committee Considerations

- The committee reviewed progress reports on the development or revisions of the following publications and looks forward to reviewing progress or drafts at the 2020 General Service Conference.
- A pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women.
- A pamphlet based on the Three Legacies.
- The pamphlet “Too Young?”
- The pamphlet “Young People in A.A.”
- The pamphlet “Is A.A. for Me?”
- The video “Your General Service Office, the Grapevine, and the General Service Structure.”
- The committee reviewed a progress report on the pamphlet “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” and made two suggestions to increase the emphasis on the importance of anonymity on social media.
- The committee reviewed a progress report for language on safety and A.A. ... in the booklet Living Sober and the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” and clarified that the language is meant to focus on safety at the group level.
- The committee suggested that the trustees’ committee develop a Literature Committee Workbook.
- The committee discussed the draft of the proposed revision to the A.A. World Services’ “Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Material” and supports the proposed policy and its intended impact... (Note: This suggestion generated a Floor Action that became an Advisory Action.

Floor Actions

Motions that the Conference Declined to Consider

- The pamphlet “The God Word” be added as one of the pamphlets used in Corrections service for possible publication without staples.
- The “Alcoholism at Large” section be removed from the AA Grapevine.

Motions that the Conference Recommended to the appropriate trustees’ committee

- A draft Fourth Edition of the Spanish Big Book, Alcohólicos Anónimos, be developed.
- The pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic” be updated.

Motions considered by the Conference that failed to achieve substantial unanimity.

- Production of Language of the Heart in Spanish as an audio book be prioritized by AA Grapevine, Inc.
- That committee recommendations that achieve simple majority but not substantial unanimity be prominently included in the Conference Final Report.

Advisory Actions - Motions Approved with Substantial Unanimity

- The A.A.W.S. Policy on Publications of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials” be recommended to the trustees’ Literature Committee with an updated policy to be brought back to the 70th General Service Conference

2019 General Service Conference Report

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS BY COMMITTEE

Policy and Admissions Committee

Advisory Actions

The committee recommended that to allow time for discussion the "Process for Polling the General Service Conference Between Annual Meetings" be revised. The part of the policy which currently reads: "The original poll will be emailed by 2 p.m., and voting will open that day and remain open for two weeks" will be replaced with: "...by 2 p.m. and **discussion** will open that day and remain open for **one week**. **Voting will commence on day seven at 2 p.m. After discussion closes.**

Committee No Action

- The committee discussed a request to "develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items" and took no action.
- The committee discussed reconsidering the 1986 Advisory Action regarding a simple majority vote by the full Conference and took no action. (Note: This action generated a Floor Action that failed to achieve substantial unanimity.)

Committee Considerations

- The committee noted the change of dates for the 71st G.S.C. The 71st General Service Conference will take place April 18-24, 2021 in Brooklyn, New York and the 72nd General Service Conference will take place from April 24-30, 2022 in Brooklyn, New York.
- The committee agreed to select three proposed dates for the 73rd and 74th General Service Conferences. The committee selected for the 73rd Conference April 23-29, 2023; April 30-May 6, 2023; and April 16-22, 2023. The committee selected for the 74th Conference April 14-20, 2024; April 28-May 4, 2024; and May 5-11, 2024.
- The committee considered a process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss, and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference committee. ...The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference continue developing the process..."
- The committee requested that the trustees' Committee ... develop a process for approving qualified representatives from other A.A. service structures to observe the U.S. and Canada General Service Conference.
- The committee asked that implementation of the 1986 Advisory Action regarding a simple majority vote resume with the 69th General Service Conference Final Report. (It "automatically becomes a suggestion and be duly noted in the Conference Report.")
- Public Information Committee
- Advisory Actions
- The committee recommended that the trustees' Committee ... develop a plan to produce video shorts based on current A.A. pamphlets that provide information about A.A. to the public...
- The committee recommended that the video PSA "My World" be discontinued.

- The committee recommended ... that the "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. members or Potential A.A. members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates" ... be reaffirmed that full-face actors (not A.A. members) may be shown provided that the character being portrayed is not a "potential A.A. member" or an "A.A. member."
- The committee recommended that two PSAs be developed in 2019 at a cost not to exceed \$50,000 for each PSA.
- The committee recommended that text addressing anonymity and safety be included in the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity." The suggested language concludes with the statement "Saying something about inappropriate behavior or calling the proper authorities does not go against any A.A. Traditions and is meant to preserve the safety of all members."
- The committee recommended that the wording ... in the flyer "A.A. at a Glance" be changed from "Sobriety is maintained ... through the suggested Twelve Steps for recovery from alcoholism" to "...through the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, which are suggested as a program of recovery."
- The committee recommended that a progress report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube channel be brought to the 2020 Conference.
- The committee recommended that all current video PSA titles be updated for search optimization purposes.
- The committee recommended that A.A.W.S., Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc. apply for "LegitScript" certification to qualify for Google Ad Words/Grants.
- The committee recommended that A.A. World Service, Inc. apply for Google AdWords Grants for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public.
- The committee recommended that A.A. World Services, Inc. implement Google AdWords for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public and that a report be brought back to the 2020 Conference.

Committee Considerations

- The committee suggested that A.A.W.S. Publishing Department update all pamphlet covers to prominently display the G.S.O. website www.aa.org. The committee also suggested that it may be helpful to include www.aagrapevine.org on the cover of A.A. pamphlets.
- The committee suggested that the trustees' committee explore additional online platforms for future PSA distribution.
- The committee suggested that the "how to find A.A. section of all existing PSAs be edited to include current terminologies that describe how people search for A.A.

2019 General Service Conference Report

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS BY COMMITTEE

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Report and Charter Committee

No Advisory Actions Committee Considerations

- The committee reviewed the progress report ... on the redesign of The A.A. Service Manual and forwarded their comments to their comments to the Publishing Department.
- The committee considered the A.A. Directories especially in light of the new ERP and the Meeting Guide app and requested that the General Service Office explore alternative methods of accessing and distributing the contact information contained in A.A. Directories.
- The committee agreed with suggestion that a new level of privacy was needed in the General Service Conference's Final Report for conference members' personal information.

Treatment and Accessibilities Committee

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended that Ashley's story (an A.A. member who is Deaf) be added to the pamphlet "Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers" and that the video version of the pamphlet be updated to reflect this change.
- The committee recommended that the pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic – Never Too Late" be updated.
- The committee recommended that the trustees' Committee develop anonymity-protected audio interviews with military professionals about their experience with A.A. as a resource, for posting online.

Committee Considerations

- The committee considered revising the pamphlet "Bridging the Gap Between Treatment and A.A. Through Contact Programs" to include correctional activities and agreed with the concept. The committee suggested that the trustees' committees on Treatment/Accessibilities and Corrections consult to review all the treatment and corrections literature to determine how it could be combined.
- The committee reviewed a draft Remote Communities Workbook and agreed there is a need for this material. The committee suggested that a guideline or workbook first be developed for inclusion.

Committee on Trustees

Advisory Actions

- The committee recommended a slate of trustees of the General Service Board that were approved by the Conference.
- The committee recommended a slate of officers of the General Service Board that were approved by the Conference.
- The committee recommended a slate of directors of the A.A. World Service Corporate Board that were approved by the Conference.
- The committee recommended a slate of directors of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board that were approved by the Conference.

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the drafted procedures for a partial or complete reorganization of the General Service Board, the A.A. World Services Corporate Board, and the AA Grapevine Corporate Board. The committee agreed that the procedure needed specificity, offered suggestions and requested that the trustees' Committee bring back a revised plan to the 2020 General Service Conference.

STANDING COMMITTEES

ARCHIVES

The Archives Committee collects, organizes, preserves, stores, and displays records of A.A. History.

If you wish to donate some of your old AA materials, or you would like to be a member of the Archives Committee, Contact the Area Archivist, Tom V.: archives@area53aa.org

CPC/PI

We are too few, at present to handle the overwhelming number of opportunities to carry the A.A. message of 12-step recovery to professionals within the community. We encourage all AA's, and member groups within Area 53 to elect a CPC-PI representative to attend the next monthly meeting, or CPC-PI school to learn more about the Committee and get involved in this valuable service work.

CPC-PI Committee Meetings:

1st Sunday of every month, 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Maple Grove United Methodist Church
7 W. Henderson Road
Columbus, OH 43214

CPC-PI School:

Feb & Oct; same time and location as monthly Committee meetings.

Chairperson: Matt W. At:

cpcpichair@area53aa.org

MINI-CONFERENCE

The Mini-Conference Committee provides oversight for the activities of the Area 53 annual Mini-Conference held in March; conducts the site selection and plans the smooth running of the conference. The **Committee Meetings** are held the 4th Wednesday each month from 6:30-7:30pm. Contact Donna K: miniconference@area53aa.org

GRAPEVINE

The Grapevine Committee assists groups in Area 53 with the distribution and introduction of the AA Grapevine magazine. All Grapevine Reps are encouraged to attend the monthly committee meeting.

Grapevine Committee Meetings:

2nd Saturday of each month from 12:00-1:00pm at COGF, 651 West Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43215. If you are interested in finding out more about the committee, contact the Committee Chairperson, Erin K. at: grapvevinechair@area53aa.org

GROUP SERVICES

Group Services assists new and existing groups and districts to become actively involved with, properly registered in, and effectively aware of the General Service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous and all the resources available therein. Part of those resources is the **GSR school**. For more information, contact:

Dan H.: groupservices@area53aa.org

SPECIAL NEEDS

The Special Needs Committee explores, develops and offers resources to make the AA message and participation in our program available to alcoholics with special needs that limit their access to the full AA experience. The committee strives to establish and implement service priorities for AAs with special needs at the individual, group, district, and area level. The committee does not currently have a chairperson. If you are interested in serving this committee, contact Ed A.: chair@area53aa.org

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

The Correctional Facility Committee assists individuals, groups and districts in carrying the AA message to the alcoholics who are confined in, or recently released from jails, prisons, and other correctional facilities.

CFC Committee Meetings:

Quarterly in March, June, September and December at 10:00 AM. COGF Meeting Room, 645 West Broad St., Columbus, OH 43215.

Contact: Brandi V.:

corrections@area53aa.org

LIAISON

The Liaison Committee is responsible for communication and cooperation between Area 53 and active Intergroups in Central and Southeast Ohio. They establish and maintain communication to prevent unnecessary duplication of efforts and conflicts that could arise as a Result, and seek to keep Area members informed of all Central Office and Intergroup Office activity within the Area. Contact: Barbara M.: liaison@area53aa.org

TREATMENT FACILITIES

The Area 53 Treatment Facilities Committee cooperates with and presents Alcoholics Anonymous to the clients, staff, and volunteers of treatment centers within Area 53. The next **Committee Meeting** is Saturday, August 17th. To attend remotely dial 415-200-1362 then enter Attendee Code 489 1332# when prompted. See the Area Calendar online for more details.

Contact: Erica C.: treatment@area53aa.org

Featured Section: Groups

RESOURCES FOR GROUPS



Check out some of these resources for your Group. They can be found at www.aa.org or aagrapevine.org

The Area 53 Website also contains more resources including registered groups in Area 53. www.area53aa.org/groups

GROUP HISTORY: The Three Legacies Group

Meets: Sunday, 7:00 pm @ Hoge Memorial Presbyterian Church | 2930 W. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43204

In 1987, three A.A. members, Dave H., Dick L., and Peggy F. met at the Desert Island Club to discuss the need for a new meeting that studies the literature of Alcoholics Anonymous. After much discussion, they decided on a rotating format focusing on the Big Book, the 12 & 12, and the A.A. Service Manual and once a month an open speaker meeting. As a result of this format, the name for the new group became The Three Legacies Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. From the start, the group's primary purpose was Recovery, Unity, and Service. The first meeting was held in November of 1987 at the Desert Island Club. In 1991, the group voted to move to Hilltop Lutheran

Church. Around that time, our General Service Office in New York published a pamphlet on the 12 Concepts. The group conscience voted to use this pamphlet to study the Concepts.

In the new millennium, the group conscience made several noteworthy decisions. In 2002, it voted to move the meeting back to the Desert Island Club due to a change in ownership at Hilltop Lutheran Church. In 2005, it voted to move the meeting to Parkview United Methodist Church. In 2009, the group moved to Hoge Memorial Presbyterian Church to return to West Broad Street and the bus line, where it has remained to today.

Featured Section: Groups

Grow Where You Are Planted

Inventories can be a tedious process. There is no doubt in my mind they keep me balanced. Without them I start to feel disengaged, restless, irritable, discontent. This can go on days/months if I let it. "It clearly must be the other man's fault", my mind tells me. It can lead me to take a look at his inventory. This happened recently. But it wasn't a man/woman. It was my home group.

There are numerous reasons I chose this group as my home. I would have gone anywhere these people gathered. The feeling of history and rich tradition in the room gives me a sense of belonging - belonging to something bigger than a meeting that is just keeping "lil ole me" sober. The self-essness that gives to AA as a whole evidenced by the years of service leadership plants my feet in the AA Tradition (p.561).

The group conscious process holds to the 12 Concepts and 12 Traditions values. This takes great patience amongst group members as well as great spiritual tolerance. It takes great maturity. Maturity I have yet to find.

This tolerance left me in January 2019. Something was bugging me. I didn't like decisions being made, I was squirming in my seat, uneasy with format changes, old business, new business... "Get me out of here" began ringing in my head. Resentments building, the hunt for a new home group began.

The hunt was sweet. I felt every new group I went into loved me. They loved my comments, my fresh attitude. I was self-willed and self-propelled into wanting to sign every board as a new home group member. The groups in their autonomy seemed to be so free compared to my home group. Smiles and hugs lit up my life. My self-esteem and ego were bursting open.

Without a doubt my sponsor noticed and it was time for work. My 4th step inventory

on myself and home group gave me insight to my self-seeking, dishonesty, and fearful nature. Picking apart my home group was insufficient to rid myself of my resentments. "The inventory is ours". Ugh...ego deflation. Balloon popped. If I am not part of the solution I am part of the problem. Having an "I think I know best attitude" there or anywhere is going to get me nowhere. Carrying the baggage of myself into another home group was going to do no one any good.

Trusting the process is difficult. Staying with my home group helps me do this. I may not like everything or everyone there but I can practice the principles. Working and stumbling with a home group is a practice ground for life. My home group family has watched me and kindly guided me. They have watched me head down "...alluring shortcuts and by-paths down which they (I) may wander and lose their (my) way..." (p.123) but they are sure to "praise my progress...in a life of tolerance, love, and spiritual understanding." (p.127) I have decided to be part of the solution and stay, one day at a time. They have something I want. I have decided to grow where I'm planted.

Elisabeth H.

Beginner Meetings

Someone I sponsor was recently asked by a mental healthcare provider to start an A.A. meeting for former patients from their facility. They asked for a meeting outside their main location (they already had a meeting there), but still part of their hospital. The request came because they were getting feedback from patients saying that they weren't able to find meetings or get connected with people from A.A. Two questions immediately came to mind. 1: assuming they really are wanting it, why aren't they able to find meetings or connect with people from A.A., and 2: do we REALLY need another meeting in Columbus?

Here are some thoughts as well as other questions that resulted from our discussion. No right or wrong answers or opinions here, but definitely some food for thought.

What is the purpose of the Beginner's Meeting? Does it provide information to newcomers about what A.A. is and what it isn't? Is it to bring in speakers to share their story, and if so, are they sharing A.A.'s program of recovery? Is there discussion of the first 3 steps, or all of them? Do we talk about the traditions and how they apply to us all? Do we read from and discuss the literature? Are we trying too hard to make the newcomer comfortable? Do we need a "beginner" meeting to do this? Are we trying to carry the alcoholic to A.A. or carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic? If the beginner's meeting is segregated from the main meeting, how, after a period of time, are members then integrated into the regular meeting? What tools are we giving them at beginner meetings to help them maintain their sobriety and flourish in Alcoholics Anonymous? Do we share with them our experience about not only how we got sober, but how we've stayed sober? The importance of sponsorship, having a homegroup (and participating in it), and service? If we're taking meetings into facilities, are we providing them with the resources they need to connect? Do we provide them with all the ways we have available to find meetings and talk to other alcoholics?

A while back, I came across an old Northern Illinois Area Newsletter that featured an article by an A.A. member about a Beginner's Meeting they attended and how valuable it was to their early sobriety. I found it interesting because I hadn't ever been to a Beginner's Meeting like this. The structure and format of the meeting is as follows (more food for thought): It is sponsored by a well established group, one that stresses taking the steps under the direction of a sponsor. It meets prior to

continued on next page

Featured Section: Groups

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the regular group meeting. It starts promptly and attendees are expected to be seated and quiet when the meeting begins. Attendees help clean up when the meeting ends. Newcomers are the focus of the meeting and sit in their own section near the speaker. Attendees with more than 1 year of sobriety are welcome, but must sit in the back of the room and generally do not participate in the meeting. Newcomers are there to listen and learn, not talk, although there are frequent opportunities to ask questions about living sober. The meeting is conducted as a class. Discussion topics are based on the

premise that beginners must be told the truth about their illness and include: the disease concept of alcoholism; hitting bottom; what A.A. is (and isn't); surrender and sponsorship; H.O.W. (steps 1 through 3); spirituality and change (and taking the steps); learning to give.

As far as wondering if we really need another new meeting in Columbus? Maybe. But maybe, we also need to take a look at what we already have. Maybe, we might want to see what we can do to help make the meetings we are already attending stronger and therefore more attractive. Would the meeting benefit from a Group Inventory? What about me...am I part of

the problems that make me want to start a new meeting or group? Or, can I be part of the solution that strengthens it?

The difference between a Meeting that meets each week and a Group that has a Meeting each week is huge. There is a community, a family, and a fellowship that exists in a Group that provides a safe place to expand and grow in sobriety.

Resources for groups are available on our area website: www.area53aa.org, the General Service Office website: www.aa.org, and The Grapevine website: aagrapevine.org

The GSR Preamble

We are the General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A. We realize the ultimate authority is a loving God as he may express Himself in our Group Conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship. Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our group and A.A. as a whole.

About the GSR School

The individual Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) group is connected to the world of A.A. through their General Service Representative (G.S.R.). In Area 53 our Group Services Committee maintains and helps to coordinate the G.S.R. School. The Area 53 G.S.R. School is designed for newly elected G.S.R.s, however, current and former G.S.R.s are invited and encouraged to attend and share their experience. The purpose of the Area 53 G.S.R. School is to provide shared experience, and information on the actions the G.S.R. can take, and on the resources the G.S.R. may use to link their individual A.A. group to A.A. as a whole.

G.S.R.s will learn how to provide current and accurate information about their A.A. group to the General Service Office (G.S.O.), and to their local Intergroup office. Also, G.S.R.s will learn how to arrive at and report their A.A. groups informed group conscience to the world of A.A. and the General Service Conference.

Resources the G.S.R.s will receive include a list of trusted servants available to answer their questions, A.A. literature resources that can help the G.S.R. get started in their service position, and A.A. website resources which provide a great many tools to help the G.S.R. connect their group to the world of A.A..

If you are interested in hosting a G.S.R. School at your district or group, please contact Area 53 Group Services Committee Chairperson Dan H. at groupservices@area53aa.org, or 614-301-0424 to make the necessary arrangements. When Dan was asked, "What's the main thought you hope someone attending the Area 53 G.S.R. School walks away with?" he answered, "That they know where to find the answers to their questions." Attend the Area 53 G.S.R. school and learn where to find the answers to your questions!

Website Updates

From Ann B. | Area 53 Website Administrator, Panel 69

One of the biggest updates to report is that we've purchased and installed a security certificate for the area website. It is now **https**. You don't have to enter anything different to get to the website, just www.area53aa.org as usual. We do not collect any money through the website (contributions are made directly through Paypal), but if you subscribe to the website, your personal information is secure.

The most recent quarterly update from Fellowship New Vision, which is the database of registered groups for our area, has been updated on our website.

Please check your group information to make sure it is up-to-date. If not, contact James C, Area 53 Registrar.

We've made and continue to add information for the Groups & Group Services Committee section on the website. It contains information about the GSR school, how to get one set up for your event or district, as well as support resources for Groups through GSO and AA Grapevine.

HOW TO SUBMIT CONTENT FOR THE WEBSITE

If you are submitting something for the website, be sure to allow up to three weeks for your content to be reviewed and posted. In most cases it won't take that long. All files submitted should be a pdf file. If you're having trouble with that, let us know and we can walk you through converting your file to pdf.

Email submissions to contact@area53aa.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS - See the Calendar on the Area 53 website for more details and events

District 16 July 4th Fellowship Picnic

July 4 @ 12:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT
Dairy Lane Park, Dairy Lane Park
Athens, OH 45701

East Central Regional Forum

July 12 @ 8:00 am - July 14 @ 5:00 pm EDT
Sheraton Detroit Metro Airport Hotel, 8000 Merriman Road
Detroit, MI 48174

C.O.G.F. 70th Anniversary Celebration

July 27 @ 10:00 am - 2:00 pm EDT
Central Ohio Group Fellowship, 645 West Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Woodfield Group 37th Anniversary Picnic

August 10 @ 11:00 am - 3:00 pm EDT
MACO Workshop, 47013 State Route 26
Woodfield, OH 43793

Ohio State Convention

August 16 @ 2:00 pm - August 18 @ 3:00 pm EDT
Holiday Inn Eastgate, 4501 Eastgate Boulevard
Cincinnati, OH 45245

A.A. Rise and Shine Group Anniversary

August 17 @ 8:30 am - 11:00 am EDT
Marysville First United Methodist Church,
207 South Court Street
Marysville, 43040

Pleasant Valley Group 73rd Anniversary

August 24 @ 11:00 am - 3:30 pm EDT
Mason County WV Farm Museum, 1458 Fairground Road
Point Pleasant, WV 25550

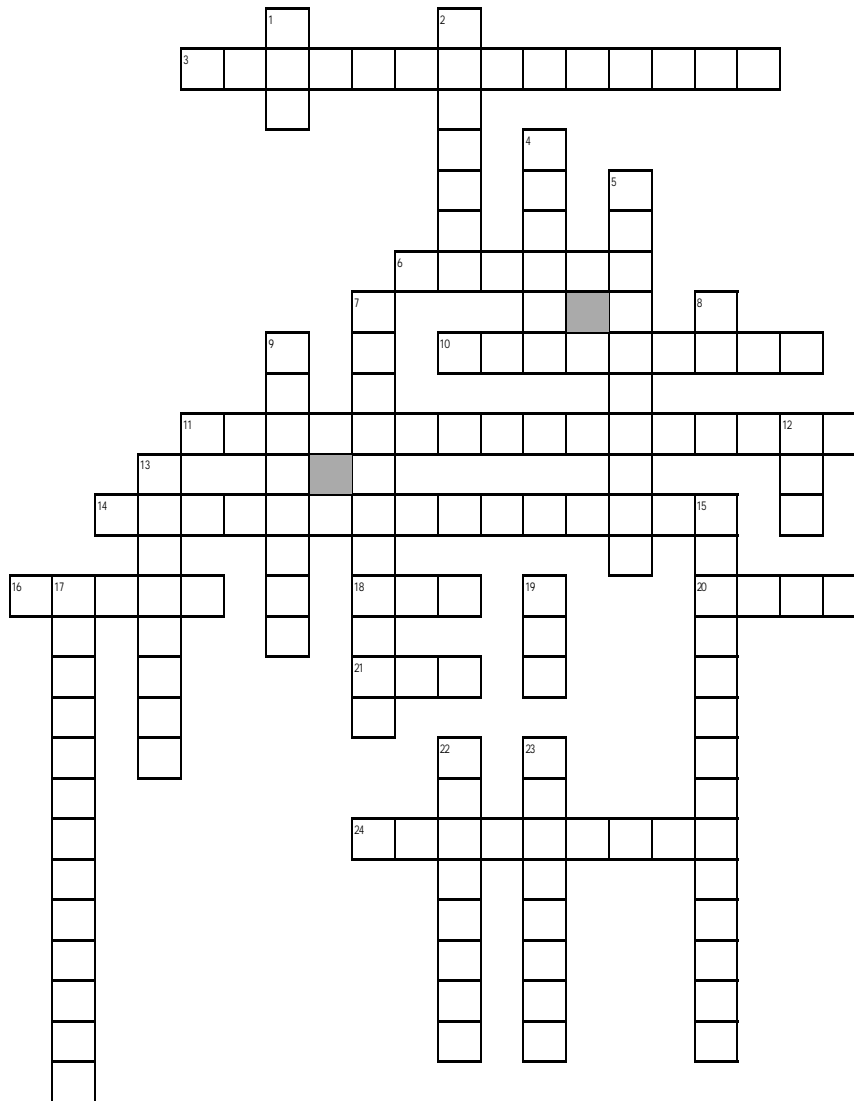
23rd National A.A. Archives Workshop

September 5 @ 8:00 am - September 8 @ 5:00 pm EDT
Hotel St. Regis, 3071 West Grand Boulevard
Detroit, MI 48202

Area 53 Assembly

September 8 @ 10:00 am - 3:00 pm EDT
Holiday Inn Columbus – Hilliard, 5495 Maxwell Place
Columbus, OH 43228

General Service Crossword Puzzle



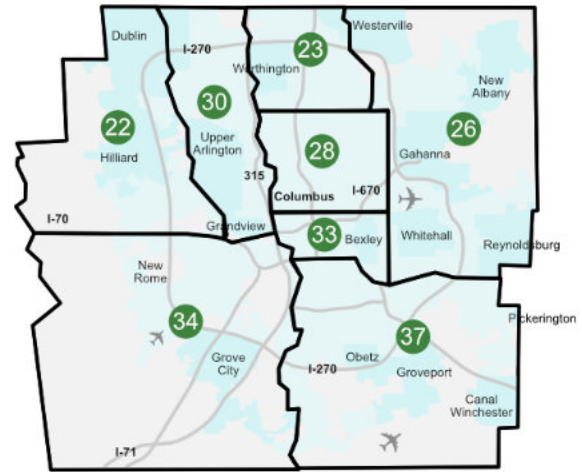
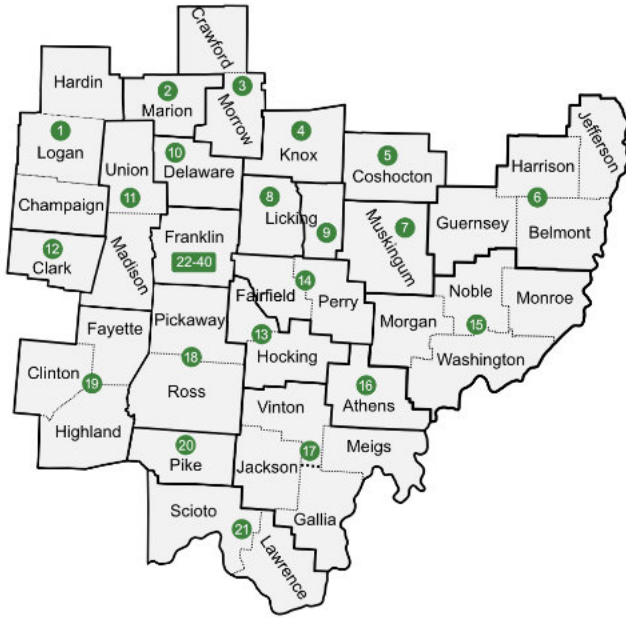
Across

- 3.** represents the informed group conscience of the Fellowship
6. grouping of several areas from which a regional trustee comes to the board of trustees
10. international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous
11. meetings of the D.C.M.s and G.S.R.s of groups in a district
14. movement-wide services, performed by anyone in the general service structure
16. numerical designation that refers to a group of delegates elected to begin serving at the General Service Conference
18. provides services to groups in the U.S. and Canada and publishes A.A. literature
20. geographical division within a state or province
21. carry the message to professionals who work with alcoholics
24. stands ready to step into the service position

Down

- 1.** grapevine representative
2. member of A.A.'s General Service Board
4. bimonthly Spanish-language magazine published by AA Grapevine
5. structure involving committee members
7. the sum total of all A.A. services, from a Twelfth Step call to coast-to-coast and worldwide service activities
8. carry the message by working with the media
9. division within an area, represented by committee member
12. group contact with the General Service Office; voting member of the area assembly
13. represent the area at the annual Conference meeting in New York
15. group, district, area, or Conference meeting in which everyone is invited to contribute ideas and comments on A.A. matters
17. committee made up of district committee members
19. experienced G.S.R. elected by other G.S.R.s to represent the groups of their district
22. spiritual principle of sharing the responsibility for A.A. through changing leadership
23. serves on the corporate board of directors

Area 53 Districts



Franklin County

More detailed information about Area 53 Districts is available at:
area53aa.org

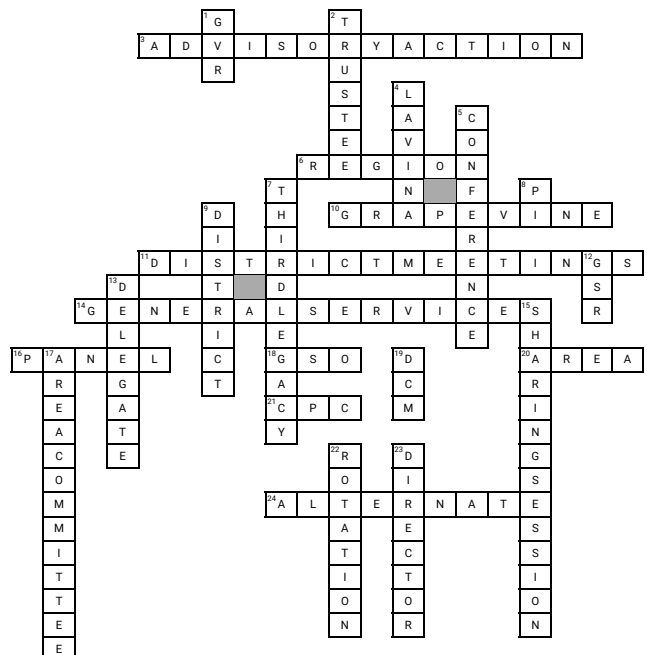
Don't Miss the East Central Regional Forum

July 12 @ 8:00 am -
 July 14 @ 5:00 pm

Sheraton Detroit Metro Airport Hotel
 8000 Merriman Road
 Detroit, MI 48174

Go to www.aa.org for
 registration information.

General Service



Area 53 Contacts

AREA OFFICERS PANEL 69

Chairperson: Ed A. | 740-602-6800
Delegate: Stephen S. | 614-323-1150
Recording Secretary: Martha C. | 614-581-8381
Registrar: James C. | 614-419-2219
Treasurer: Diann N. | 614-595-3546
Web Administrator: Ann B. | 614-589-7625
Alternate Chairperson: Nita S. | 614-395-8703
Alternate Delegate: Donna K. | 614-446-4433
Alternate Recording Secretary: Bruce W. | 614-301-8025
Alternate Registrar: Joe M. | 614-680-1153
Alternate Treasurer: Tom D. | 937-244-1761
Alternate Web Administrator: Dan S. | 614-370-1653

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Archives Committee Archivist: Tom V. | 614-855-2305
Cooperation with the Professional Community/Public Information: Matt W. | 614-579-6584
Correctional Facilities: Brandi V. | 614-632-8773
Grapevine: Erin K. | 740-466-5300
Group Services: Dan H. | 614-301-0424
Liaison: Barbara M. | 740-370-2525
Mini-Conference: Donna K. | 614-446-4433
Special Needs: *OPEN*
Treatment Facilities: Erica C. | 614-537-6620

DISTRICT COMMITTEE

DCM Chairperson (DCMC): Marcia H. | 614-589-1788
Alternate DCMC: Don C. | 740-464-7793

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBERS (DCMs)

District 1: Garwood F. | 937-216-9442
District 2: Contact Marcia H. | 614-589-1788
District 3: Dan C. | 419-985-3112
District 4: Kasie A. | 614-832-2088
District 5: Contact Marcia H. | 614-589-1788
District 6: Jeff N. | 740-632-4832
District 7: Ray C. | 614-373-8195
Districts 8/9: Greg M. | 614-406-8619
District 10: Bill Y. | 614-270-0593
District 11: Brenda B. | 614-795-2108
District 12: Tom D. | 937-244-1761
Districts 13/14: Cheryl A. | 740-215-9691
District 15: Ty D. | 740-995-0120
District 16: Tom C. | 740-742-2017
District 17: Shirley K. | 304-593-3581
District 18: Barbara M. | 740-370-2525
District 19: Terry U. | 937-382-6180
District 21: Mellisa B. | 740-876-3659
District 21 (Alternate): Don C. | 740-464-7793
District 22: Jillena R. | 614-678-4765
District 26: Steve B. | 614-584-4029
District 28: Taffy J. | 614-505-6229
District 30: David F. | 614-867-1587
District 33: Nicholas B. | 614-843-0517
District 34: Kevin D. | 614-206-3368
District 37: Ossian McC. | 614-900-6906