

Gratitude Gazette

Spring, 2017



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INTRODUCTION FROM YOUR GRATITUDE GAZETTE EDITOR:

Thank you Area 38 for this wonderful opportunity to be of service to you and AA! The Gratitude Gazette is YOUR newsletter and I want it to reflect the issues and ideas that are important to your sobriety and service life. Please write to me with your ideas for articles and other content. My email address is gazette@eamo.org. You may also write in if you wish to respond to something in a recent issue of the Gazette. Going forward, an “Editorial” section will be built into the Gazette.

The Summer, 2017 Gazette will be published with OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE as its theme. I invite your thoughts and comments about this issue and will dedicate space to publishing some of them.

I look forward to serving as your Gratitude Gazette Editor during this rotation!

In service, Bryndon B

FROM OUR DELEGATE...

I'm writing this at the end of a productive and memorable weekend in Oklahoma City at the Southwest Regional Delegate's Assembly ("SWRDA"). This was my third SWRDA, having attended the last two as our area's alternate delegate. I am so grateful that our region provides for this gathering of current and past delegates and trustees. In less than six weeks I'll arrive at the doors of my first general service conference, up in Rye Brook, NY. The idea of being thrust into and actually participating in this thing that's regarded around our fellowship with such importance, historical significance, and, to some extent, mystery, is a scary one. But, being around and hearing from so many others who have experienced it gives me the assurance that I'll do fine. I know, in addition to the support of our area, I have close relationships with the currently serving delegates and trustees from our region, and with so many of its past delegates and past trustees. I've been told what will be in front of me and how best to prepare. It's been stressed that I should ask as many questions as I have, and that I can participate without any fear that I'll "mess up Alcoholics Anonymous." God is in charge. I know there will be lots of familiar faces in New York, and I can easily reach out should things get rough. Once the 67th General Service Conference is in my rear view mirror, I look forward to coming back to our area, and to SWRDA, to pass along what I've experienced. I'm so thankful for this wonderful opportunity to serve.

Ian S, Panel 67, Area 38 Delegate

Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference, 2017: Supporting Our Future

Growth

Diversity: Outreach and Attraction
 Safety: An Important Consideration
 Communication: Today and Tomorrow

Participation

Fellowship vs Membership
 Leadership: "I am responsible..."
 Is Your Voice Heard

Contributions

Spirituality and Money
 Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations
 Apathy and Power of the Purse

FROM OUR AREA CHAIR...*Let's Put on a Workshop!*

Eastern Area 38 of Missouri is starting a new workshop program and each district as well as every group in Eastern Area 38 of Missouri is welcome and encouraged to be a part of it. The hope is that by the Area offering to put on workshops this can become a tool for districts and groups for years to come. Like most things in AA, this is not a new idea. I was given the idea by Olga R., the current Chair of the Western Area of Texas when I was talking with her last year. She explained to me that as Alternate Area Chair she oversaw Area Workshops and they presented more than 50 workshops during the two year rotation. The more I learned, the more I wanted to bring this to Area 38!

My hope is that especially the rural or outstate Districts of Area 38 will take advantage of this and allow the Area to help them carry the message or help them with issues they might be having in their districts or home groups, this is all about working together and education. The workshop program will work like this: your district or home group needs to talk about what topic needs to be presented or what area of the program do you want or need to learn about.

Possible Topics: Apathy in AA, Safety & Respect in AA – (Dealing w/Financial, Spiritual, & Sexual safety), Internet & Social Media in AA, How To Chair a Meeting, Group Inventory, District Inventory, General Service, The Home Group, Sponsorship, Three Legacy Sponsorship, 12 Concepts, 12 Traditions, Trusted Servants, Traditions, Concepts, Service & Service Positions, How to Chair Meetings-AA, Group Conscience, Business. If there is another topic you'd like, please let us know. Each EAMO District will be allowed two Area Sponsored Workshops per year and each EAMO Registered Group will be allowed one Area Sponsored Workshop a year.

Provide the following information to the Alternate Area Chair:

- Two dates that are approved by your Group Conscience or by the GSR's at the District Meeting for the Area Committee on Workshops to pick from.
- Saturday and Sunday early afternoon start times work best.
- We would like the District or Group to have food to help bring people in.
- Pick a topic from the list we have provided below. These are only suggestions, your District or Group may have topics they need to discuss.

Eastern Area of Missouri 38 will find two presenters that have experience on the topic (we will work toward the fact that at least one of the presenters has workshop presentation experience) – or Area 38 will find one and ask the presenter to find someone to assist.

- Area 38 will then distribute the information to the District or group and at the point, turn it over to the District, group and presenter.
- Area 38 will post the workshop on the eamo.org website and will do a final report on the workshop including material used and any other information (also to be posted).

I hope the Area 38 Districts and Groups take advantage of workshops and allow Area 38 to help. Please contact the Eastern Area of Missouri 38 Alternate Chair at altchair@eamo.org for more information.

Jim F, Area 38 Chair

FROM OUR AREA ARCHIVES CHAIR...

AA Group Histories

Does your home group have a group history? If you do not know, it is easy enough to check. Near the EAMO Archives display at every assembly there are three binders which contain all the group histories on record for each district. If you find that your group does not have a group history on record, there are envelopes available (also at the assemblies) which contain a simple form along with easy instructions for filling out a group history. You can also check to see if your group has a history by contacting the EAMO Archives by email at archives@eamo.org. A group history form can also be obtained online at eamo.org. At the website click on "Area Service Committees", then click on "Archives", then click on "Eastern Missouri Archives Group History Report". The pdf form can be filled out and printed or filled out and saved and attached to an email you can send to archives@eamo.org. Also note you can view, print or download the instructions for filling out a group history ("*Group History Guide*"). A group's history is an important part of each home group. It contains information on when, where, why and how the group started. Group histories also may contain the names of the group founders and any changes, events, or issues that the group may have experienced over the years. Group histories can act as a source of value and harmony which strengthen the group. The traditions and concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous demonstrate that the A.A. group is the foundation of our fellowship and as stated in our First Tradition: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity."

District Histories

Why and how do we preserve district histories? The answer is that the collection of district histories is a valuable tool for each district. And the way we preserve district histories is by passing on district meeting minutes, meeting agendas, treasurer's reports, district newsletters, district event flyers, and workshop flyers to EAMO Archives. Also, how can district histories help those who are currently participating in service work in the Districts? The answer is that district officers and committee chairs can use meeting minutes to see how the district has evolved and see how the district has worked through past issues. Additionally, when considering potential district workshops, the district can see what worked well in the past and help decide what new topics would work best for their district. If those currently in service at the district are interested in publishing a newsletter, they could look back and see whether their district had a newsletter in the past or if other districts have newsletters currently or in the past which could serve as a model or a source of ideas or topics. Also, those who are considering developing a flyer could see what may have worked well in the past. Often within past treasurer's reports, districts can see how district budgets were worked out and how such things as prudent reserves have been formulated for their district as well as other districts. In sum, district histories not only demonstrate the strengths of each district, but also how those strengths were developed. Having said all of that, each district can be instrumental in the preservation of their district's history by emailing district meeting minutes, meeting agendas, treasurer's reports, district newsletters, district event flyers, and workshop flyers to EAMO Archives at either archives@eamo.org or minutes@eamo.org.

AN AA'S EXPERIENCE – CORRECTIONS:

“I have nothing to offer...”

When I came into the program I did not feel like I have anything to offer anyone. Pitiful was a perfect word to describe me. I was introduced to the circle and triangle and told I needed each pillar of the program to stay sober – Unity, Service, Recovery. Also, I was told to stay around newcomers I will by default be in all three pillars. Around a year sober I was sitting in a district 14 GSR meeting while the corrections chair announced an opportunity to speak in prison. Those feelings all came back to me. I have never been in prison. I could not help – I have nothing to offer them. The next month the corrections chair announced the same opportunity. This time I took action and got the phone number to call and inquire. I talked to my sponsor and he said “They know how to drink and get in trouble, they are in prison. They need help on how to stay sober and that is what you have to offer them.” Since I became a Volunteer in Corrections (VIC) I have learned not only do the offenders want to hear about sobriety, they do not care how you came into the rooms. They want to know, as the Big Book states, our experience. It does not matter if we were in prison or not. They want to hear about the Steps and Traditions. They want to hear about the solution, not the problem.

The gratitude I receive leaving prison after a meeting is something I can't describe. I tell AAs all the time to come speak with us in a prison. The number one thing I hear is “I have nothing to offer them”. I explain to them what my sponsor told me. One thing I didn't have when starting my journey carrying the message into prisons was a place to see what carrying the message into correctional facilities is like. I am excited to say the National Corrections Conference will be held in St. Louis from November 10 to 12, 2017. This is going to be an excellent place to come and see what happens in the prison system with AA - without actually going into a prison. There are flyers all over the city and you can go to nationalcorrectionsconference.org to register. The purpose of the weekend is for AA members involved in correction work *behind the walls* to come together, share experience, exchange information, and hear from corrections professionals, former inmates, and other trusted servants throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Please come and spend this special weekend with us.

Jeff Haney, P.I. Chair National Corrections Conference 2017, Area 38 Corrections Chair

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES...

<u>Women's Luncheon</u> Orlando's Events Centers, Catering & Special Event Design 2050 Dorsett Village, Maryland Heights, MO 63043	May 7, 11:30 – 1:30
<u>District 1 & 2 Picnic</u> Tower Grove Park - Old Playground Pavilion	May 20, 12:00 – 4:00
<u>Area 38 Summer Assembly</u> Holiday Inn, Watson and Kirkwood Rd, Saint Louis, MO	June 24, 9:00 – 4:00
<u>Missouri State Convention</u> Capital Plaza Hotel, 415 W. McCarty St., Jefferson City, MO 65101 Call: 1-800-338-8088	August 4-6
<u>National AA Technology Workshop</u> Sacramento, CA	September 8-10
<u>National Corrections Conference</u> Saint Louis, MO	November 10-12

To submit an article, event, or other item for possible publication in the Gratitude Gazette, please email gazette@eamo.org. Letters can be mailed to: Editor, Gratitude Gazette, c/o EAMO Office, 14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144, St. Louis, MO 63143.

Disclaimer: The Gratitude Gazette is published by the Gratitude Gazette committee, Eastern Area of Missouri of Alcoholics Anonymous. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not those of AA as a whole. AA has not endorsed the contents of the Gratitude Gazette.