

"We..." E.P.G.S.A. Newsletter

1/15/20

Edition 2, Volume 4

From the Current **Delegate** by Ken D., *Delegate, Panel 69*

Dear Fellow Members November is "Gratitude Month" in our Fellowship. Our 7th Tradition encourages us to be self-supporting. To me that means all levels of recovery and service: from personal to group to district, area intergroup and General Service Office. Through our Three Legacies of spiritual practices - Recovery, Service and Unity - we inherit critical guidance to make our recovery available on a world-wide basis. We can share our resources of time and expertise through service. We can share money by contributing to the basket and having our home group share with district, area, intergroup and our General Service Office. Either way – and I have found that both ways are very important, we are making the message available – a key part of our own recovery and unity with our Fellow Members of A.A. Tradition 7 is gratitude in action. Thank you for all your contributions to Area 59. You keep us financially strong. We are one of only a very few areas in the USA and Canada that fully contribute the total amount of money it costs to send our delegate to the General Service Conference. Again, thank you for your participation and Gratitude.

As for A.A. World Services, the highest organization-wide priority is the operation and maintenance of the new NetSuite enterprise system, which went live Monday, August 5. Overall the system is functioning, but there are gaps and shortcomings along the way. Assessment of the processes and

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<https://rebrand.ly/a59we>

What's Happening at GSO?

New and updated literature has become available in American Sign Language and audio:

In response to the need expressed by the deaf community an updated ASL translation of the *Big Book*:

https://aa.org/pages/en_US/alcoholics-anonymous-asl

and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*:
https://aa.org/pages/en_US/twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions-asl became available in November of 2019.

The *Twelve Concepts of World Service* by Bill W. are now available in audio format.

Twelve Concepts for World Services **Audio Version – by Bill W.**

Give them a listen!

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Area 59 website

<https://area59aa.org/>

governance of the system implementation is ongoing, with more work and focus required from all internal teams, as well as the vendor and consultants. The 2020 International Convention is also a top G.S.O. priority, with registration and housing underway, as of Monday, September 9.

The 2020 International Convention will be held July 2-5 in Detroit. You can get more information and register at www.aa.org. If you are looking for a roommate and open to meeting someone from the Northeast, our region has a person who can help you. Send me your contact info at delegate@area59aa.org and I will forward it to Ken T. who is our Northeast Regional Secretary. He is willing to help with this process.

The Finance committee has drafted a good budget for Area 59 for 2020 which was passed by the Area Committee at the December Quarterly Meeting. We will sponsor two Forums that can be hosted by several districts together at once. Area Officers and special servants can bring news and information about our General Service structure and service opportunities. These Area Forums were successful last Panel and were encouraged to continue at our recent Area Inventory.

It is a pleasure to serve with our wonderful servants on the Convention Committee this Panel. The E.P.G.S.A. Convention was a huge success in terms of registration. The attendance was 810 registered, a number we have not had for many years. The hotel was comfortable, and complaints were minimal. Obviously, there is room for improvement. The Convention Committee will be addressing ways to make the 2020 E.P.G.S.A. as affordable, worthwhile and exciting as possible. We call on all members and groups to keep November 13-15, 2020 open. This will be a voting year; however, we plan for marvelous guests and workshop content. If you have suggestions or questions, please contact Paul M., Convention Chair at convention@area59aa.org.

If your district, intergroup or home group has successful experience assisting the elderly and/or shut-ins, please share it with me. G.S.O. has called for a general sharing on this topic. We are looking to share experience around the U.S.A. and Canada to be more effective in this area of carrying the message.

Finally, I encourage you, your groups, districts and intergroups to call on our Past Delegates as you need for speakers – especially on General Service topics. They have a wealth of service experience and we are blessed to have dedicated long-time servants to support Area 59 – Eastern PA. In addition, our Area Officers want to help you and your groups in any way we can. You can easily find out lots of good information – including contact for our officers and subcommittees at www.area59aa.org.

In Fellowship and Service,
Ken D., Delegate

[LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.](#)

By Sarah R.

"LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A." was published in the Fall of 2018 and is one of our four newest pamphlets. Originally titled "A.A. for the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic" it has been revised and updated in an effort to be still more inclusive and to reach out the hand of A.A. to every member of the LGBTQ+ community that struggles with the disease of alcoholism.

This 33 page pamphlet contains the Preamble, the 12 Steps and the 12 Traditions, a list of AA publications, Where to Find A.A. and a short paragraph explaining 'How it works.' The bulk of this piece consists of 13 stories written by alcoholics in recovery that represent a wide variety of LGBTQ individuals. The stories are preceded by 'Do you have a drinking problem?' "In A.A. you will find a community of kindred folks from every walk of life and 'of every stripe.' For those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ), A.A. extends a helping hand, an open heart, and a life-saving and life affirming program of recovery."

I found the personal stories to be very compelling-the abuse, pain and not fitting in are very relatable, as is the amazing transformation that occurs when we live the three legacies of Unity, Service and Recovery that Patrick talks about in his story. I was moved by all of the authors' resilience and determination to be true to themselves as they grew in recovery. I really enjoyed reading this, and the best part, of course, is that every story has a happy ending.

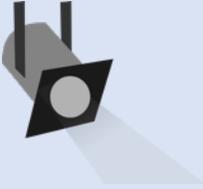
I encourage you to read this pamphlet if you are a part of the LGBTQ community, if you sponsor someone who is, or if you are an ally. If you are none of those, and especially if you "just don't get that stuff" I strongly suggest that you read it because you just may need it for your A.A. toolkit so that you are ready when "anyone, anywhere reaches out" for this lifesaving program of recovery that was so freely given to us.

This pamphlet is available online in English, Spanish and French:

https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-32_LGBTQalcoholicsinAA.pdf

https://www.aa.org/assets/es_ES/sp-32_LGBTQalcoholicsinAA.pdf

https://www.aa.org/assets/fr_FR/fp-32_LGBTQalcoholicsinAA.pdf



Spotlight on District 46

By Kellie A.

Hi, I'm Kellie A. and I'm an alcoholic. I'm from District 46. Where's District 46, you ask? I hope you will ask because otherwise, you will likely read no further and you display a distinct lack of curiosity! In Area 59, you go as far north and as far west as you can and there is District 46. It is the far northwest corner of the Area; as far from Philadelphia as you can get and still be in Area 59.

We A.A. members in District 46 are very dedicated to attend Area 59 functions, because we must be. My minimum drive time to any Area event has been 3 hours. Mind you, I don't even live at the extreme northwest corner of District 46, way up at the New York State border. I drive 45 minutes west just to get to our District Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at St. Peter's Catholic Church, 68 Central Avenue, in Wellsboro.

District 46 is a large district by area. It is technically all of Tioga County and the western half(-ish) of Bradford County, approximately 1,800 square miles. I say technically, because groups from the Towanda vicinity and along US Route 220 up through the Sayre-Athens area (known locally as "the valley") are served through the Sayre Intergroup and meet with District 500 as part of Area 47 in New York State.

What is there to see and do in District 46? The Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, near Wellsboro, includes State Parks with lakes & trails and the Tioga Central Railroad. Mansfield University, in Mansfield, is part of the Pennsylvania State University system. There are beautiful scenic vistas along our winding roads which are different during each season. Motorcyclists especially enjoy these road trips. The entire area is an outdoor paradise with festivals and celebrations throughout the year.

Information available states that District 46 was organized in 1980, but at least one group (Saturday Night 8 p.m. Group in Canton) has been meeting since October 1979. *Note: This is the first meeting that I attended before I was fully committed to getting sober. In 1983, there were 18 meetings scheduled weekly in District 46 (including the Sayre Intergroup area). The district was active in 1993, then went "dark," it was revived in 1998. In 2014, there were 29 meetings weekly, and in 2020 there are 30 meetings scheduled weekly (not including the Sayre Intergroup area). Consistency is a trait of District 46.

Annual District 46 events include:

Spring Workshop in March. In 2019 the workshop topic was the 12 Steps.

Sponsor/Sponsee BBQ at Woodland Park in May. AA speaker, egg toss & AA Jeopardy are featured events.

Bike Ride in Pennsylvania Grand Canyon from Darling Run to Blackwell in July. This leisurely bicycle ride is completely downhill on a 3% grade with a stop midway for a cookout lunch at Tiadaghton and another at a swimming hole, if the weather is appropriate. Volunteers drive riders back up to their vehicles at Darling Run.

Annual Serenity Campout at Stony Fork Campground on an August weekend.

Speak-a-thon at the Warehouse Theater in August. Six speakers share their experience, strength & hope following a potluck dinner.

Border Picnic with NY District 500 in September held at Cowanesque Lake. Joint event with neighboring districts/areas featuring AA speaker, Big Book trivia & barbecue.

Long timers Panel in October. Subtitled, "They didn't drink & they didn't die." Several A.A. members with over 20 years sobriety take turns answering Ask-It Basket questions following pizza & potluck fellowship.

Holiday Party & Chili Cook-off on Christmas Eve. Bring the family to celebrate, followed by an A.A. meeting.

New Year's Eve Party, a great way to finish the old year and welcome the new with sober friends.

Our District 46 "breaking news" is that we will be hosting the June 14, 2020 Area 59 Quarterly Meeting. It's a lovely time of year to visit and there's a very good chance that there won't be snow. We hope that lots of members will come way up here and see what a splendid place District 46 is to enjoy your sobriety.

[This Matter of Honesty](#)

[By Sheila D., Past Delegate](#)

The following talk was given by Past Delegate, Sheila D. during a panel presentation at the 2010 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Antonio, Texas. The title of the panel was, This Matter of Honesty.

My name is Sheila and I am a woman inflicted with the disease of alcoholism. Alcoholism is a disease that lies to you. It tells you it isn't a disease and sets in motion the phenomena of denial. When is an alcoholic lying? When his lips are moving. How many drinks did you have? Two. When are you coming to bed? Soon. Too proud and too thirsty to tell the truth, dishonesty was my only recourse. But that's just the beginning. Vices can build upon vices and a liar may become a thief; a blasphemer, a glutton; a bigot, an adulterer and eventually, an empty shell, barely human, devoid of all virtue, yet proudly and arrogantly claiming good intentions.

Then, by the grace of God, a moment of sanity exposed the great deceit. Flooded with the grace of sobriety, I rushed headlong into the sea of truth and proclaimed to all: I'm an alcoholic, I have a disease, it's an allergy, one drink will set off the craving, and I can't be around people places or things that might trigger a relapse. I must tell you this and more, if you'll listen, for I work a program of rigorous honesty. Some days, I may not have eliminated all of the white lies, although my spiritual advisor states that lies don't come in colors, but I try.

In his Grapevine essay, *This Matter of Honesty*, Bill W. states that “we need to eliminate fear, expediency, and self-deception to make choices which are loving, wise and honest. We must be aware of the tendencies towards self- deception and reckless truth telling and face life situations in which nothing less than utter honesty will do.”

When confronted with certain situations, we must swallow our pride and take the courageous path of truth, despite the repercussions. Our very lives depend on this. Only then will we possess the freedoms outlined so eloquently in the Ninth Step Promises. But reckless truth telling is to be avoided at all costs. Our ninth step dictates that “we make direct amends to such people wherever possible except went to do so would injure them or others.” It is very clear that direct verbal blows are indefensible. But we also injure others indirectly, sometimes, when we spread truths inside and outside of the rooms.

Did you hear what Susie said at our business meeting this month? Well, she brought up some good points about Harry’s attitude and Joe agreed. Make sure you are there next month.

Bill W. notes that “no such abuse of facts could ever be twisted into anything resembling integrity. “And yet, some of us continue to abuse the facts about our own motives by the clever device of self-deception. I am not talking about outright manipulations, but about the subtle rationalizations by which we excuse ourselves but condemn others. Self- integrity? Lying to ourselves? If we continue to take a searching and fearless moral inventory, at this point we are, admittedly, confused and in need of outside guidance. My sponsor, spiritual advisor, and trusted A.A. friends have often straightened out my twisted thinking when my favorite vices resurface.

As dishonesty heaps vice upon vice, honesty can build virtue upon virtue. Truthfulness requires humility, a humility grounded in faith, a faith full of hope and based on love, all of which are indispensable as we seek to be of service to the still suffering alcoholic.

I am what I am, and my name is Sheila, and I’m an alcoholic, honestly!

FYI... Two handy reference “Mini Catalogs” are designed to help folks discover what is new and revised in our A.A. literature and other items:

- 1) [Mini Catalog of New and Forthcoming Items of A.A. Literature from A.A.W.S., Inc.](#)
- 2) [Mini Catalog of AA Grapevine new and backlist books and other items .](#)

“We...” is a newsletter for members of the Area 59 (E.P.G.S.A.) General Service Committee, Service Volunteers and interested Fellowship members. For information contact literature@area59aa.org