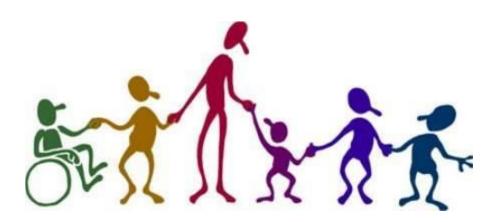
WINTER ISSUE

KENTUCKIANA NEWS

THE VOICE OF AREA 26

BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS THROUGH AA SPONSORSHIP AND SERVICE



In this issue:

- On Point: A newcomers viewpoint, Living in all Three Legacies
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- Past Delegates' thoughts on Concept 12 and The Warranties
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The goal of Kentuckiana News is to inspire recovering alcoholics through articles on AA topics that share the experience, strength and hope of AA members.

The topic of our Spring Issue will be Safety in AA. Safeguarding ourselves and the newcomer. Articles will include Concepts 8, 9, 10, 11 and Steps 2&3.

Please submit your articles for the Spring issue to Kentuckiana@area26.net

Deadline for article submission is March 1, 2017

ON TOPIC: A Newcomers Viewpoint. Living in all Three Legacies Alcoholics Anonymous has taught me how to join in and play a part in life – a thing most "earth" people take for granted. To be included in life I must make myself available - contribute - who knew - well AA knew all along!!!!!!!! I've learned from others in AA by offering my time in service I get to know others and this is where my friendships and relationships have begun in AA. When I read the book with another woman week after week something magical starts to happen that is hard to explain. When I say yes to a service position and meet every Thursday night for a year until the main event something changes in me and the others I meet with regularly. Relationships are my most valuable possession in AA today. This is what fuels my desire to stay sober and stay here with you people. There is magic here. The moments we share are incredible! The laughter that fills the air takes my breath away!!! Days are so meaningful now and it's because you taught me how to be a friend by showing up – thank you!!! Kim B., District 12, Better Days Group

MEET THE AREA OFFICER AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS



My name is Lynda and I am an alcoholic. My sobriety date is June 28, 1986. I got sober in the small town of Cody, Wyoming. There was only one AA group, but they had 8 meetings per week, 3 of which were open meetings. Since I didn't know what I was yet, I was encouraged to attend the open meetings until I

figured it out. I know now that the group was strong on AA Tradition; then it just felt warm and welcoming. I moved to Billings, Montana about 6 months after I got sober. A.A. there didn't feel the same as Cody so I didn't find a home group and instead drove back and forth to Cody, about 100 miles each way, once a week. Over time, my trips to Cody dropped off and for about 4 years I drifted from group to group, never getting involved, always staying on the fringe of A.A. I finally reached out for help and the woman that I chose took me through the Steps and Traditions and eventually the Service Manual, A.A. Comes of Age and the Concepts. She insisted that I get involved in all aspects of A.A. She did not, however, tell me what to do. She was by my side showing me every step of the way - first as a greeter at meetings, graduating to ashtray/cup washer and eventually making the coffee. She sat by my side at group conscience meetings and prodded me to volunteer for positions that she thought I was ready for. When she served as Alt. GSR, I served as Secretary. When she moved on to GSR, I was elected Alt. GSR. When she became Alt. DCM, I was elected as GSR. While GSR, I also served as the PI/CPC Chair for my District. I then when on to serve as Treasurer, Alternate DCM and DCM of District 11 in Montana.

In 2000, I had to resign midway through my term as DCM when I moved to Kentucky. Since I'd already served as a GSR and a DCM, I believed I was done with General Service when I moved to Louisville. God had another idea. I went to

my first group conscience meeting of my new home group and asked who their GSR was and their response was, "What's that?" I told them and the group thought that was something they should have, but no one was willing to serve and they asked if I would. Because I am a firm believer in rotation, I hesitated, but eventually I said yes. I went on to serve as Alternate DCM and DCM for District 24. In 2007, our incoming Chair asked if I'd be willing to chair a standing committee and if so, which one. I said yes and that I'd really be interested in Treatment or Corrections since I had experience with taking meetings into those facilities. He had other ideas and asked me to be the Literature Chair. This turned out to be a great fit and I loved the experience. In 2010 I was elected to serve as your Alternate Delegate and in 2012 I was elected as your Panel 62 Delegate, rotating into Chair in 2014 and Alternate Chair in 2016.

That first sponsor taught me never to say no to an opportunity to be of service to A.A. There have been times when there have been places I thought I'd rather be, concerts missed, vacations rescheduled, birthdays and anniversary celebrations postponed – but every time I've said yes, it's put me where I needed to be of service to someone else which always opened the door to learn something new, meet someone new and continue to grow. Somewhere along the journey of service, I fell I love with Alcoholics Anonymous. Not only did God and the

program save my life, they've given me a life worth living and saying yes when asked is a small payment on the debt that can never be fully repaid.

I have had the opportunity to see our Traditions and Concepts in action and have come to trust and rely upon those principles, not only in A.A., but in my life. I've come to understand that not only am I responsible to make sure the hand of A.A. is there when someone reaches out, but it is also my responsibility to work to ensure that the message we carry is the message of A.A.

There has also been a tremendous amount of fun along the way – sharing this journey with my service sponsor, sponsees and all you other service junkies has been incredible.

It's hard the believe that the shy girl who didn't fit in and was terrified of people, whose only means of survival was to drink the fear away, went on to chair the Banquet Meeting at the 63rd General Service Conference. My thoughts that night were not on how scared I was, but rather on how grateful I was. It has truly been a privilege and pleasure to be allowed the many opportunities to serve.

Lynda R. Alternate Chairperson, Past Delegate Panel 62

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? STUMP THE CHUMP

What can I do as a Newcomer to be of Service?

"AA service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferranging all the way from the Twelfth step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to AA's General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of service." (Service Manual p.S1) It can be small things at first, like being a Greeter or helping with the set up at your home group. Picking people up for meetings and making the coffee.

What is the difference between Service in General and General Service?

Service in general is the things we do around the fellowship and with our Home Group. General Service is "the twelve traditions make clear the principle that AA, as such, should never be organized, that there are no bosses and no government in AA. Yet at the same time, the Traditions recognize the need for some kind of organization to carry the message in ways that are impossible for the local groups – such as publication of a uniform literature and public information resources, helping groups get started, publishing an international magazine, and carrying the message in other languages into other countries." (Service Manual p.S15)

FUNNY JOKES OR NOT

Diarrhea is Hereditary... It runs in your Jeans.

IF ONLY...

A frog had wings it wouldn't smack its ass when it hopped.

WORD SEARCH

January Word Search

SPONSEE
HOSTOTERIENDS
HELP
HOPE
COOPERATION
SPONSOHS
TEAMWORK
HESPONSIBLE
TRUSTWORTHY
SHARING
LAUGHING
SEHVE
RELIABLE
INCLUSION
USEFULNESS
HAPPY
STUDY
TWELVEANDTWELVE

FROM THE DESK OF THE ARCHIVES CHAIR

THE SUNSET GROUP, Jeffersonville, IN

The Serenity House opened in 1974. There was a need for an AA meeting. The Serenity Group, as it was then called, started meeting in the basement of the house. As far as we know, it has always been a speaker meeting. It has always met on Friday nights at 7:30 pm. In May of 1994, a group of residents got together and decided to adopt the Serenity Group as their Home Group. When they registered the group with GSO they found that they needed to make some changes; the biggest one being a name change. They read in the pamphlet "The AA Group", that no group should be named after a treatment center, halfway house, or person. It was decided to change the name to Sunset Group. Our first trusted servants were newcomers. Though the group has had many members throughout the years, it still proudly contains a handful of its founding members.

Many residents choose to become members of the Sunset Group, though they often leave when they complete their stay at the house, some have chosen to stay and become loyal and active home group members. Women members have been few and far between, but the Sunset Group has had at least 4 join to this date.

The members of the Sunset Group are grateful to have the opportunity to work with newcomers on a regular basis. The whole reason for the group was to be able to give back what was so freely given to us. A chance to be free, and to live clean and sober, One Day at a Time.



"We admitted we were powerless over Alcohol and that our lives had become unmanageable."

For me admitting I was powerless was a lot harder than just saying the words "I am powerless". It took being completely and utterly hopeless and helpless. Only after burning every bridge and having everyone I loved turn their backs on me was I able to take a step back and take a good hard look at myself.

To know that taking the alcohol away was not the only thing that I needed to do. I had to change everything about me. Changing the people around me, all my behaviors, and doing things for myself, by myself. I had to stop depending on alcohol to numb me and start facing things head on.

Being unmanageable was something I had become comfortable with. So the second part of this step wasn't hard for me to admit. The hard part for me was doing something about it. Going through all aspects of my life and trying to make them better was a very uncomfortable task but because of Alcoholics Anonymous, I didn't have to do it alone.

Today I know I'm powerless over not just alcohol but over everything; I have all faith in my higher power to pave the path for me. My life can still be unmanageable if I don't stay involved in this program of action. I know I have to put action behind every commitment I make to insure my sobriety. The recovered alcoholic's life isn't easy but it is so worth it!

Kelsey R., Better Days Group, District 12



CONCEPT 12 AND ITS WARRANTIES

Concept 12

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the AA Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; the no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that through the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action. Pg 60 AA Service Manual

In short, my understanding of this Concept is that there are no bosses and that we keep the Main thing the Main thing and Trust in God we can't go wrong. One of the main reasons nothing happens fast in Alcoholics Anonymous. We vote in these Trusted Servants to speak for us and AA as a whole. In the next paragraphs you will hear how past Delegates have experienced and lived this Concept and the Warranties there in at the Conference.

WARRANY ONE

Warranty One: "The Conference shall never become the seat of perilous wealth or power."

All of the Warranties are set forth in Article 12 of the Conference Charter, which begins by stating "In all its proceedings the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. Tradition taking great care that..." Warranty One, specifically addresses some of the principles found in our Seventh and Ninth Traditions.

Traditions Seven: "... Then, to, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose."

In 1954 the Board of Trustees established the Reserve Fund. The purpose of the Reserve Fund is to set aside necessary funds to be able to provide essential services of G.S.O (and the Grapevine) in the event of an emergency/disaster or to fund major expenses, such as leasehold improvements. The Reserve Fund balance is limited to no more than one year's expenses. Any excess income from the sale of books/literature, contributions or Grapevine sales is transferred to the Reserve Fund. If there is a shortfall, money is withdrawn from the Reserve Fund to cover those expenses. If the Reserve Fund accumulates funds that would cover more than one year's expenses, and that balance remains at that level for more than a year, the General Service Board will look at ways to reserve the fund. There have been a few occasions in the past where

literature prices have been lowered so that Reserve Fund balance would be decreased. This method ensures that we do not accumulate excess funds with no stated A.A. purpose.

Tradition Nine: "Rotating leadership is best."

The Conference has been structured so that there isn't a special class of Conference members. All members have an equal voice and vote, regardless of whether they are a Trustee, Director, Delegate or Staff Member. In addition its membership is continuously rotating with Delegates and Directors rotating every two years, Class B Trustees rotating every four years and Class A Trustees rotating every six years. This effectively prevents any one person, or group of people, from amassing any power over the Conference as a whole. Also, our Class B Trustees and Delegates are all elected via Third Legacy Procedure and our Class A Trustees and Boards of Directors are all ratified by the Conference, ensuring that the fellowship has had a say in its leadership.

As long as we follow the principles set forth in Concept IX, and select qualified, principled service leaders, (*See Bill's Essay on Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need*) it isn't likely that the Conference will ever become a seat of perilous wealth or power. We will continue to rely upon "the spiritual power which flows from the activities and attitudes of truly humble, unselfish, and dedicated A.A. servants. This is the real power that causes our Conference to function."

Respectfully submitted, Lynda R.

WARRANTY TWO

The Six Warranties of the 12th Concepts have been described as having a "high and permanent importance to A.A.'s general welfare." They are "quite as important to A.A.'s world services as the Traditions are to A.A. as a whole."

This writing will highlight Warranty Two, which states, "Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample Reserve, should be its prudent financial principle."

The importance of our 12th step work and its relationship with voluntarily contributions is generally understood by our fellowship. However, contributions alone fail to entirely meet our 12th step efforts and these deficits are met by the Reserve Fund, which is constantly renewed by literature sales.

As this warranty appears as part of Concept XII, the following statements are listed as opinions from those who may not be totally familiar with this principle:

- 1. the reserve fund is no longer needed,
- 2. if it continues to grow, perilous wealth will result;
- 3. the reserve fund discourages group contributions;
- 4. by not abolishing the reserve fund, we lack faith;
- 5. that our book ought to be published at cost and cheapened for hard-up buyers;
- 6. that profit-making on our literature is counter to sound spirituality.

Interestingly these points of view were written in 1960 and yet, they sometimes surface today.

In reality without our reserve fund both our World Service Office and Grapevine would likely face huge deficits that would lead to the unthinkable of curtailing or eliminating services. Furthermore, its flexibility could see us through hard economic times that may very well destroy other businesses.

The idea of providing a "charity" for newcomers is one not shared by A.A. as a whole. Actually it suggests that it may not be a good idea for groups to provide books less than cost. Perhaps the same can be said for providing books to correctional facilities.

The notion of "profit-making" or that A.A. has all the money it needs may be misleading as funds are transformed into services by the fellowship as well as guaranteeing solvency for A. A. to continue saving lives.

By no means is this writing a comprehensive examination of this warranty. Obviously, such an examination is impractical for this publication. Hopefully, it does provide inspiration for one to take a thorough look at this principle.

Charles W. Past Delegate, Panel

WARRANTY THREE

None of the conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over the others:

At my first General Service Conference, I was elected Delegate Chairperson for the 57th General Service Conference. Over the next year I was allowed the privilege to work closely with the General Service Conference coordinator. As we came closer to the conference, an issue arose from a General Service Board Meeting, whereas, three Regional Trustees felt that their minority opinion was not heard by the full board. These Regional Trustees made available background material, along with their minority opinion to the delegates in their region. The Regional Trustees also asked and obtained permission from the committee on policy and admissions for their minority opinion to be heard by said committee. In doing so, they placed 49 percent of the delegates in a position of unqualified authority over the others, by allowing them to have information that others did not have. In our delegates' only meeting, part of our guidelines states that we are not allowed to talk about any conference agenda items. After some heated discussion, I was able to convince the group, which we cannot talk about this until it reaches the conference floor. After reaching the conference floor, and more heated debate, the information was disseminated to the other delegates. To make a long story short, at the end of the day, God prevailed at the 57th General Service Conference.

On a personal note I asked my sponsor when I was elected chairperson, what I should do. He informed me that I was placed in not only a leadership position, but a position of neutrality. Many times during this General Service Conference, I really wondered what to do. I had to ask God to be neutral, yet attempt to lead a very fractured group of individuals. As the week progressed, we came together as a group, to not find the good for Alcoholics Anonymous, but the best for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Yours in service,

Darryl M. Past Delegate Panel 56

WARRANTY FOUR

That it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;

My experience with warranty 4 ... at the Area level, we must have a 2/3rds majority vote to make a substantial change. This is true for amending our Structure (which must go back to the groups for approval). We also hold this principle in our Elections for Delegate, Alternate Delegate and Trustee candidates. Substantial Unanimity gives a "stronger" acknowledgment that a motion is approved by a larger number of votes than a simple majority. This

keeps an issue from being a "flash in the pan" decision or a "fluke". Combine that with a lot of thoughtful discussion, as well as abiding by the fifth concept of allowing for "minority voice" and the process allows for a better decision.

At the General Service Conference, each Conference Committee (I was on Finance) can decide how they want to determine the outcome of an agenda item or motion in that committee. In my committee, as with most committees I believe, we used substantial unanimity in our voting process. The item then goes to the main body of Conference members where it continues to be discussed and voted on, if they deem it worthwhile. When reporting back to the groups at home, I felt in my heart, that the Advisory Actions which came from Conference had been the "voice" and Group conscience of A.A. Also, at Conference, Trustees are elected by the third legacy procedure, which calls for 2/3rds majority. Of course when an overwhelming effort doesn't lead to a clear 2/3s majority, it will eventually go to the hat. Interesting,

Fortunately, the GSC the following year can make adjustments where necessary. Thanks.

Respectively submitted, Joy F. Panel 60 Past Delegate

WARRANTY FIVE

Warranty 5 - That its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy;

I was first introduced to General Service while serving on a young people in AA committee. Part of my job was to travel to Area Assemblies and Intergroup meetings within the Hawaiian Islands to announce the event, keep relations between our service structure and young people in AA strong through communication. I fell in love with General Service from my first experience. The people who attended were great AA members, people whom I respected, and very loving and caring about Alcoholics Anonymous.

Around this time, I attended a District Workshop where I met many people involved in various aspects of General Service. One panelist, who I did not know until this event, was a past delegate and later served on the AA Grapevine board as a General Service Trustee. He had been around a long time but was a new acquaintance. Our conversation standing around the coffee pot talking about the issues facing AA at the time is where I first heard about Warranty Five.

You see several years before this workshop, the year that I found sobriety the copyright on the 1st Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous lapsed. Regardless of how or why, that fact has had an impact on Alcoholics Anonymous literature sales and subsequently our operating budget ever since. Around 1992, a private organization calling itself "Intergroup World Services, Inc." began selling a small abridged soft cover Big Book that became known as the Little Big Book. This publication resembled remarkably the soft cover Big Book which Alcoholics Anonymous World Services we all know and love. The version Intergroup World Services, Inc was printing had a blue cover and cited the copyright of AAWS on the inside cover implying approval to publish.

After being contacted by AAWS and asked to cease publication, they removed some references and went to a red cover you may be familiar with. It seemed apparent to anyone familiar with the issue that the blue cover, company name, and other similarities were deliberate attempts to confuse those who would purchase the books, namely members and groups of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The publication of the first 164 pages of our Big Book by an outside organization was of deep concern and much discussion. The 1994 General Service Conference Final Report included discussion of a meeting with IWS and General Service Office and AA Grapevine staff, and General Service Board Trustees to address their current actions and desire to expand to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, publish Spanish Language literature, offer to publish literature for foreign GSO's, and sell their publications in Canada where the copyright of all Big Book editions was still in effect.

This was the topic of the moment and I found myself standing in a school cafeteria, at a District Workshop in Waikiki, Hawaii having a conversation with my future service sponsor who asked me my thoughts on IWS and the current ongoing controversy. My immediate response was, "what a jerk, I want to find that guy and punch him in the nose for doing that." I went on to rant about how the person running IWS is selfish and how shocking such a loser was still sober. Why would anyone want to take money from operating AA by cutting into their sales and having AA members buy books where the proceeds go into their greedy little pockets? Didn't they know that ultimately they were harming AA and making it harder to provide services which could help save lives?

I ranted on and suggested how we could punish our member and the group of people publishing our literature, I droned on about how they could legally do this but it was a detriment to the fellowship that allegedly helped save their lives. Kind and loving elder statesman that he is, David E. looked at me and smiled saying, "well Roger, our principles tell us that we cannot be punitive".

I thought why not? Surely we have to protect the only thing that we can claim as our own, the purity of our AA message as it was recorded in our Big Book. I did not like that response one bit. There had to be justice. We had to DO something about it.

Several letters were exchanged between IWS and GSO. As I got involved in service, I learned that the AA members operating this outside publishing venture argued that they were an AA Group and practicing Tradition Five, helping to carry the AA message by producing and distributing literature at a much lower cost than AAWS could or would in order to help more alcoholics. They denied trying to deceive anyone

and complied with some of the request from the General Service Board after several meetings and consultations.

Regardless whether you agree that their motive was spiritual or not; whether you believe they were making no profit from the venture; whether you believe they incorporated solely to be of service to alcoholics; or whether you believe they were wrong, selfish, and unjustified to exploit the copyright lapse is actually not important. The freedom we enjoy from any punitive action from our groups or trusted servants, like it or not, must be extended to others who may see things differently than we do.

What I learned about Warranty Five of the Conference Charter, restated as part of Concept XII, Warranty Five, is that we do not have to be punitive. Regarding Conference actions, we cannot punish groups, districts, areas, or members. The Conference and its members – delegates who represent the AA groups may not take punitive action. It is not my job to punish those who do not comply with my way of doing things. The General Service Board has an awesome responsibility to manage our operating corporations, however at the higher levels of group business, as long as our group's message is the AA message - it is spiritual. It cannot be compromised or violated nor can it be profited from as long as the AA groups and our members are giving it away free.

Roger W., Alternate Delegate

WARRANTY SIX

The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

The first time I read this Concept I probably said to myself, "What are we here for if the Trustees have all the say so". At first glance it may appear that way but remember, all the concepts are to be taken as a whole and not separately. I'm alcoholic; if I look long enough and hard enough I can take a Concept by itself, twist it all around to make you believe anything.

- The Conference recognizes: That's us, we elected the Conference members to represent us at Conference, we can't all go.
- That the chief initiative and active responsibility: As with most corporations, the board of trustees of a business runs the deal, but not in AA.

- In <u>most</u> world service matters: In a normal corporation it is the responsibility of the Chief Operating Officer to carry out the wishes of the Board, but again, not in AA. We give the Trustees the room to carry out the day-to-day stuff but when it comes to policy, finance and what we want them to focus on, that stuff comes from the Conference in the form of Advisory Actions. Don't forget, they have a vote too. The only flaw in this process is the Delegates have no say in what gets put on the Agenda. "this is what George J. was working on when he died." The Trustees can actually veto a Conference Advisory Action but it wouldn't be pretty if they did.
- Should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board. There is a lot of talent and knowledge among of the GSB, so it makes it easier for them to Serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous by making our advisory actions work. Today, just like the panel 1 Delegates of the first Conference, are representatives serving AA as a whole. They go over the books, ask questions express the fellowships concerns and new ideals.

Our fellowship is run like no other; it has to be in order for the upside down triangle to work. Our twelve concepts allows this to happen with clear cut responsibilities, checks and balances and the love that we all have for the fellowship that saved our lives,

In Service,

Jim S. Past Delegate Panel

EVENTS ACROSS THE AREA

Area 26 meeting

April 8-9, 2017

Dale Hollow State Park

HOSTED BY DISTRICT 37

THE PINK CAN

Help supply AA approved literature to jails and prisons by placing a donation in the pink can located in your meeting rooms

FROM DISTRICT 17

KRISTEN G CELEBRATING 1 YEAR SOBER

"LONG TIME COMING. WE LOVE YOU!"

WORK THE STEPS GROUP

IS SPONSORING A BUS TRIP TO AKRON

JUNE 2017

LOUISVILLE INTERGROUP QUARTERLY

February 18, 2017

Dick H. Alexander, KY

Saffin Center

EACYPAA in Milwaukee

March 23-26, 2017