

Area 12 Delegate's Report
December 10, 2016

NERAASA 2017 will be held in Framingham, Mass, from February 24-26. At NERAASA.org you can download an application, register on-line, or register for the hotel. NERAASA is a weekend of fellowship where people in service share their experience, strength and hope. It is not a working weekend. The more senior members in service find it insightful both as to what is going on in AA as well as how to better serve the fellowship. Looking forward to the weekend of June 2, the North East Regional Forum (NERF) will be held in Mars, Pa. This is the General Service Board traveling show for AA members. There you will learn how AA is serving AA. Trustees, directors and staff will be there to conduct workshops and answer questions. You can register on-line. There is no registration fee. You must provide the cost for lodging, meals and transportation. Incidentally, Mars, PA, is an hour and a half drive from Akron if you want to include a field trip there to visit Dr. Bob's house. The Forum is an excellent chance to explore what happens at the GSO.

Flatline membership growth, declining literature sales, and inflation and how to deal with it affect all of us. As you know we are tasked with carrying the message of the conference to the fellowship. "We are the General Service Representatives," our GSR preamble states. "We are the line of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A." To keep the discussion open and the fellowship informed, the conference chooses a theme and corresponding workshop topics that allow conversations about the issues to take place. Districts are part of the service structure and thus are tasked with keeping the fellowship informed by holding workshops themed around these issues.

The theme for the 2017 General Service Conference will be: "**Supporting Our Future.**" I am sure you will include them in your planning for your Spring Service Workshop. Might I suggest to you that districts could bundle together to cover these topics.

- I. Growth:
 - a. Diversity -- Outreach and Attraction
 - b. Safety - An Important Consideration
 - c. Communication - Today and Tomorrow
- II. Participation:
 - a. Fellowship vs. Membership
 - b. Leadership: "I am Responsible..."
 - c. Is Your Voice Heard?
- III. Contributions:
 - a. Spirituality and Money
 - b. Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations
 - c. Apathy and Power of the Purse

I am happy to report that contributions to the GSO are 8 % above budget. Projections as of the October board meeting for the following years assume generally flat sales, slight increases in contributions, and normal inflationary increases for manufacturing and office operating costs. These assumptions result in a small loss for 2018 with significant losses in succeeding years. So continued work is necessary. Only 40 percent of the groups nationally contribute to the GSO and although Delaware's percentage is above average, we have "dark" districts and unrepresented groups that have not heard the news. We, too, individually, in our districts through workshops and group visits and in our groups, by discussion within our business meetings can do our part. There is a new, free self-support bundle available with discussion ideas for your groups and workshops and I would like to remind you can personally contribute to the Birthday Plan as well as make recurring contributions to the GSO on-line at www.aa.org. (click on the basket icon) Birthday contribution envelopes are available at no charge from G.S.O. (FR-2 for group contributions, and FR-5 for individual members) Any and all contributions are welcomed, regardless of the size or frequency. These contributions are

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tax deductible. In addition to personal contributions to the GSO, it is also possible to individually contribute to the service work in Area 12. Individual contributions are gratefully accepted for the work we do. Go to our website and get the address to send in your personal contribution; it is tax deductible since we are a 501-3-c non profit. Making contributions for us to do 12th step service work is a way we can express our gratitude. Gratitude sits in the middle of A.A. — gratitude for a release from active alcoholism and, as Bill W. points out in Step Ten in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (p. 95), “a genuine gratitude for blessings received.” In a letter written in 1959, Bill W. suggested that “Gratitude should go forward, rather than backward. In other words, if you carry the message to still others, you will be making the best possible repayment for the help given to you.” (As Bill Sees It, p. 29) Thank you for helping me get the message to the groups.

Basket money is not the only way to support our 12th step service work. Literature purchases traditionally have made up the difference in our support. There are new ways we can support our literature sales. First is the special holiday gift set of the 75th anniversary facsimile of the first edition of the Big Book bundled together with *Pass It On, Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* \$30 per set. The set will be offered for sale for a limited period, from October 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017. Next, a new Grapevine subscription app for I-phones and I- pads is available for \$23.99 for 12 months, and their new collection of Grapevine stories, *Our 12 Traditions* is available. Remember, you can always support literature sales by raffling conference approved literature and the Grapevine at district workshops. I personally support this effort by giving my sponsees conference approved literature as gifts.

Since I have reported to the GSRs in February, I travelled a great deal within the state attending workshops, helping to conduct workshops and visiting districts and intergroup events, approximately 4500 in-area miles. You are working hard to help me carry the message of service and Conference Actions to our groups.

Because we have had no convention this year, some of the in-area miles I travelled were to bring the Conference Report Back to the districts. To date, I reported to every district but 4 and it is scheduled in December. I participated in District 5 and 6 & 7 fall workshops including the Report Back to get the information to even more of the fellowship. I am visiting districts now to go over the final conference reports. To date, I have visited Districts 1, 2, 3, 13, 5, 6 and 7, and 12 with District 4 scheduled.

Finally, I am gearing up to start a grassroots initiative in Districts 8-11 through an Ad Hoc area committee to establish a district meeting for those unrepresented districts beginning in the New Year. I have obtained permission to use the NDIG office one night a month to hold a meeting so that GSRs without personal transportation could take advantage of public transportation within the city and attend the meeting. I am in the process of building a committee for this work to begin this effort.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan R., Panel 66 Area 12 Delegate