

# KENTUCKIANA NEWS

## HARVEST!

Artwork by Mike C.



*As we get a few years of sobriety under our belts, we reap the benefits, as described in the Ninth Step Promises. Read on!!*

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## Being Gay in A.A. and Sponsorship with Men and Women

Over the last 7 years I have been in A.A. has included spending time with 2 male sponsors and 4 women sponsors. My sexuality as a gay woman has never been an issue in any of my relationships with my sponsors. Currently I am sponsoring 6 women and again it is a non-issue. I personally do not feel more comfortable doing A.A. with a man or woman. I just need them to be an alcoholic who is properly armed with the facts about themselves to share the necessary experience, strength, and hope of the program of recovery.

I could not get more than 3 weeks of sobriety time for over 2 years that I was in the meetings but not being taken through the Big Book. I was in a living hell and about ready to give up on A.A. It was not working for me! I did not realize that I had not actually taken the steps as outlined in our program. I was just in the fellowship. When I found the man who was to take me through the Big Book 4 years ago like none of the other sponsors had done before my whole life began to change completely.

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*Continued from page 1, Being Gay...*

A whole new attitude and outlook on life was given to me from him. My spiritual experience started in step 1 when the illness was explained to me. I could identify with the mental obsession, the physical allergy and the true unmanageability of my life on page 52 in the B.B. when it talks about my trouble controlling my emotional nature, trouble with personal relationships, fear etc... It was not about material things that made my life unmanageable it was the spiritual malady "untreated alcoholism" it was internal. In the meetings I kept hearing about people losing their jobs, relationships, getting DUI's going to jail and losing their kids. I could not identify with any of that.

Working step 2, I began to be as open minded as the dying can be! Whatever I thought I knew about a higher power and how I fit into this world I let all that go and began to say "I don't know?" So that I could be free to have my own experience as my new life began in sobriety. 4 years later I still say "I don't know?" and it gives me the ability to see different perspectives and keep seeking my truth. I began reading a lot of different spiritual books from authors like Richard Bach, Emmett Fox, Deepak Chopra and many more. My relationship with a higher power has grown into such a powerful life altering and tangible strength in my life. My higher power does not care what gender you identify as or what your sexuality is but how you treat people. Step 1 taught me honesty with the illness of alcoholism and step 2 gave me hope.

When step 3 was explained to me that I had to stop trying to control everything and acting like I know what is best for me was a new concept. I prided myself my entire life on my accomplishments and being independent. Allowing myself to be vulnerable and to let this program and my higher power to guide my life was scary. It still is sometimes. My sponsor told me the truth about myself and my selfishness. It hurt at first and then it was a relief to see the problem and then he showed me a solution-the rest of the steps. It was not until we got to steps 4 and 5 that my being gay even came up. He did not know that about me and he did not care. When we did the sex inventory, we did just what the book said, and it was not uncomfortable at all. We talked about my selfishness, dishonesty and being inconsiderate in my relationships with men and women. Then I got through the rest of the steps very quickly and was sponsoring other women within about 3 months. I have not had the thought of a drink being a good idea since then! That is the miracle of my life.

*Continued from page 2, Being Gay...*

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Today when I think about sponsorship in A.A. I do not give my personal opinion on relationships, finances, medical, legal or mental health. I only share my experience and provide tools that the big book shows to my sponsees which allows them and their higher power to make the decisions. My outlook is to be all inclusive with every alcoholic no matter what the gender, sexuality or gender neutral or non-binary way people identify and just wish to be helpful to another alcoholic. Some alcoholics do not identify as a man or woman and that is ok. I do not subscribe to the idea of a men's only or women's only meeting. I want A.A. to be all inclusive for every alcoholic. My sponsor did recommend going through the steps again at 2 years sober with a woman to gain that perspective and it ended up being such a great experience she became my sponsor and the one I have today. Sponsorship should not depend upon what gender they identify as but just someone who can share all 3 legacies of recovery, unity, and service so that I can have a full understanding of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Kristen G. Owensboro, KY

## What Sponsorship Does for Our Sobriety

Sponsorship has been discussed in several of our newsletters, generally focused on the new person. However, being a sponsor has a tremendous impact on our own sobriety. An impact that the new person can't understand until they have the experience of helping others.

Two sober women have shared, in their own words, how being a sponsor has helped them not only stay sober but also grow spiritually. I met the first woman, Molly, when she was in detox. The other woman, Patti, was my great grand sponsor when I got sober.

### **Molly's Story:**

Sponsorship in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has saved my life and nothing less.

When I got to AA I was given the gift one of the best sponsors in the world and will share what she did for me that has carried me through our way of life to this very day.

First and fore most this sponsor's sacrifice of time and energy on me to say the least must have been harrowing for her. Having said that – it was worth it all- for I am today a sober woman that is a part of her community that allows me to serve it to the best of the ability God gave me. And it began with that first sponsor- that gave of herself for me.

It started when I had around 5 months of sobriety. This sponsor and I were at a meeting where a girl raised her hand to say she was new. The sponsor leans over and says “why don't you go over and talk to that woman. All I could think of was that I did not want to- and how do I get out of this. I did it anyway. My sponsor then processed to tell me to read and re read Working with Others. And the results were miraculous! This new girl started to call and come out with me every night and mind you- I had no car and had to get myself and her to a meeting.

First of all I had to reach out to the fellowship to find rides for this newbie and myself so- guess what – I got to know our fellowship much better as they graciously extended themselves to help me and the new girl. Then I had to go to my sponsor to tell her what was going on with this gal. GREAT experiences.

*Continued on page 5, What Sponsorship...*

*Continued from page 4, What Sponsorship...*

Now-- the girl sticks around and I start to get to share with her about me and my experiences drunk and sober as she continues to tell me more. But here now is what happened- as she start to tell me about her plans and designs...it hits me... that if she does these things she has a scant chance here with us without a drink and for the first time I could remember in my life- I could only think about her with little regard for myself- I was to busy convincing her that the schemes she had were not going to help her stay away from the 1st drink. And in these moments for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in my life of struggling with sobriety could I see how I had done these things and it was a continuum of living the life of a drunk. I actually had a true 1<sup>st</sup> Step experience while sponsoring this gal!

Since then -sponsorship has been the greatest gift in the world. Pieces of my old self have fallen to the wayside and has made way for the Light of God to get through! And this has happened due to sponsorship, self-sacrifice and giving up of self for others.

Being a sponsor means forgetting about my plans and designs- what I think I need.... and I get the privilege of thinking of the new gal and working our way of life with her. There is not enough money in the world that could surpass the extraordinary joy that comes from seeing the light start to shine in these women that were so shut off when they walk in our halls. I have been given the opportunity to serve God and along the way have made deep meaningful relationships with those that stay. It has given me clearer vision and reverence for what my sponsors had go through and ... this could never have occurred without the intensive work with another alcoholics!

My sponsor today is a woman who teaches me more about God and my relationship with Him. I have been given the privilege to work with this blessed person and joyful that she is in my life. After all this time the sponsor is still there for me and I need her. I have been spiritually awakened and continue to have more light shine in through because of sponsorship. May God bless you all. Molly M.

### **Patti's Story:**

My sobriety date is Dec. 23, 1981. I stayed away from AA for a year & a half, before getting sober, because I did not believe in God. A night in jail caused me to surrender to the idea of coming here anyhow. My higher power surrender came soon after. And then one night in complete fear & desperation I did a 3<sup>rd</sup> step & God came to me. A Vivid spiritual experience! From that time on, He guided me, although most of the time being a newcomer, I didn't always pay attention to his plans & tried my own first which usually failed, then I found His were perfect.

*Continued from page 5, What Sponsorship...*

But the one thing I couldn't ignore was sponsoring women. The 1<sup>st</sup> one he sent to me was in a treatment center, she asked me to be her sponsor. I told her I could not because I didn't have a year & I had not done all the steps yet. She replied "Oh yes you can, I asked my therapist & he said it was OK". So, I thought, he is a professional so it must be alright. Our relationship lasted about 2 months & she was sent off to a halfway house across the state. I learned so much in that short time. About alcoholism, my selfishness & a real desire to help others.

She was the first of hundreds, in the beginning all I had to offer was rides to meetings, a real caring & cigarettes. I didn't yet have a sponsor myself, but soon found one so I could take the women through the steps. I believe God knew how much help I needed (because helping others is the greatest way to help myself).

All through the years, through joy, marriage to a great sober man, losses of sober friends, sponsors (who died sober), and my beloved husband of 20 years (when he was ill, it was all the women around me & God who kept me going) God just keeps on sending people to me (I also sponsor men at times). He requires us to do His work & He rewards us well. I have been rewarded so well. I will soon be celebrating 39 years & I have never had less than 10 people to sponsor at a time. This is all for the love of God & the love of AA & the love of service. I cannot imagine it any other way, I believe we must share what has so freely been given to us.

This is now a strange time in the world, with the virus. I have been concerned about AA, but I see, God still has it in control, zoom meetings, phone meetings & in person meetings in the rooms & in parks. He has sent me a wonderful newcomer to energize me & allow the love of God & love of sobriety & love of giving, to pass through me to this young man, as I pass on to him, the best way of life & the freedom of the bondage of self.

One more thing I share with all who will listen, "God is so smart", when we give ourselves to Him, He knows exactly what each of us need and this life that I was given, when I surrendered, is exactly what I needed.

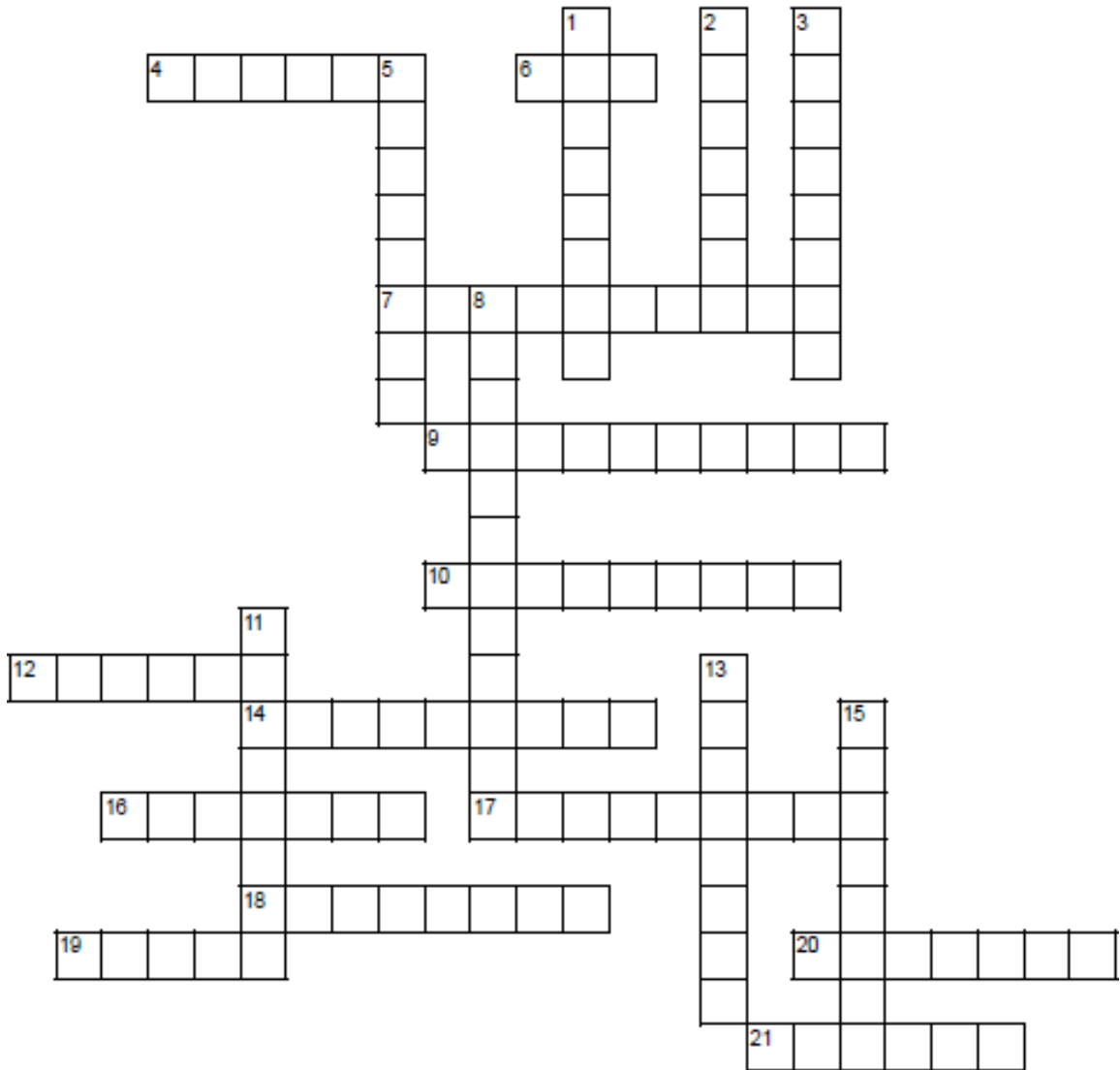
Another one more thing! I forgot to mention that I have a sponsor & she has been sponsoring for 50 years. Her sponsor passed away, but she uses some of us who have a long time & in doing that we keep the program & God's energy flowing for each other.

Patti E. 2250 Group, St. Petersburg, FL

# We Are Not a Glum Lot!

Brian D.

## Crossword



Continued on page 8, Crossword

## We Are Not a Glum Lot!

Continued from page 7, Crossword

### Across

- 4 And the \_\_\_\_\_ to know the difference
- 6 One \_\_\_\_\_ at a time
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ is the "number one" offender
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ before personalities
- 10 We admitted we were \_\_\_\_\_ over alcohol
- 12 the only requirement to become a member of AA is the \_\_\_\_\_ to stop drinking
- 14 On \_\_\_\_\_ let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead
- 16 The main thing is that he be \_\_\_\_\_ to believe in a Power greater than himself
- 17 Having had a \_\_\_\_\_ awakening as the result of these steps
- 18 God grant me the \_\_\_\_\_
- 19 Faith without \_\_\_\_\_ is dead
- 20 You hit bottom when you stop \_\_\_\_\_
- 21 To accept the things I \_\_\_\_\_ change

### Down

- 1 Cunning, \_\_\_\_\_, powerful
- 2 The \_\_\_\_\_ to change the things I can
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ is defined as doing the same thing over, and over again, expecting different results
- 5 Half \_\_\_\_\_ availed us nothing
- 8 Humbly asked Him to remove our \_\_\_\_\_
- 11 made a searching and \_\_\_\_\_ moral inventory of ourselves
- 13 90 \_\_\_\_\_ in 90 days
- 15 Be part of the \_\_\_\_\_, not the problem

Answers on the last page of the newsletter



## Hearing from a Past Trustee...

The man who first twelfth stepped me eight years before I got sober was involved in my first service position. He knew that I was detoxed in a local hospital and once I got out and was going to my first AA meeting on my own, I was walking down the steps to the church basement and I heard his voice say "Mark will do that". I was volunteered for my first service position at my first "outside" meeting. It was a job of setting out about 18 feet of books the group had for sale, AA, non AA and other things. Put them out every week and put them away after the meeting. It got me interested in the literature available.

From there on, I moved to other group service positions – washing ash trays, washing cups, making coffee, greeter and so on. At maybe two years sober my sponsor encouraged me to stand for and serve as the GSR for my home group and he took me to an Area assembly. I was so disturbed by the bickering over trivial stuff that I quit the job and fired him as my sponsor. I continued doing group level service (Coffee, cleaning up, treasurer, chair and so on) plus sponsoring and that was OK for a few years. I moved to eastern Pennsylvania and go involved with sponsoring, plus group and district level service there and that kept me busy and happy serving the district as Archivist, Phone Answering Service Coordinator and even Treasurer, but avoiding anything that might get me to Area level activities.

I moved again to Southwest Ohio and again got involved in all sorts of local activities but there it seemed that the local service organization was lacking. Groups I attended did not have GSRs and when I asked about the District meeting, I got blank stares – no district, or so it seemed. Well I then found my way to an Area meeting to complain about the poor organization and representation of groups in my home district. I learned that my district and many others in that part of Ohio were not represented and the seated Delegate from that area encouraged me to open up that district. I took the bait and got busy, and after 10 years we finally got the district to be truly functioning. I was the DCM for a short while, but then got more involved in area work and served as Corrections chair, Treasurer, Alternate Delegate/Area Chair, and then as Delegate in 2012-13.

I continued serving the Area and beyond after rotating away from Delegate, and did what I could to help as encourage others into General Service for the next three or four years. I remained active in the background all the time – probably most as a Service Sponsor and yet continued in serving the East Central Region (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan). In 2017, the position of East Central Regional Trustee again became open and my home area in Southwest Ohio nominated me as a candidate for that position, and I was one of 14 candidates for that job. The 2017 General Service Conference then had an election for two Regional Trustees that year – East Central and Southeast Regional Trustees. I was elected to serve the East Central Region and Cathy B. was elected to serve as the Southeast Regional Trustee.

The next three years to this day have been busy days with service on the General Service Board, the Grapevine Board, attending loads of Area service gatherings in the East Central Region and beyond, representing the Boards at Forums and other service activities plus going to meetings and doing what I can to stay sober and help other alcoholics. Before this virus hit, I was pretty much gone somewhere three out every four weekends to say nothing of so many conference calls and reading requirements to do my best to serve the Fellowship.

This portion of my service to the Fellowship will end at the General Service Conference in 2021 because in AA service, rotation is the rule and it is one of the most helpful approaches to keep our service fresh and to avoid making any job in AA a permanent job.

I don't know but I'm willing to be that I will stay involved in helping others and encouraging the next servants to keep moving forward in doing what we can to help carry the message of the live saving and life giving Fellowship.

Thanks for the opportunity to share. Your humble and obedient servant, Mark

## The Ask It Basket

Q: What year did AA come to Kentucky?

A: Kentucky was blessed early in 1941 when Jim McCoy, a member of Indianapolis AA Group, was transferred to Louisville. In order to stay sober he began his search for fellow drunks. He found a small group of men and one woman who became known as 'the six regulars.' They would meet nightly on a street corner and make Twelfth Step calls. They met weekly at a tavern on Third Street for dinner to discuss their problems and experiences, In June 1941 they moved to the YMCA to form Kentucky's first AA group. The group slowly grew. In September one of Jim's contacts in Chicago wrote an article that appeared in the Courier Journal, "So You Think Drunks Can't Be Cured." This aroused more interest with a slow but steady growth. In November, the Group was offered a room on the third floor of the Kentucky Dairies building at Third and Kentucky. For several years this space was headquarters for the group. There were ten members struggling to stay sober. Eventually some of the wives got involved and helped the other wives.

In March 1943 Bill W. visited Louisville. His visit sparked growth in AA. Neighboring groups were formed, more meetings began. A Steering Committee composed of representatives from the groups began to serve as an advisory body. Its purpose was to discuss, coordinate and assist in cooperation among the groups and their various projects; to direct the functions of the Central Office; and to assist generally in the development of the Fellowship in the Louisville area. This committee continues to function. The name changed to Intergroup Committee on October 1, 1970.

In July 1946 the Token Club was formed. Its purpose was to function as a space for social activities of the groups. Clubrooms were rented at Third and Main streets in the Vaughn Building. The following years a paid secretary was hired to handle the growing business functions of the Fellowship. In 1948 the office moved to the Realty Building. The Club purchased permanent quarters at 439 Baxter Avenue, The building was remodeled , becoming one of the finest clubhouses in the nation. The Central Office moved here. The Gateway began publications this year here.

At this time Louisville had 13 neighborhood groups and 1 colored group that met weekly. The membership totaled several hundred.

Peggy S.

## Bill's Wife Lois

Bill's wife Lois was also talented in writing and drawing. In her book, *Lois Remembers*, her viewpoint helped me understand how alcoholism affects all around the alcoholic. Newly sober and living on Clinton Street brought many adventures in helping others in their home. Chapter 11, The Clinton Boys, in her book begins with the following poem;

*"Once there was a funny man  
Who lived at 182.  
He had so many drunks around  
Who didn't know what to do.  
He nursed some, he razzed some,  
He taxied some to Bellevue,  
But the funniest thing about him was,  
He really fixed a few."*

## Area 26 Repository can come to you!

The present committee created a PowerPoint that was presented at the July Area 26 meeting.

Email or call the area 26 Archives Chair if you would want a virtual workshop in your District or Home Group



# A BLAST FROM THE PAST



## THE Winner's Circle.

NOVEMBER  
1977  
ISSUE

### MORE THOUGHTS ON SERVICE

It seems a pity that there are members of AA, who upon hearing the work "Service", stiffen up, get nervous and jumpy and maybe break into a sweat and say they don't want any part of that politics or business. Could it be that they just don't want to take on any responsibility in repayment for what they are getting from the group?

Could be! Many of us have been known to have been selfish and lazy in the past, but we should be trying to correct those defects in our character. Perhaps the real reason why so many men and women fail to take an active part in AA is because they just don't understand how this activity will help keep them sober. It will, yousee! All one need do is look around at those people who are taking these responsibilities seriously. They're sober.

Br. Bob, in his brief remarks before the First International AA Convention in Cleveland said, "Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the works 'love' and 'service.' We understand what love is, and we understand what service is. So let's bear this in mind."

When a member says he doesn't want any part of service, he is pleading guilty to an awful lot of ignorance. This member doesn't realize that he has been dependent on AA service for quite some time. How did he find an AA meeting? Perhaps through a friend, his doctor or pastor. Perhaps it was while in a treatment center. A basic part of our service effort has worked for years to tell people what AA is and how to reach it. This must be passed on and we can't do it by just smugly sitting in "our" little meeting. We must be "givers", too, and not just "takers". If all we have is "takers", the well just might go dry!

Alcoholics Anonymous is built on the foundation of love and service. The meetings are the golden links in a chain that binds our worldwide fellowship, where real love and service are put into action.

As individuals we have a responsibility to our group and in turn our group has a like responsibility to be an active part in this worldwide fellowship. How else will we survive?

Our own little group could conceivably disappear - dissolve or fade away. Some people do go back to drinking, move away or die. What would we do if we went to "our" own little meeting and found we were all alone? To whom would we turn?

If your little group could conceivably disappear - dissolve or fade away. Some people don't think that this could happen. Some people think that there will always be a fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous no matter what they do or don't do. But, what if nobody carried the message through Public Information work? What if nobody supported the General Service Office in New York? What if nobody printed the Big Book, the Twelve and Twelve, or The Service Manual anymore? What if there weren't any more newcomers? HOW LONG CAN THE PRESENT AA MEMBERS LIVE?

If your group does not have a General Service Representative (GSR) attending our State Committee meetings, you are being short-changed! You are also letting those that do attend decide what is best (or isn't any good) for AA. What if they got together and decide that only groups that contributed to GSO could buy the Big Book and other literature? Or what if they decided that only groups that send GSRs would be listed in the Directories? Of course in AA we shouldn't worry about "what if's", but what if it did happen? Could you stay sober without AA?

The Kentucky State Assembly held last October elected a new State Delegate, Secretary/Treasurer and Committee Chairman to represent the Kentucky Area of AA. Only 52 General Service Representatives attended the Assembly and made the choice for all of the 220 AA groups in Kentucky. WAS YOUR GROUP REPRESENTED?

Dick G., Editor

Alcoholics  
Anonymous®  
www.aa.org

## General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10115 / Telephone: (212) 870-3400

Please direct all  
communications to:

P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163  
Fax: (212) 870-3003

### MEMORANDUM

Date: August 20, 2020

**To:** General Service Conference Members, Accessibilities Committee chairs, Cooperation with the Elder Community Committee chairs  
**From:** Irene D., secretary, trustees' Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities Committee  
**Re:** Reopening of call for stories to update the pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic"

The Conference Treatment and Accessibilities committee reviewed the progress report on updating the pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic." The committee noted that the submitted stories did not indicate a broad and diverse representation of A.A. experience and suggested a reopened call for stories based on the following experiences provided by trustees' C.P.C./Treatment and Accessibilities Committees:

- Ethnic, cultural and LGBTQ communities
- Lifestyle diversity
- Got sober later in life
- Veterans from the Vietnam War or later
- Hearing loss or mobility issues
- Online or telephone A.A. meetings
- Dementia or Alzheimer mental health issues
- Spiritual pathways

Typed manuscripts should be 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. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not their story is selected for publication.

Please email your sharing to: [access@aa.org](mailto:access@aa.org) and type "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic" in the subject line of the message. Or, you may mail your sharing to: Access Assignment, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

The deadline for submissions is December 15, 2020.

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- G.S.O. in New York is continuing to support all levels of service. Literature still needs to be published and distributed, calls need to be answered, online platforms still need to be updated, and support operations sustained.

In an effort to keep the membership informed during this challenging time we would like to share a brief three-minute video update from Leslie B [REDACTED], the Class A (nonalcoholic) treasurer of our General Service Board.



Please feel free to pass this information along to members and groups in your Area to watch on their own time or to play before their online meetings.

We are so grateful for your time and attention, your dedicated service and – always – your generous support.

Yours sincerely, in fellowship,

G. Gregory T. [REDACTED]  
General Manager

## Kentuckiana Newsletter Information:

The Kentuckiana Newsletter is for all A.A. members. The newsletter includes both articles written by people like you and some fun and information about what is going on in Area 26. We are always looking for articles from individuals in the fellowship. A general guideline for length of articles is about 500 words. Please share your experience, strength, hope, jokes and thoughts with all of us.

The Committee meetings are held during Area 26 quarterly business meeting weekends. All AA members are welcome to participate. If you would like to write an article or would like us to know about an event coming up in your home group or district, please contact the Chair, Melanie P. at [Kentuckiana@area26.net](mailto:Kentuckiana@area26.net).

## We Are Not a Glum Lot Answers

