



we **newsletter**

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Through the Eyes of Our Delegate: **What's Happening at Our Convention**

Area 59, Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly, performs a variety of services and functions. While each is fundamentally connected to ensuring that suffering alcoholics are reached, there is one primary objective at the heart of it all. We exist to elect a delegate to bring the voice of the groups to the General Service Conference, and to effectively communicate the results of that Conference, as well as the yearlong activity of the General Service Board, the General Service Office, Alcoholics Anonymous World Service Board, and the Grapevine Board.

The delegate and Area officers are elected during even-numbered years at our Annual Area 59 Convention, EPGSA. The EPGSA Convention is quickly approaching, but this will

be an odd-numbered year with no election. This fact does not reduce the relevance of attending the event, especially for GSRs (General Service Representatives). Experience shows that GSRs find the non-election year valuable for familiarizing themselves with the trusted servants that may stand in the following year's election assembly. This is a great opportunity for a GSR to engage in their responsibility and help determine the best possible servant leadership for Area 59.

While that alone is a tremendous reason to attend EPGSA, there are many other benefits of attending the Convention during odd-numbered years. We meet to grow as trusted servants. There will be workshops and sharing directed at all levels of general service experience. All

Area 59 Subcommittees and Officers will offer reports to inform the membership that Area 59 serves. We will hold an Assembly at EPGSA for GSRs and Area Committee members to provide needed input on items that will be considered by the 74th General Service Conference. Area 59 will hold a Pre-Conference sharing session in April of 2024 to take a deeper dive on General Service Conference agenda items, but this Assembly will serve as a great opportunity to get the wheels turning and to provide an avenue for more GSR input.

We have three wonderful guest speakers joining us this year, including our General Service Board Trustee-at-Large U.S., a non-alcoholic Trustee member of the General Service Board, and a recently retired staff member of the General Service Office. These are individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, yet a shared love for our fellowship, and many years of experience with the general service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. Each guest speaker will share their personal story, as well as hold a workshop throughout the weekend to help inform the membership of Eastern PA.

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You won't want to miss the **66th annual** Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Convention & Assembly

Nov. 10-12, 2023

Wyndham Lancaster Resort & Convention Center
2300 Lincoln Highway East • Lancaster, PA 17602

EPGSA Through the Eyes of a Past Delegate: Why it is Important, and How to Volunteer

Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly is the service body for groups in Delegate Area 59.

It is the connection through which groups can participate in AA's wider decision-making and service structure. It is how we come together to voice our conscience and take on bigger service projects that are only possible when groups collaborate.

November 10 – 12 is a special weekend for Area 59 when the Area groups practice a tradition that started in 1958.

The convention and assembly are attended by all Area officers, DCMs, GSRs and open to all AA members.

Home groups should financially support the GSR attending the Convention/Assembly so the groups' conscience may be heard.

In odd-numbered years we gather for an assembly where the Area Officers and Sub-Committees report on their work to educate the fellowship. In even-numbered years we have elections for the Delegate and Area Officers.

Each year we have workshops, discussion panels, and meetings where the voices of the Area are shared.

Do you want to enhance your sobriety; educate yourself about staying sober; educate yourself about service; hear great speakers and have fun?

Well then, please join us at the Wyndham in Lancaster for our annual EPGSA Convention and Assembly. And don't forget to bring your bathing suit!

Over my many years of service the fact that holds so true is that, "the more you give, the more you get." It has been my experience that volunteering denotes unity. Volunteering for Registration, Greeters, or Hospitality certainly enriches the entire experience. So, "when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help...." I am asking for help. Please contact Curt C. at alt.delegate@area59aa.org to sign up and show your gratitude and enthusiasm for sobriety.

Thank you sincerely for the honor and privilege to serve as Chair of our great Convention Committee. Let me know if we can do anything to assist you in any way.

With love,

Pat F.

Past Delegate and EPGSA Convention Committee Chair



Volunteers are needed at EPGSA

We need your help to make this year's Eastern PA General Service Assembly a fun and rewarding time for all.

Give us an hour of your time as a greeter, registration aid or hospitality helper. Be a vital part in our service assembly at the Lancaster Wyndham.

Let us know if you are available Friday or Saturday, November 10 & 11 by contacting our Alternate Delegate at:

alt.delegate@area59aa.org

SCAN TO
Volunteer



We do the business of Alcoholics Anonymous!

EPGSA convention offers:

- ☐ A renewed sense of purpose and energy to carry the message of AA.
- ☐ A greater understanding of issues and solutions to problems we face when carrying the AA message.
- ☐ A sense of belonging and being a part of Area 59, and AA as a whole.
- ☐ Sharing in the ongoing efforts to protect our Fellowship.
- ☐ Communicate the great weekend experience all across AA.

November is Gratitude Month

A member expresses her gratitude to A.A. through recovery and service

In January 2014, after numerous attempts at getting sober over a 2-year period, I finally surrendered. I was released from detox in the middle of a blizzard on Monday night, January 20th, 2014. I was determined to get to the 6:45pm beginner's meeting that night (on a holiday during a blizzard) because I was told that was the first thing I needed to do when I left. While driving to the local clubhouse, I thought to myself there was no way anyone was going to be there! There was 3 feet of snow on the ground, and the snow was still coming down. To my surprise, the doors were unlocked and there were people inside! There was a man making coffee and a woman there to chair the meeting. I was the only person who came to the meeting that night other than them. I felt that they had opened the meeting just for me. I often think how different my life might have been if the doors were locked that night and they didn't show up to the meeting. That woman later became my sponsor and took me through the 12 Steps for my first time.

After going through the Steps, I was told it was my turn to carry the message and to help others by sponsoring them and giving to them what was so freely given to me. It was then that I started sponsoring women and getting involved in service at the Home Group, District, and Area levels. The service bug bit me early on in sobriety, becoming a GVR (Grapevine Rep), GSR (General Service Representative), DCM (District Committee Member), and Area 44 Secretary. I was on fire for service then, and still am. I always wanted to ensure that the program that had given me this incredible life was available for the next sick and suffering alcoholic that walked through the doors of an AA meeting, just as it had been there for me.

I moved to Area 59 in May 2019, and shortly after moving here, I was diagnosed with cancer and would need to go through chemotherapy for 6 months. As an alcoholic, I was already going through a lot of change in a short period of time – changing states, my home group, my network, my coworkers – so to add this big change to it all was very scary, even with years of sobriety! I felt like a newcomer all over again in many ways. I used what I have learned through the program to get me through this difficult time. I learned through the program that no matter what life throws at you (both good and bad), that a drink will only make matters worse. I picked up my spiritual tool kit, put on my big girl pants, did the next right thing, and stayed sober, with dignity and grace. I don't know where I would be today if AA wasn't available to me. I always say I grew up in AA, because I truly did. I came in as a scared little

girl at 27 years old with not much to look forward to, living like it was Groundhog's Day every day. Today, I have a life beyond my wildest dreams (it sounds so cliché, but it is true) and look forward to what life has in store for me. All the amazing things I have in my life today are because of my sobriety and the program I work on a daily basis.

As soon as I was feeling well enough in January 2020, I got back into service work and became my home group's GSR. Service work has always been an important part of my sobriety and it was hard for me to be away from it, even for 6 months. Today, I have the honor and privilege of serving as the DCM for District 24 and as the Finance Subcommittee Chair for Area 59.

"Thank You for Keeping the Doors Open and the Lights On"

Gratitude month is a great opportunity for us AA members to reflect and to say thank you to AA. If it wasn't for AA, I don't know where I would be today. I am grateful for the gift of sobriety and the opportunity to share my experience, strength, and hope with others. As the chairperson of the Finance Committee, I am blessed with the opportunity to see how our contributions are used to not only do 12 step work but to also make 12 step work possible and more effective. I have always contributed to the basket in my home group and made contributions to GSO. I have known about the work that GSO does through reports given at various events, but this year I got to see it from a whole new perspective. In March, my district took a trip to GSO. It was an eye-opening experience to see what they do to help us with carrying the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic.

On behalf of the Finance Subcommittee, I want to thank every one of you for doing your part to ensure that our organization, at every level, remains forever self-supporting. To quote my favorite passage in the AA Service Manual from Bernard K. Smith, "We may not need a General Service Conference to insure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure recovery of a child being born tonight, destined to alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in AA that rebirth which brought us back to life." Thank you all for playing a part in ensuring these things and keeping the lights on and the doors open."

Lauren B.
Finance Subcommittee Chair
DCM – District 24





Area 59 Subcommittee Spotlight: Treatment and Accessibilities

Interview by Jim K., District 67 DCM and a member of Ad-hoc Digital Subcommittee

“Treatment and Accessibilities provides assistance on the challenges which can arise in carrying the AA message into treatment facilities in the area and encourages interest in this form of Twelfth Step work. It also assists groups and districts with practical solutions for those who need facilitating accessibility to the program.”

I had the distinct pleasure to interview Rob C., past chair for the Treatment and Accessibilities subcommittee. I must say what a pleasure it was to hear about all the wonderful and exciting work he and his group of DCMs have been working on over the course of this new panel. The group is comprised of 6 members. Treatment has been reaching out to districts, intergroups and surrounding treatment facilities to get their message out, while ensuring printed meeting schedules and Apps are up to date. As Rob C. highlighted during our discussion, they are focused on “building relationships” with these entities and especially bringing the message of Bridging the Gap to the forefront as well.

They have been working in coordination with Jim L. the Area 59 Bridging the Gap coordinator through all of this. There is a large push to bring Bridging the Gap into a more unified and accessible opportunity throughout Area 59. A big success story has come in the form of creating a well-established database. Patients at treatment centers are given the opportunity to not feel alone in their recovery journey by having access to a name and a contact number of someone they can depend upon when first out of treatment. What a gift it must be knowing of a potential path for success when leaving treatment and getting established in their communities.

**Braille literature has
been distributed to an
Area treatment facility,
while building a working
relationship with the
Library for the Blind in PA**

The subcommittee has been aggressively compiling a list of volunteers of Spanish and ASL interpreters to be available to Area 59 events, workshops, and meetings. A liaison in the committee has also been working with the Treatment and Accessibilities committee for NERAASA (Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly) with the goal of compiling a larger list of Spanish and ASL interpreters from Maryland to Maine. Additionally, there has been discussion and work regarding exploring options of Closed Caption for future Area events and working with Area 59 tech servants.

Braille literature has been distributed to an Area treatment facility, while building a working relationship with the Library for the Blind in PA.

This certainly does not encompass everything that has been achieved or where progress has been made. As with all things in recovery more will be revealed. As long as we keep working for them. And the Treatment and Accessibilities subcommittee sure are an example of what can happen when one fellow alcoholic reaches out their hand to another. And for that we are responsible.

I'd like to personally commend the committee for their tireless work, progress and success. Rob C has been instrumental in my own recovery and a big example of what our legacies can look like as long as we work the program, stay committed to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions and live in all aspects of Unity, Service and Recovery.

In closing as Rob C. made clear, “There is still a lot of work to be done. It's been tiring, not easy. But it's been super rewarding. I've met lots of amazing people and am building great relationships. I've come to see and believe that people really do care.”

Area 59 Officers & Subcommittee Chairs

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Structure.....	structure@area59aa.org
Treatment/Accessibility.....	tf@area59aa.org
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Through the Eyes of Our Delegate

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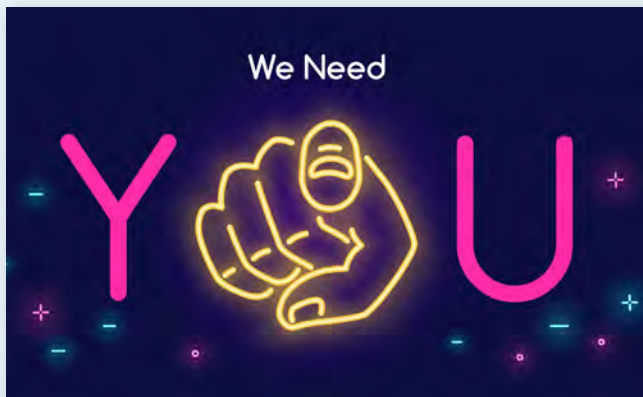
My personal experience with the EPGSA Convention has never been anything but uplifting and positive. I always leave the Convention recharged and more enthusiastic about serving Alcoholics Anonymous.

As a result of my annual attendance, I have developed a wide network of individuals I enjoy connecting with in unity, recovery, and service. The experience should not be missed.

Please consider joining us this November and participating in the remarkable service culture of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Pete B.
Delegate

Join the 2024 Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly (NERAASA) Planning Committee!



In 2024, Area 59 will be hosting
NERAASA in Hershey, PA
and *we need your help!*

For more information,
email Steve O.

neraasa2024chair@area59aa.org

Area 59 Archives

Area 59 Archives Walking Tour

Introduction

Join Area Archivist Donald H. on an informative walk through the Area 59 Archives Display Room.

Check to see if your group has a history on file by emailing: archivist@area59aa.org.

Area 59 Archives



In this first segment, we are introduced to the center of the room which contains (48) District binders that contain the Group histories, in alphabetical order, that have been submitted to our Archivist over the years.

Area 59 Calendar of Events

Calendar of Events



Get in Service!

Bridging the Gap



Our fellowship offers a program designed to assist new members after their release from treatment and correctional facilities, this program is called **Bridging the Gap**.

Visit our webpage for more information and to get involved!

Bridging the Gap

In this section of the Area 59 website you will find a comprehensive chronological list of events occurring within Area 59 and our larger A.A. fellowship.

We also show you how you can add your local A.A. event to Area 59's Calendar of Events.

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Area 59

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GENERAL SERVICE ASSEMBLY
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we newsletter