

# OCEAN VIEWS

RHODE ISLAND AREA 61 NEWSLETTER

February 2018 • Volume 5

## FROM THE DELEGATE'S DESK

Hi to all of you. I'm very excited that the New Year is moving along. I have a few different things to talk about in this first newsletter of the new rotation. "Rotation of Service" - it is one of our main traditions. We pass on our favorite tasks to the next generation of trusted servants coming up and let that new group take on those tasks.

A new year brings with it a new theme for our conference: "A.A. - A Solution for All Generations".

Michele Grinberg, Class A (nonalcoholic) General Service Board Chairperson, shared the following on this theme at the North East Regional Forum in 2017:

I think this topic has two meanings — at least for me it has two meanings. One is tolerance and acceptance of all who seek the A.A. solution. Bill Wilson wrote, "Honesty with ourselves and others gets us sober, but it is tolerance that keeps us that way." Wow. The other meaning for me is that A.A. is timeless and can be a solution for all generations to come, one day at a time. That means it's up to all of us who care about A.A. to keep A.A. strong for those future generations.

My Conference committee is Policy/Admissions and we have e-mailed each other a couple of times already to say welcome aboard. I have been assigned a conference buddy; her name is Joanne L. from Area 6, Northern Coastal California.

The Area officers met with the Central Service trustees in early January at their request. It was an opportunity to get to know each other and discuss our common purpose as well as the different services/functions we provide to alcoholics that are sober and the ones who have not found us yet. We will meet again in July to continue with communication and fellowship with one another.

We conducted our first quarterly assembly in January and I was so impressed with AA in Rhode Island. It was very well attended by GSRs, DCMs, Committee Chairs and AA members. Here in Rhode Island we are very fortunate that we also had in attendance many Past Delegates who provide their support and knowledge to all of us. Rich Purtell, our North East Regional

Trustee, gave a presentation on the role of the GSR as well as an overview of what is currently happening at our General Service office in New York.

I'm hoping every group in our area will participate and have a voice at our next assembly. I know that our Chair Alison and our Alternate Delegate Steve are going to be working hard to put together a great pre-conference assembly. We are currently working on getting you the background summaries on the Conference agenda items as soon as possible. It continues to be my goal to make you all aware of the many topics that will be discussed at the General Service Conference in April. While time does not permit in depth discussion of every topic, you will hopefully be made aware of a broad range of these topics.

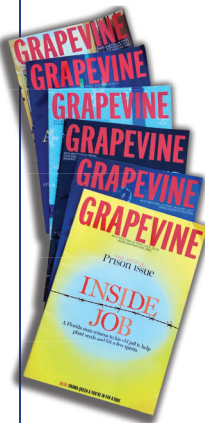
We have been financially solvent and able to provide a wide range of services through the donations of our groups and districts in Rhode Island; however, over the last several months, donations have decreased. We are currently in need of your support to provide the many services that help to carry the message of hope to alcoholics everywhere.

Members celebrate sobriety by giving time, energy and money in support of our Twelfth Step—carrying the message—the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship offers. Members assure that group expenses are paid by putting money into the basket passed at each meeting. It is each member's responsibility to support the services that have been requested by the A.A. Fellowship, to help facilitate A.A.'s vital Twelfth Step. Contributions are made in a spirit of sacrifice, and they honor A.A.'s code of "love and service." Contributions also underscore the spiritual nature of our Fellowship and our mutual love and trust. We have found that these contributions are as important to each member as they are to the service centers supported.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone on April 7th for our pre-conference assembly. It is my personal favorite cook-off assembly-PIES-sweet or savory!!! I will bring my "world famous" chicken pot pie.

Service is gratitude in action.  
Area 61 Delegate, Mary K.  
areadelegate@aainri.com

## Who Wants to be a GvR?



GvR is one of 1000 acronyms we use in the fellowship. It stands for Grapevine Rep. I have very positive recollections of the first GvR I saw in action. Thinking back to my initial months in the halls, I recall a young woman who made an announcement to the group on a monthly basis. Her remarks were no longer than a minute or so. She enthusiastically shared a few details about the current monthly issue of the AA Grapevine, how she

had subscription cards for anyone interested, and also had a handful of individual issues available for sale at the end of the meeting.

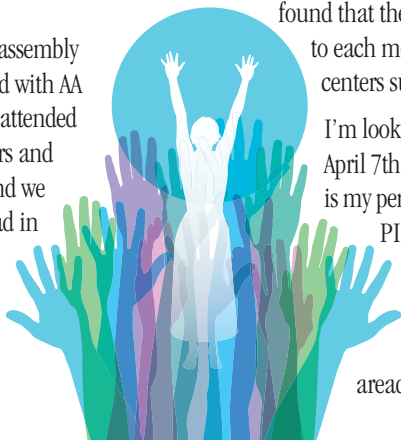
I don't recall that GvR's name, but I do know that when my first sponsor purchased a Grapevine subscription for me, I already knew that Grapevine was our meeting in print and was a powerfully helpful tool for recovery.



We have a few GvRs in Area 61 and I am grateful for their service. What's their job? Simply to spread the word about AA Grapevine: monthly magazine, audio GV, GV archives, books & ebooks, CDs, etc. I believe we will benefit from a greater number of GvRs in our Area because the net result is hopefully more conversation about and use of Grapevine resources in Twelfth Step work. The only action required to boost the number of GvRs is the number of groups willing to have a GvR and allow a GvR to fulfill his/her service. More or less, a GvR's service might include participating with the Area 61 Grapevine Committee, a report at a group business meeting, a monthly announcement from the floor, or perhaps a table-top display.

For details about the GvR position, go to [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org). To learn more about the Area 61 Grapevine Committee, please come to a meeting on the second Monday of the month at 7PM at the Area Office (3649 Post Rd., Warwick) or email the committee chair: [grapevinechair@aainri.com](mailto:grapevinechair@aainri.com).

Area 61 Chairperson, Alison H.



# Let Your Voice Be Heard



Before 1950, all matters, big and small, in Alcoholics Anonymous were handled by our co-founders, Bill and Dr. Bob, plus a handful of non-alcoholic trustees. The New York Headquarters was where they made all the decisions for Alcoholics Anonymous. But Dr. Bob was gravely ill in 1950 and Bill knew they were not going to live forever. Who was going to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous after they were gone? Would the growing number of AA groups trust a few unknown non-alcoholic men in some office in New York with all of the business of Alcoholics Anonymous? How could these men act for us? How would they know what we really want or need? Thus, Bill W. came up with the idea of a conference of Delegates from specific geographic areas (now numbering 93 Delegate Areas across the US and Canada) at the 1950 International Convention in Cleveland. These Delegates have been, and are now,

entrusted with taking care of, and making decisions for, Alcoholics Anonymous, just as Bill and Dr. Bob once did. Dr. Bernard Smith was a non-alcoholic friend of AA and one of the chief architects of the conference structure. Here are two of his most convincing reasons for a conference structure: "We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight" and "we need it to ensure that changes in A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few." (reprinted from The A.A. Service Manual, page S20).

So, in preparation for the annual gathering of these 93 Delegates in New York, our Area's Pre-Conference Assembly, (which will take place at St. Kevin's Church in Warwick at 9:00 AM on April 7) will help shape events as we pull several items from the General Service Conference Final Agenda and review them committee style, just as it is done at the General Service Conference. It is amazing that very often the actual results at the General Service Conference end up mirroring what we come up with during our pre-conference. And at the pre-conference, we encourage everyone in attendance to participate. Speak your mind and be involved with the future of AA. The Delegates, though our Guardians of AA, usually speak and vote as we suggest. So come join the fun! Let your voice be heard! Thank you all for your service!

Area 61 Alternate Delegate, Steve L.

## THE PRIVILEGE OF SELF SUPPORT

"Self-support through our own contributions" is frequently and appropriately a reminder that AA must take care of its financial responsibility at all levels. The spirit of self-support is a statement that we do not accept contributions from non-AA sources, that we are accepting responsibility for our own survival.

I heard a person at a meeting declaring he will not contribute, he does not feel he should be required to PAY for his sobriety. Clearly he had not been informed that the contribution is not to pay for recovery, rather a privilege to ensure the group can continue to keep the doors open for all, especially the newcomer.

Groups may find it helpful to educate newcomers on the 7th Tradition but also those members who have misunderstood why we need to meet our responsibility to AA as a whole. The Structure of AA from the AA Service Manual is an important tool when discussing self-support. The introduction to how the Group interacts with AA GSO (New York) through the District and on to the Area is new information to many members. The services that our Area (61) provides to local treatment centers, the corrections

facilities, public information organizations and cooperation with the medical community and other professionals are funded by local groups. All of these fine works are supported by the groups in Area 61.

AA groups are encouraged to support numerous entities in our fellowship, proportionate to the service the group is receiving. Central Service maintains a 12-step list, the meeting list and an answering service as some of their critical tasks. Districts are responsible to meet and prepare GSRs to act as liaisons to and from their groups through the District to the Area. Most typically a contribution is passed from the Group to support the District, with any surplus from the District typically being forwarded to the Area.

Contributions to AA World Service are understood by most members to fill a need to continue 12-step work on a national and international scale.

Cliff C.  
Past Delegate, Panel 36



## Area Officers

### Delegate Mary K.

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### Alternate Steve L.

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### Area Chair Alison H.

AreaChairperson@ainri.com

### Secretary Gary D.

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### Treasurer Tricia I.

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### Archivist Ted D.

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### Registrar Ted D.

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## Committee Chairs

### Archives Dennis P.

ArchivesChair@ainri.com

### Convention 2018 Chair John H.

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### Cooperation with the Professional Community/ Public Information Gay M.

CPCPIChair@ainri.com

### Information Services Phil C.

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### Corrections Greg M.

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### Grapevine Chair Jeff W.

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### Treatment/Accessibilities John D.

TreatmentChair@ainri.com

## HELP WANTED

Below is a listing of open service positions in Area 61. The chief requirements to fill these positions are a desire to carry the message and a willingness to serve.

### Archives Committee

- Alternate Chair

### Grapevine Committee

- Alternate Chair

### Treatment and Accessibilities Committee

- Alternate Chair

### Corrections Committee

- Men's ACI Meeting Coordinator

### Information Services Committee

- Newsletter Coordinator

### Districts 2&4

- District Committee Member
- Alternate District Committee Member

### District 3

- Alternate District Committee Member

### District 8 (Hispanic)

- District Committee Member
- Alternate District Committee Member