

# KENTUCKIANA NEWS

## AWAKEN!



*Becoming sober may feel like coming out of hibernation...without alcohol your mind and body woke up to a new day... then comes a new level of awakening... when you ore introduced to service work.*

### How Can I Be of Service?

*For me, I had to learn what being of service was. Being of service was putting others needs before mine and in doing so I saw that my needs were met. I experienced the extreme joy of being a part of instead of apartfrom.*

My first type of service work was for my home group, to be there when needed and do whatever I could to make my home group a place where people could come and learn about alcoholism; see the fellowship and want to be a part of it.

Being a General Service Representative (GSR) for my home group was very humbling. I had to accept what the home group wanted even when I disagreed. To be of service as a GSR meant that I was the voice of our home group, voting yea or nay for the group on M matters. Being a GSR taught me to grow up and be one of many in our fellowship.

I became an Alternate District Committee Member (DCM) when I moved to Ashland KY. I had held other positions at the district level in St Petersburg, FL and had been to a couple of area assemblies in FL. I was nominated to be ACM at my second district meeting in Ashland and a new learning process began. First, if the DCM couldn't make it to an assembly or conference, I was to be there if possible. Second, I was to have GSR Sharing meetings monthly to keep GSRs informed of happenings in Area 26 and report back to the DCM what the groups had relayed to me.

I am now the DCM for District 23. I will continue to have GSR **Sh g** meetings and try to visit as many groups as I can each month. I am learning to be accountable to my district and to AA more each day, and for that I am extremely grateful. *Yours in Service, Curtis O. DCM District 23*

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## Awakening in Service

It is very easy for me to recall my beginnings in service work - not just things like setting up and putting away chairs, making coffee - I mean general service work. My homegroup was without a General Service Rep (GSR) for a little while, and a question was asked at a group conscience meeting to which no one had the answer. My sponsor decided that I was to be the group's GSR - he told me simply to be at a certain place at 6:30 on the first Wednesday of the month.

I am sure I am like many people in M - I was scared. There was this huge weight of responsibility, this feeling that I was not worthy of being a 'trusted servant'. Also, I had no idea what was expected of me, other than reading some pamphlets, and letting my alcoholic mind go to all sorts of incorrect assumptions.

I have to admit that while I was and still continue to work a program, I didn't feel like I was 'in the middle' of M. I love my sobriety, and all the gifts that come with working a program - but I also felt like I should be doing more.

So I went. I walked into a district meeting where I knew absolutely no one. Fortunately for me, every single person there was welcoming, helpful, and glad I was there. I took notes, paid attention to everything and survived my first district meeting. My first impression after that meeting was that I was perfectly comfortable there - I understood things like business meetings, Robert's Rules of Order, meeting minutes, etc. It wasn't at all scary, and nothing like my over-thinking mind thought it would be.

After a few months of going to district, and sharing things with my homegroup, a strange thing began to happen. I started to see where I was a benefit to other people in M - my homegroup and my district. Not only was I feeling much more useful, but it really started expanding my program and the things that I thought about, shared in meetings, and shared with other alcoholics. It also encouraged me to go to meetings that I would not have otherwise gone to, talk to other Ms that I would not have had the opportunity to get to know, and go to more general service-related functions. I was truly beginning to awaken into service - and it has been an invaluable part of my sobriety.

I have continued to say Yes when I am asked to do things in service work, and I have had the great privilege to attend Area meetings and assemblies, workshops, and use my skillsets to help others in general service.

All because my sponsor told me to go to a district meeting - and I did.  
*Yours in Service, Brian D*

From Area 26 Archive... The World Is Coming to a Beginning!



# TheKentuckiana News

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## Growing a Fellowship

Moving to Ashland KY, I experienced M culture shock. I had no idea of how spoiled I was, how much I took my old fellowship for granted. You see, I came from a district where there were lots of meetings, a strong service structure and a strong fellowship. Actually, one of the men described it as a fellowship AND a womanship. The womanship was a force to be reckoned with and very protective of new women. We traveled in groups to various meetings as well as to assemblies, retreats and conventions.

Sober men in my home district told me that there were very few women with time who sponsored. Almost immediately, my service sponsor got an O.M.G. email from me. Her answer was for me to be a sober example and that, over a period of time, change would come. Within a month, I was sponsoring 3 women, then 4, then 5. AA milestones were recognized with special coins and small gifts. Sometimes, we would meet for lunch. The ladies came to my home for step work.

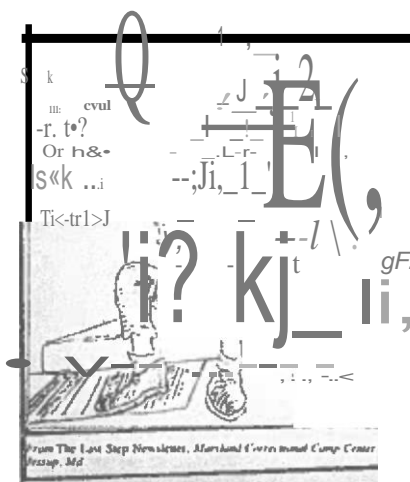
The women that I sponsor, sponsor other women. Soon, my home group-a women's group-was celebrating AA birthdays with cupcakes and cards. More and more, sober women were spending time with each other.

Did I do anything special? No, I only carried the message as it was given to me and followed the example of my sponsor and other good sober women.

We have a wonderful program of recovery but you can't call a program at 2 am. The fellowship is about the love that only one alcoholic can have for another.

About those special coins-usually, we passed coins down from sponsor to sponsee. They could be quite old, going from generation to generation and have what we called "mummy dust". You can't see mummy dust but you can feel it. If a coin was new, it was passed from woman to woman, held and a prayer said for the woman receiving the coin. The new coin now is covered in "mummy dust".

*Yours in Service, Berenice O. Treasurer, District 23*



## Speaking to Our Delegate

While attending the Kentucky State Convention in Bowling Green, Kentucky, I had the privilege of speaking with our Panel 70 Delegate, Mary F. Mary's sobriety date is July 17, 1994. She is passionate about Alcoholics Anonymous and about general service.

I really only asked Mary one question, "How soon after sobriety did you get in to service?"

She shared the following: "My sponsor did not get me into service. It was a natural inclination for me to do service work. In my first home group I set up chairs, made coffee. I then served as an Intergroup Representative (IGR) a couple times and moved from there to becoming the General Service Rep (GSR) for my home group. I was involved in other service work outside of AA too."

Mary got involved early in her sobriety, but says she really got serious about service work in 2014 when she was asked to be the District Committee Member (DCM). This was the first time she took seriously her responsibility to take care of the program that took care of her.

"It is a huge attraction to see people passionate and committed to AA service at the local and national levels."

Mary believes it's important to get Sponsees into service early on - some will take to it and some will not, but she asks all of her Sponsees to do something for their home group.

At the Transition meeting held in December last year, the officers and committee chairs from the Panel 69 transferred their knowledge and resources to the newly elected officers and committee chairs. The new officers shared their vision for the next two years. Their passion and commitment were evident in the Big Bold Ideas they shared with the rest of us. I asked Mary to expand on the goals she shared that day.

Mary believes improving communication between the a and the GSRs is critical for involving home groups in carrying the message more effectively. She reached out to other areas in the USA to see how they were meeting this challenge. *Continued on page 6 Speaki.ng to our Delegate.*

*Continued from page 5 Speaking to our Delegate.*

She learned Tennessee is doing a great job connecting with GSRs and they and some other areas use "mock conferences" as one way of communicating and engaging GSRs in the important work of providing direction to Delegates attending the General Service Conference.

Having GSRs actively discussing GSC agenda topics and taking these questions back to their home groups for input, as part of the mock conference process, changes their involvement from being passive to active participants at the general service level of AA. The home groups are better informed, have more skin in the game, and the Delegate heads to the GSC better informed of how to best represent his or her area.

Mostly, Mary wants to create better relationships and communication with the GSRs of Area 26. The mock conference is just one avenue for how she will accomplish this goal in the next two years.

We ran out of time as the next workshop at the KY State Convention was about to begin. I walked away from our conversation being inspired by who Mary Ferguson is and what she does to carry the message to still-suffering alcoholics. *Yours in service, Melanie P.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

<p><b>Area 26 Pre-Conference Report</b>                  When: April 4th, 2020; starts at 10AM                  Where: Crossroads Church, 828 Heights Blvd, Florence, KY 41042</p>	<p><b>29th Falls City Convention "A Vision for You"</b>                  When: October 9-10                  Where: Saffin Center, Holy Family Church, 3926 Poplar Level Road, Louisville, KY                  Contact Anthony</p>
<p><b>Pre-Conference Panel</b>                  When: April 11, 2020; 1:30-4:30 pm                  Where: Grayson Recovery Center, 400 Stevens Blvd., Grayson, KY 41143                  Contact Connie C or Curtis O.</p>	<p><b>Southeast Region Forum 2020</b>                  When: December 4-6, 2020                  Where: Golden Nugget Biloxi Waterfront Hotel, Biloxi, Mississippi</p>
<p><b>67th Indiana. State Convention "2020 - A Vision for Unity"</b>                  When: April 17-19, 2020                  Where: French Lick Resort 8670 W. State Rd. 56, French Lick, IN                  Contact <b>Nick R.</b></p>	<p><b>17th Annual Kentucky Man-to-Man Men's Retreat</b>                  When: December 4, 5 &amp; 6, 2020                  Where: Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St., Anthony Drive, Mt. St. Francis, IN 47146                  www.ketnuckvmantoman.com</p>

## Errata

In the Winter 2019 Edition of the Kentuckiana News, a portion of the final joke on page 11 was cut off and was not printed. Below is the full version of joke.

### **Did you hear about Johnny B?**

*Johnny B. is struggling with recovery and, as luck would have it, he is pulled over by a policeman the one time he slips up.*

**Policeman:** "Sir, I smell alcohol on your breath. Have you been drinking today?"

**Johnny:** "Well, officer, you'd be drinking too if you'd just killed your wife."

**Policeman:** "WHAT!?! Are you confessing to murder?"

**Johnny:** "The handgun is hidden under the seat. In the glove box, I stashed the heroin and a syringe I used to knock her out. Her body, bless her soul, is wrapped in a sheet in the trunk of the car."

The officer, stunned, handcuffs Johnny B. and calls for his sergeant. The sergeant arrives, takes the car keys and opens the trunk.

"There's no body in here," the sergeant says to the patrolman. "I thought you said there was a homicide?"

The sergeant then looks in the glove box. There isn't any heroin and there's no syringe," he says. He then searches under the seat.

"And no gun either."

The sergeant turns to Johnny B. for an explanation:

**Johnny:** "Gee, I bet he said I was drinking too."

## The Ask It Basket

Q: How do you get someone involved in general service work when all they want to do is sponsor alcoholics?

A: There is no service work in M that "trumps" or is better than other service work. If an individual is willing and able to sponsor other alcoholics, that work is as important as any general service work he or she could do.



## An Awakening to Service

In my earliest days of service to my first home group I was given a purpose. Though my experiences were not yet sufficient to carry the message of spiritual awakening through the twelve steps, I was able to help the group carry the message to our community. My pride had been smashed by the circumstances of the last 3 years of active alcoholism, and my ego was so out of whack that I needed approval from the world to combat the pain. I had no workable spiritual solution for my madness, as I had yet to reap the benefits of the steps, but I did have a sponsor and I did have a homegroup.

There was something special about the homegroup. It had a sense of order that the other meetings I attended didn't have. The folks who attended regularly were serious about recovery, and those who were interested more in the social aspects of fellowship didn't really come around. Just being in the group filled me with a sense of ease and comfort that I didn't have during the day at the homeless shelter. On one particular Tuesday evening, I was in need of that relief, but my job in the shelter kitchen was going to keep me from making the meeting. That day, I had made a series of decisions that made life difficult for those around me, I had attempted to fix the situation by taking more selfish actions, and was filled with fear about what the consequences would be for my behavior. I didn't want to feel the way I felt, but I had not yet taken inventory and learned how to identify what was blocking me from my higher power. After my kitchen shift, I ran the ½ mile or so to my homegroup for relief. The meeting was over, but that was OK, I knew that I'd feel better just being with my sponsor. I burst through the door, and a few group members were there straightening up after the meeting. I ran to my sponsor. "I've had a bad day," I said. I was hoping for a hug, a pat on the head and some nugget of wisdom that would make it all better. Instead, his response was, "Good! I'm glad you had a bad day. You are always running around **here** like everything is perfect. Go mop the floor."

What? Mop the floor? I mopped the floor. We would talk later about what happened during the day, but at that moment the only thing my sponsor wanted to know was how I was going to serve the homegroup. No, I don't believe that the mop kept me sober that night, nor did I discover the meditative powers of menial tasks. It was the first time that I was directed to combat my self-centeredness with ego-deflating service. I did not even realize the lesson until much later, but the seed was planted that night that my life in AA is not only about me.

*Continued on page 9 An Awakening to Service*



*Continued from page 8 An Awakening to Service*

After I had been sober a year, I became curious about how my group fit in with the other groups in the city. I attended lots of meetings locally, and often heard terms like IGR and GSR mentioned but I had no idea what they meant. The only thing that I could really understand from the pamphlets was that there were AAs doing stuff in Louisville and our group was not represented. I was curious about this aspect of M, I was scared that my group wasn't doing something right, and I was willing to go learn. I effectively volunteered to be my groups first ever IGR, by showing up at an Intergroup meeting asking a lot of questions, updating our contact info, and making the commitment to go back the next month. I had been to hundreds of meetings, but I saw a whole new bunch of AAs at the intergroup meetings. I was awakened to a new way to see AA.

My interest in service also created an awakening in my group. My participation in the intergroup led to the discovery that our homegroup had never been registered with GSO. The group quickly registered and elected our first GSR.

A district service workshop about the 7th Tradition, introduced me to the pamphlet "Self-Support Where Money and Spirituality Meet." I regularly attended another group's meeting and they made it a point to be transparent about their 7th tradition contributions, this pamphlet gave me the ability to introduce my group to a different way of handling group finances.

These are just a few simple accounts from my earliest pieces of service to AA. It is my experience that every time I have been awakened to a different aspect of AA service, my excitement for participation in M grows. There is no reason to be bored, there is plenty of work to do.

In the coming issues, we will hear the experiences of Ms whose service experiences are currently blooming to give them great lives, and from some whose long-timers who have harvested the benefits of decades of service to Alcoholics Anonymous. *Ian H.*



## We Are Not a Glum Lot

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|---------------|----------------|
| ALTERNATE     | GROUP          |
| <b>AREA</b>   | IDEAS          |
| ASSEMBLY      | INTERGROUP     |
| <b>AWAKEN</b> | LITERATURE     |
| COMMITTEE     | PATIENCE       |
| CONFERENCE    | PERSONALITIES  |
| DECLARATION   | PRINCIPLES     |
| DELEGATE      | REPRESENTATIVE |
| DETERMINATION | RESPONSIBLE    |
| DIRECTORY     | SERVANT        |
| DISTRICT      | SERVICE        |
| ELECTION      | TRADITIONS     |
| FELLOWSHIP    | TRANSMIT       |
| GENERAL       | TRUSTED        |
|               | UNITY          |

**A WEEK** BEFORE A SPACE LAUNCH, an Astronaut was trying to relax at an out-of-the-way pub.

But a boozed-up customer at the bar recognized him and said, "You **NASA** types think you're something, hitting the moon and bringing back all them shuttles and all.

We got a couple of local guys here, been building their own spaceship right out back!"

Reluctantly, the Astronaut goes outside to inspect the spaceship--a huge mess of beer **kegs**, cans and junk.

One drunk boasts, "Moon-Schpoon! We're going to the sun!"

The Astronaut warns them, "Boys, this thing will incinerate long before you get close to the sun."

"Don't you think we thought of that?" argued the second drunk.

"We got that all figured out!... We're going at night!"

A fellow who had a drinking problem which also led to seeing weird animals under his bed each night after retiring went to seek help. The shrink assured him that he could cure the malady, and stated that the fee would be \$1,000. Needless to say, the drunk never went back. Several weeks later, they met on the street and the shrink asked him if he was still troubled... and the conversation went like this;

Drunk: "Hell No ••••• and the professional cure I got only cost me a case of beer"  
 Shrink: "What professional would work for a case of beer?"  
 Drunk: "My brother-in-law"  
 Shrink: "What branch of the professional field is he associated with?"  
 Drunk: "He's a carpenter, he sawed the legs off my bed"

Below is a copy of Bill W's first Grapevine editorial, which was taken from the "The Grapevine Vol. 1, No. 1, June 1944". Who is your Grapevine Rep?

# EDITORIAL:

## The Shape of Things to Come

In the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* there is a chapter called "A Vision for You". Wandering through it recently, my eye was caught by this startling paragraph written a short five years ago. "Someday we hope that every alcoholic who journeys will find a Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous at his destination. To some extent this is already true. Some of us are salesmen and go about. Little clusters of twos and threes and fives of us have sprung up in other communities through contact with our two large centers—" Rubbing my eyes I looked again. A lump came into my throat. "Only five years," I thought. "Then but two large centers—little clusters of twos and threes — travelers who hoped one day to find us at every destination."

Could it be that only yesterday this was just a hope—those little clusters of twos and threes, those little beacons so anxiously watched as they flickered, but never went out.

And today—hundreds of centers shedding their warm illumination upon the lives of thousands, lighting the dark shoals where the stranded and hopeless lie breaking up—those fingers of light already stretching to our beach heads in other lands.

Now comes another lighted lamp—this little newspaper called "*The Grapevine*". May its rays of hope and experience ever fall upon the current of our A.A. life and one day illumine every dark corner of this alcoholic world.

The aspirations of its editors, contributors and readers could well be voiced in the last words of "A Vision for You". "Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find, and join us. We shall be with you, in the Fellowship of The Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you—until then."

Bill

## Service Meetings in Area 26

<b>LOUYPAA</b>	Every Sunday 1pm beacon house 963 s. 2 <sup>nd</sup> street, Louisville
<b>SERCYPAA</b>	2ND AND 4TH Sunday at 5:30 PM, Immanuel UCC, 2300 Taylorsville Road, Louisville
<b>Louiaville Intergroup</b>	IGR meetings are held the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7PM St. Paul United Methodist Church, 2000 Douglass Blvd, {comer of Douglas Blvd & Bardstown Rd in the highlands). new IGR orientation is at 6PM. For questions contact Louisville aa Central Office: 502-582-1849
<b>Intergroup District 3</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month 13th Street Clubhouse, 1013 e 13 <sup>th</sup> Ave Bowling Green, KY 42101
<b>Bluegrass Intergroup</b>	Meets 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month at 7PM at New Life Community Church, 3353 Clays Mill Rd. Bluegrass Intergroup Office located at 253 Market Street., email

### One more for the road...

A bear wonders into a bistro and sat at the bar. Then comes along a glassy-eyed drunk and sat down on the stool besides the bear. The drunk put his arm around the bear (not knowing this was a bear), where upon it knocked him flat on the floor. Sitting up groggily, the drunk muttered "Wow! ... give some women a fur coat and they think they own the world".



### Kentuckiana Newsletter Information:

The Kentuckiana Newsletter is for all A.A. members. We are always looking for articles from individuals in the fellowship. Please share your experience, strength, hope, jokes and thoughts.

The Kentuckiana News 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 district, please contact the Chair, Melanie P at [Kentuckiana@area26.net](mailto:Kentuckiana@area26.net).