

The District 05 View



Vol 2023, DEC issue

Serving Pierce, Pepin, Buffalo, Eau Claire and Trempealeau & parts of Saint Croix, Dunn Chippewa counties

Go to Page 6 for GSO General Manager Bob W letter dated 11/17/23

**MONTHLY DISTRICT MEETING
Second Wednesday, 6:45 p.m.**

**IN PERSON AT
THE MENOMONIE LEISURE CENTER**

**1412 6TH ST. E
MENOMONIE, WI 54751**

**OR
JOIN ONLINE**

Zoom ID: 829 0126 1204

**Password: district05
All are welcome!**

Tradition 12: "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

Keep the 7th Tradition Alive! Support our district with cash or check .

Mail checks to:

District 05, PO Box 1902

Eau Claire, WI 54702

DISTRICT 05 THE VIEW NEWSLETTER

Send an email to: newsletter@district05.org to request a digital copy in your inbox each month.

Message from our Shane R. - District Committee Member

Greetings District 5. I hope you are all having a safe, healthy, and happy start to the holiday season, however you choose to celebrate that.

I am writing this while I wait to board a plane for Atlanta to visit family as an early start to Thanksgiving. What has happened in my life which allows me to do this is, to me, a miracle. Thanksgiving and Christmas of 2017 were spent in the Eau Claire county jail. While not a great place to be for the holidays, I was grateful to be alive and safe. For several years after my release in 2018, I was not allowed to leave the state without permission and documentation. Today, I can do these things freely and am a welcomed guest in my family's homes. I've never had it as easy as I do today, and it keeps getting better.

It has been a pleasure to serve as DCM for such a vibrant and active district. I am excited for the new group of servants you've elected for the next rotation. I look forward to serving you next as the Area 74 Secretary.

Special thanks to Matt A, Nicholas S, Chuck S, Jacki B, and Pete W for all the love, support, and experience shared.

Shane Renner



Step 12: "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

Member Share - Pat T.

Step 12

As I have grown up in Alcoholics Anonymous, my experience with Step 12 has evolved. Early in the program, basic commitments, setting up chairs and tables, cleaning and resetting rooms were my initial actions. The more I attended meetings, the more comfortable I became. I took on other duties such as coffee maker, treasurer, or secretary. These were usually the gentle or not so gentle suggestions of members who had been active group members. I was taught by example, that no task was too small. I started to feel a part of the group. If I did not feel like attending the meeting, I realized my commitment might not get done or fall onto others. These small but meaningful tasks helped me to develop a sense of responsibility. As I worked with sponsors, they helped me understand the value of sharing and listening to other alcoholics. I went to coffee after meetings or breakfast with a group on Saturday mornings. The more I participated, the stronger I felt in sobriety. I was able to socialize more easily, something I had never been comfortable doing. My understanding of the program, one alcoholic working with another gradually sunk in. I offered newcomers rides. I was taught to say yes if I was ask to help. I did things that were outside my comfort zone, such as attend retreats.

My early sobriety did not include working the steps with a sponsor as outlined in the Big Book. I had grown some spiritually, but today, after completing the steps as the Big Book lays them out, with a sponsor, I feel a much closer relationship with my higher power. I have had spiritual awakenings as a result of the steps.

When sponsoring, we go through the first 164 pages together. It helps me stay focused on the solution. Each time I go through this process, I benefit as much as the person I am working with. I am reminded frequently that I need to practice these principles in all my affairs.

Continued on following page...



Concept XII: "The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Member Share continued...

AREA 74 NEWSLETTER SIGN UP

To sign up to receive a copy of the Area 74 Newsletter "Now and Then", please email nowandthen@area74.org

Another area I have been a late bloomer is General Service work. As a result of becoming more involved at this level, my spiritual growth has continued. I have learned to be open to other peoples' ideas. I learned more about humility. The more involved I have been in recent years, the more tolerant and patient I have become. I think more about what I can do for God and my fellow man than what my needs or wants are.

There are many ways to participate in step 12. Regardless of what my involvement has been, I always feel better when I am not being selfish and self-centered. Reaching out to others in AA and outside of AA helps me to be a better person. I am incredibly grateful for the gifts this program has given me. I see it as my responsibility to freely give to others what has been freely given to me.

Pat T

DIGITAL TOOLS!

The mobile apps for The Grapevine and La Vina have brought the wonder of publication and other tools of our program to my phone - always accessible.

Check it out at the link below.

Grapevine Apps

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The following letter written by GSO General Manager, GSO, included attachments that are not included with this Newsletter. Should you wish to receive the entirety of this letter, please contact outgoing DCM Shane Renner, or write to the Newsletter Editor at

November 17, 2023

Dear A.A. Friends:

As a Fellowship, we celebrate and recognize November as Gratitude Month. This is a time when we A.A.s reflect on the many gifts and blessings sobriety has given us. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous encompasses many facets: our home groups, sponsorship, the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Fellowship among each other, service on many levels, and many more. As the General Manager of the General Service Office (GSO), I'm grateful to see firsthand the many services GSO provides that support the spiritual purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous – carrying the message of sobriety to the alcoholic who still suffers. These services assist the many facets of the A.A. program.

With the spirit of Gratitude Month in mind, I write today to share with you the difficult news related to the current financial health of Alcoholics Anonymous and the potential continued challenges ahead as we strive to fulfill our spiritual purpose. I hope this letter will be met with understanding, and that the honesty and sincerity in my heart are apparent throughout. The last four years have been very challenging for A.A. in many respects. This began with the worldwide shutdown in early 2020 due to the pandemic, which immediately forced nearly all A.A. groups to close their physical doors and either stop meeting altogether or find other means of gathering. This was followed by a slow return of groups meeting in person, an economy filled with uncertainty, and a workplace that changed in many ways. During this time, GSO and our Boards, like other organizations and businesses, were forced to change dramatically. We quickly transitioned to working 100% virtual to continue serving the Fellowship.

The office, along with the A.A. World Services (AAWS) and General Service Boards (GSB), have worked hard to manage our finances through these last four years with the hope that many of the challenges we faced would subside and return to pre-pandemic conditions. It is apparent now that the financial challenges we face cannot continue to be met with the deferral of essential projects and office development that are necessary to carry out Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference and support the vital services GSO provides.

Our tradition of self-support has always been vital to the health and future of the Fellowship and been our main source of income. However, there has always been a need for additional support from the sale of our literature. When the pandemic hit in early 2020, the initial impact on our revenue was significant, with a steep decrease in contributions. Income from sales of A.A. literature was also significantly reduced as sales came to an almost complete halt. The Fellowship responded with tremendous generosity, resulting in contributions reaching record levels. That continued in 2021, and contributions in 2022 nearly matched the 2021 level. This year to date, we are on pace to reach similar levels to the last three years. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and heartwarming.

Unfortunately, literature profits have not rebounded back to pre-pandemic levels. In addition to the slow return of sales, inflation has resulted in substantial increases in the cost to produce and distribute literature. Conscious of the challenges facing groups and members, the AAWS board held literature prices steady for as long as possible until earlier this year, when it became apparent the costs to produce and distribute were not going to return to pre pandemic levels. Despite increased contributions after the pandemic, the loss in literature revenue has left our total revenue short by approximately \$1,000,000 compared with per pandemic times.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact on virtually all our expenses. Of note are increased costs related to meetings, events, and travel, which are a key necessity to support the Regional Forums, board meetings, and the General Service Conference. However, we have managed to reduce total operating expenses to an average of \$15,768,000 compared with pre-pandemic levels of \$16,258,000. Reducing total expenses below pre-pandemic levels truly illustrates the diligence the office and the boards applied to the budget and operations to offset losses.

Because of the significant decline in literature sales and revenue and the large cash outlay needed to continue printing and distributing our literature, we have also experienced a very tight cash position. Our reforecast budget for this year estimates a loss of \$997,000, after depreciation and the GSB support of La Viña.

The office and all three boards have worked diligently to address these financial challenges. A systematic and dedicated approach to budgeting has been developed over recent years and allows for the most informed group conscience possible. Throughout, budget managers and the AAWS Board work together to find the most effective ways to prioritize and execute services, maximizing the use of each A.A. dollar. In addition to the annual budget process, a reforecast is done midyear to adapt to the direction brought forth by the April General Service Conference and other factors impacting original estimates.

Together we can overcome the challenges we're facing. We need your help to continue to adjust to and plan for the reality of current economic conditions and changes in our Fellowship. As members we often say that when A.A. needs money, the Fellowship will respond. This is one of those times. Your generosity has sustained us through very difficult times in the past. **If your group is able, in the spirit of Gratitude Month, please consider a special contribution to the General Service Board. You can make a contribution through aa.org by clicking [Here](#) or by mail.**

Make your check payable to the General Service Board to:

**General Service Office
P.O. Box 2407
James A. Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407**

***Online Contributions with Credit Card and
Paypal options***

[Contribute Here](#)

As difficult as this letter is to write, I'm hopeful and optimistic for A.A.'s future.

Moving forward, more frequent, and incremental contributions would be much appreciated as the office incurs many of its expenses during certain parts of the year. In particular, many of our more significant expenses are incurred from January to May, due to planning preparation, and operation of the General Service Conference each April.

Attached to this letter you will find a summary of the operations of GSO and details of many of the vital services GSO provides. I hope this information gives you a greater understanding of the vital work and services your contributions help to support. Thank you so much for everything each of you do for Alcoholics Anonymous.

With gratitude for all the sacrifices you make for A.A.,

Bob W.
General Manager, GSO
Services Provided By GSO

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District 05 Calendar



THERE IS A SOLUTION BEGINNERS MEETING is holding elections on:

December 4th, immediately following the meeting. Meeting at 5pm, **elections at 6pm.**

UU Church on Farwell and Gray.

**INTO ACTION GROUP
ROBERTS, WI**

AREA 74 is asking if anyone knows if a meeting in Roberts, WI, is still active.

Please contact

kdarea74@gmail.com

If you have knowledge about this meeting.



**DISTRICT 05
PUBLIC
INFORMATION
COMMITTEE MEETING**
A GREAT WAY TO BE OF SERVICE

DESIGN | PSA | INFORMATION BOOTHS | AND MORE

**JOIN US THE SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY
MONTH AT 6:15PM**

ZOOM ID: 961 8488 4909 PASSWORD: 609156

FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL PI@DISTRICT05.ORG

