

MARGENSER

Fostering Unity and Carrying the A.A. Message in Area 29 MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE

Delegates Corner: The Journey in Service and Moving Forward

Tom R, Area 29 Panel 28 Delegate

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve Area 29 over the past two years as your Panel 58 Delegate. Moving forward, I am excited about whatever path God has in front of me. Over the past year we have continued meeting with our six Regional Panels, reviewing the Advisory Actions and Additional Committee Considerations of the 59th General Service Conference. We saw an Agenda Item submitted by Area 29 for this year's General Service Conference approved by the Conference and forwarded as an Advisory Action. This year, Area 29 has submitted a request for an Agenda Item for the 60th General Service Conference, that request starting from a discussion in one of our Districts. We expect more requests for Agenda Items to be presented by our Regional Panels, and forwarded on for consideration for the 60th General Service Conference.

Over this past year our Area 29 Workshop Committee's "travelling road show" has helped facilitate many District workshops

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Spirit of Rotation

Nancy B, Area 29 Alternate Delegate

The following is a workshop presentation I was asked to give on "The Spirit of Rotation". I have to chuckle at the opportunities God gives me to take a closer look at myself. My sponsor uses an expression I can relate to... "We teach best what we most need to learn".

My first service job, after set-up person at my home group, was Intergroup Rep. My sponsor at the time, who was secretary of Intergroup, handed me her notebook at one monthly meeting and asked me to take the minutes for her the next month. I had that job for two years. I didn't understand that secretary was an elected position, and apparently my sponsor didn't either. I later became chairperson of my home group and allowed the members of my group to continue re-electing me for about four years.

Up until a few years ago, the spirit of rotation was somewhat foreign to me. Oh, I had an idea what it was, but like so many things in AA, I didn't think it applied to me in most cases. I wanted to hang on to most of my service jobs because I liked

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Edwin Throckmorton Thacher April 29, 1896 – March 21, 1966 Part #1

Ron M, BYOB, Easton, MD

While delving into the history of A.A. and looking at the icons who were the bedrock and foundation of our program one name stands out and that person is Edwin Throckmorton Thacher otherwise know as "EBBY". Without Ebby, quite possibly, A.A. would have never evolved.

Ebby was born in Albany, N.Y. in 1896 and was the youngest of five brothers. He came from a very well to do family headed by his father who founded a family owned foundry that manufactured railroad car wheels. His education included attending Albany Academy, a highly prestigious private school. All his brothers graduated, but

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MARGENSER STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Area 29 MARGENSER newsletter is published to foster unity and facilitate communication among AA members, groups, districts, and intergroups within the Maryland General Service Area. The MARGENSER aims to be instrumental in carrying the AA message. This quarterly newsletter seeks to publish AA-related material, including personal stories of experience, strength, and hope. Material will be reviewed by the MARGENSER committee chairperson or by a member of the committee. Nothing published in the MARGENSER should be thought of as a statement of Area 29 or AA policy. Finally, publication shall not constitute endorsement by the newsletter itself, Area 29, intergroups, districts, local groups, or AA as a whole.

Traditions, Traditions, Wherefore Art Thou?

Ron M, *BYOB, Easton, MD*

"I'm an Alcoholic and a....." How many times have I heard that phrase at meetings over recent years? As society changes, so do our habits and unfortunately not always for the better. Important lessons learned in the past seem to fade away. In his writings, Bill W. indicated that the traditions came about to be sure we did not make the same mistakes that proved fatal previously.

Tradition #5 specifically addresses our singleness of purpose. To carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. In many instances he refers to the Washingtonian movement which began in the mid-1800's. Very shortly they numbered in the thousands. Bill reflected that they had the solution to the problem of alcoholism long before A.A. came along. He noted, however, that they diverted their attention to other problems of the day such as prohibition, politics, religion and the abolition of slavery. All of these timely problems were valid but diverted the movement from the issue at hand. As a result, due to internal squabbling, in a few years they had disappeared. Bill recognized that in order to meet the test of time and survive, a single purpose was the answer. The result was Tradition #5. His observation... "that sometimes the good is the enemy of the best" very succinctly addresses the problem.

From time to time it is stated that drugs are mentioned in the Big Book and also that Bill himself took drugs. That is certainly true, but it is also true that Bill is the author of the Traditions, and to expand on major issues he drafted other documents in an attempt to protect the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. One such effort is the pamphlet "Problems Other Than Alcohol" that was published by Grapevine Inc. in 1958. In it he very specifically talks to the issue of drug addiction and goes on to say that there is no way of making nonalcoholic addicts into A.A. members.

Obviously, this issue has been brewing for quite a while. The 1987 General Service Conference produced what has come to be

known as the "BLUE CARD". One side addresses an open meeting, and the other side a closed meeting. Both sides of the card however, request participants to confine their comments to the problems with alcohol.

Everyone in A.A. has other living problems and to specifically identify any one issue is an attempt to expand the base upon which membership is predicated and that could easily lead to the exclusion of the still suffering alcoholic. Let us leave other issues outside the rooms of A.A. and focus on our one common problem. ▲

(Edwin T. Thacher....)continued from page 1...

Ebby was reported as being a lackluster student and did not complete the course of studies. The family spent their summers in Manchester, Vermont, seven miles from Bill's home town of East Dorset, Vermont. Lois was also a part of this summer crowd and so the major players were in place for one of the major movements of the 20th century. Ebby was impressed with Bill's pitching in local games and reported meeting him in 1910 or 1911. Ebby is quoted as saying that the day he turned 19 (the then drinking age in Vermont) he went into Albany's Hotel Ten Eyck and ordered a beer and promptly went to work in the family business which lasted until 1922 when the business closed. It is reported that his father gave each of the sons \$150,000 which Ebby slowly but surely proceeded to squander. The years of 1920 – 1933 saw some additional details being added to A.A.'s evolution. Records reveal the drinking of both men escalated, Ebby lost his job, Ebby's mother died in 1927 and his father died in 1929. For a short time, before the stock market crash of 1929 he worked unsuccessfully in a brokerage house.

In January of 1929 Bill visited Albany met Ebby and promptly got drunk. At that time a new airport in Manchester, Vermont was about to open. Ebby and Bill hired a pilot and the following day the plane landed to the delight of a large welcoming crowd whereupon they slid out of the plane falling drunk on the ground and thereby christened the new airport. Thereafter, Ebby's drinking

continued to worsen and by 1932 he had to slink off to the family home in Manchester. It is reported that he had to sell some of the furniture to buy booze.

Around the early part of 1934 it is reported that Ebby, while drunk, drove his father's car into a house where an older couple was living. He then stepped out and asked them for a cup of coffee with a little cream and one sugar. The incident has been confirmed but the car and the date may have been his brother's since his father had died in 1929 and Ebby did not have access to a family car in 1934.

At this point some new players arrived on scene. Oxford Group members Rowland H., Shep C., and Cebra G. For some reason they had determined that Ebby was a likely prospect for their spiritual message. It is to be remembered that Ebby came from the upper levels of society and the Oxford Group members were generally of the upper class. The effort turned out to be quite an undertaking. At first he resisted all their efforts until he was threatened to be thrown into jail for a weekend and then would face an unfriendly judge. Rowland H. came forward, agreed to be responsible, and Ebby also promised the judge to stay sober and return to court Monday morning. Returning home he ran to the cellar where he had hidden several bottles of his favorite beer which he had planned to consume as soon as possible. His promise to the judge to stay sober came to mind, and after a mental argument with his conscience gave the beer to a neighbor. Many historians have agreed that this was the turning point which ultimately led to Ebby getting sober with the help of the Oxford Group. Monday came and he showed up in court to be released into the custody of Roland H., who in effect became what is known today as a sponsor. He then introduced Ebby to the Oxford Group and its teachings. Rowland took Ebby to New York City where he stayed with Shep C. for a short period and then moved into Calvary Mission, run by Dr. Sam Shoemaker's Calvary Church on Gramercy Park. (To be continued) ▲

(Spirit of Rotation...) continued from page 1...

doing the work, or I didn't think anyone else would want to do the job I was doing, or I didn't think anyone could do the job as well as I could. Of course, I didn't ask anyone else to do the job, and I certainly didn't walk away from a job so that someone else would have the opportunity to try.

Until the last few years, my service work was done at the local level; my home group and Intergroup. Members were not standing in line to volunteer for service positions which gave me the wonderful opportunity to form resentments and profess to be upset that I HAD to take on a service commitment or continue in a position I had already held for a period of time. The reality is that I was hanging on and justifying what I was doing to cover up my inability to move on and give someone else an opportunity to stay sober...so much for spirituality. I know today that the resentments I was forming and the justifications I used, put me in a position to be hurt, or worse, put me in a position that could have

been detrimental to my sobriety.

I have had the honor and privilege to serve in District 20 as GSR and DCM, and in Area 29 as Host Committee Chair, Area Secretary and now Alternate Delegate. These are two year service positions...period. Knowing that I have a short amount of time to learn about, and contribute to these positions has been the catalyst to spur me on to do as much as I can in this short period of time. I am blessed with new friends in sobriety, outside my home group and district, who have served in these positions and are more than willing to share their experiences and expertise if I ask. I have availed myself of a sponsor who not only lives the twelve steps and twelve traditions of this program, but has also served in most every service position. She has been a wealth of information for me on the Steps, Traditions and Concepts. She has gently nudged me outside my comfort zone and pulled me back when I appear to be over-committing or hanging on. She reminds me that it is better to do one or two

things well, than many things half way.

As I have rotated out of service positions (sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly) I have been able to watch members rotate in and see them contribute their experiences and knowledge; offering fresh ideas to the positions I have vacated. Others certainly DO have much to offer. There certainly ARE new ideas and new ways of doing things. And there is much for me to learn in new jobs so that I do not become complacent, apathetic or stagnant.

Tradition Two reminds us that our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. A 1985 Grapevine article says it all: "Embedded in this tradition is the principle of rotation of trusted servants. [There are those] who fail to grasp the great spiritual and practical value of rotation.

- By limiting the time an individual may serve in a specific position, we avoid 'empire building', 'vested interests', or

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(Delegates Corner) continued from page 1...

around Maryland. Likewise, many Districts have assembled panels of beautiful A.A.s sharing their experience, strength and hope on a wide range of topics related to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. Our Intergroup Liaison Committee has continued to reach out to our ten Intergroups, and hosted a phenomenally attended Soberfest and Day of Sharing. Our Area Finance Committee has helped carry information to the Area, Districts and groups on self support and where our dollar (or two dollars) in the basket goes. Our Area 29 Special Needs Committee has become a stand-alone Ad Hoc Committee this year, to correspond with Special Needs becoming a Conference Committee (combined at the General Service Conference with Treatment Facilities.) These are but a few examples of the work and services *all* of our committees are performing. Many of our Districts are working now with Special Needs, and with Bridging the Gap, Treatment Facilities, P.I. and C.P.C committees. We are seeing inactive Districts become active once again. A recent example is District 22 in Annapolis meeting for the first

time since 2001, and electing a D.C.M. and alternate D.C.M.

Our State Convention and Fall Conference committees and many, many volunteers have worked diligently on our Area conventions and remind us all, newcomer and long timer alike that we are not a glum lot. The Area 29 Mini Conference and Regional Panel process not only has provided all A.A.s the opportunity to become informed on all of the business to be discussed at the General Service Conference each year, they have informed your delegate on the facts and how the Fellowship feels about all of the Conference Agenda Items. And on the topic of conventions and conferences, many A.A.s in Maryland have registered already for the 2010 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in San Antonio, Texas. Registration is available online at www.aa.org. Since registration opened on September 1, 2009, over 20,000 worldwide have registered in the first month. Hotel space in downtown San Antonio has filled however hotel space outside of town continues to be available. I hope many will be

able to help celebrate A.A.'s 75th anniversary in San Antonio on July 1 – 4, 2010.

And finally, Bill W. wrote in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, "Still more wonderful is the feeling that we do not have to be specially distinguished among our fellows to be useful and profoundly happy. Not many of us can be leaders of prominence, nor do we wish to be. Service, gladly rendered, obligations squarely met, troubles well accepted or solved with God's help, the knowledge that at home or in the world outside we are partners in a common effort, the well-understood fact that in God's light all human beings are important, the proof that love freely given surely brings a full return, the certainty that we are no longer isolated and alone in self-constructed prisons, the surety that we need no longer be square pegs in round holes but can fit and belong in God's scheme of things these are the permanent and legitimate satisfactions of right living for which no amount of pomp and circumstance, no heap of material possessions, could possibly be substitutes."

Thank you for allowing me to serve. ☺

(Spirit of Rotation...) continued from page 3...


any of those phrases that signify bureau cracies.

- We are able to attract a larger number of people into service, and new areas of service are constantly opening up.
- Fresh approaches are encouraged; new ideas are inevitable. And we can guarantee enthusiasm from these newer members.
- The spiritual benefits of rotation begin with the fact that rotation is an exercise in humility. It makes us realize that while we have a proprietary interest in the Fellowship, none of us has proprietary right to any specific service position.
- Rotation is a catalyst for personal growth, a chance to learn again to surrender, with grace, to the wishes of the Fellowship. It symbolizes the Twelfth Tradition's reminder to place principles before personalities."

A December 1999 Grapevine article reads... "All of us trusted servants will rotate from the jobs we are doing, and other people will come in to take our places. One door closes and another one always opens if we are spiritually on track, keeping our recovery programs strong and practicing the principles of love and service in all our affairs.

Rotation allows us to grow in God's grace as we move on to other opportunities and permit others to share in the joys of service in Alcoholics Anonymous. It prevents us from becoming the experts that we once thought we were and from being so entrenched in a job that we get stale and unenthusiastic. Problems based on personalities are prevented; no power or prestige gets built up; no individual gets taken advantage of and imposed upon; and the great blessings of giving service are shared by more and more members.

Stepping out of an AA office that you love very much can be a real step forward in growth--a step into the humility which is the spiritual essence of anonymity. Spiritual anonymity in AA means that we forego personal prestige for any AA work that we do in order to help other alcoholics. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no AA status at stake, we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed, and we don't have to compete for any titles or praise."

I have a long way to go, and the more I learn the less I know. But I think I can now gladly rotate from any service opportunities I am privileged to be offered; giving others the same opportunities for growth that I have been given. In this way, I can continue to grow in usefulness to my higher power and to the fellowship I serve. 

THE MARGENSER IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

The Margenser Committee welcomes submissions. We are here to serve you. Submissions should be no more than 750 words and about service or recovery. Please include your first name, last initial and home group. Email all correspondence to Margenser@marylandAA.org or mail to Maryland General Services, P.O. Box 2683, Salisbury, MD 21802. The submission deadline for the next issue is February 1, 2010.

REACHING OUT TO THE "DARK DISTRICTS"

Many of our neighbors do not actively participate in Area 29, nor are their voices heard within AA as a whole. We encourage you to reach out to those districts without active GSRs or DCMs, sharing your experience of service beyond the home group and carrying the message one-on-one. Area 29 welcomes your ideas on how we can best do this and offers our support.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO...

In accordance with the 7th Tradition and abiding by the group conscience of your home group, you may send contributions in support of Area 29 to:

Maryland General Service, Inc.
P.O. Box 2683
Salisbury, MD 21802


Western New York Area 50
 welcomes you to the
 19th annual

NERAASA 2010

NORTHEAST REGIONAL ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SERVICE ASSEMBLY
 2010 GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE THEME
 "Practicing AA's Principles - The Pathway to Unity"
 NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK
 FEBRUARY 26TH, 27TH AND 28TH, 2010

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA) is for GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee Members and Intergroup and Central Office Representatives of the Northeast Region to discuss General Service Conference related issues and concerns affecting A.A. as a whole, as well as pertinent aspects of recovery, unity and service common to the Areas of the Northeast Region.

ALL A.A. MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!

[REGISTER ONLINE NOW](https://neraasa.org/NERAASA_2010_Online.html)

https://neraasa.org/NERAASA_2010_Online.html

LOCATION: Niagara Falls Conference Center

DEADLINES:

Hotel Registration January 25, 2010
 Event & Meal Registrations February 12, 2010
 Registration available on-site

ON SITE REGISTRATION:

Begins at 1:00 pm Friday February 26

FIRST PANEL:

Begins at 3:00 pm Friday February 26

KICK OFF AA MEETING :

Thursday Night at 8:00 pm February 25
 At the Crowne Plaza Hotel

Panel Presentations / Floor Discussions on Issues Affecting AA Today
 Northeast Regional Trustees Report

Saturday Buffet followed by an AA Speaker Meeting / Round Table Sharing Sessions on:

- AA Literature
- Archives
- Area / District Chairperson
- Central Office / Intergroup
- Cooperation with the Professional Community
- District Committee Members
- Bridging the Gap
- Grapevine/La Viña
- Hispanic Community (La Comunidad Hispánica)
- Newsletter
- Public Information
- Treatment Facilities
- General Service Representatives
- Website
- Young People
- Area / District Registrars
- Area / District / Group Secretaries
- Area / District / Group Treasurers
- Correctional Facilities
- Special Needs / Remote

OPENING FOR NONTRUSTEE APPOINTED COMMITTEE MEMBER on Trustees' Committee on Corrections

From: Kenneth B _____, Chair, Trustees' Committee on Corrections, General Services Office, New York, New York

The trustees' Committee on Corrections of the General Service Board has an opening for a nontrustee appointed committee member. We are searching for qualified individuals to fill this position and would appreciate any recommendations.

Because of recent changes to the publication schedule of Box 4-5-9, announcement of this opening will not be able to appear in that publication in a timely manner. The committee hopes that everyone who receives this correspondence will share this information with

others, so that all qualified and interested individuals have the opportunity to apply.

As you know, the success of our General Service Board rests not only on the capabilities of the trustees themselves but also on the competence of the nontrustee committee members, corporate Board Directors, and Staff members who actively carry on A.A.'s world services.

Some of the qualities most desirable for this nontrustee opening are:


1. Expertise in Correctional Facilities work.
2. Available time to attend the meetings of the trustees' committee to which appointed and general sharing session.
3. Attendance at the Saturday night dinner and A.A. meeting during Board weekends is optional.
4. At least five years of continuous sobriety.
5. The ability to work within the committee structure.
6. Activity in A.A. service.

Attached is a resumé form that should be completed by applicants for this opening and returned to the General Service Office by December 15, 2009.

All applicants will be considered and all will be advised by the secretary of the committee when a selection has been approved by the trustee' Nominating Committee. Appointed committee members are appointed for one year but the term may be extended if needed (maximum four years).

Should the applicant be a past General Service Conference Delegate, he/she is not eligible to apply for the opening until one year after his/her last Conference.

We look forward to receiving the resumé's of your suggested applicants.

Note: In seeking applications for all vacancies in Alcoholics Anonymous, the Fellowship is committed to creating a large applicant file of qualified persons which reflects the inclusiveness and diversity of A.A. itself. 

MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE 2010 CALENDAR

February 20	Committee	TBA
February 26-28	NERAASA	The Crowne Plaza Hotel, 300 Third St., Niagara Falls, NY 14303 1-800-227-6963 or 1-800-2CROWNE
March 12-14	NERD (Delegates Only)	TBA
March 20	Assembly	TBA
April 9-11	Mini Conference	TBA
April 18-24	General Services Conference	Rye Town Hilton, Rye, NY
May 15	Assembly (Report Back)	TBA
June 17-20	Maryland State Convention	TBA
July 1-4	International Convention	San Antonio, TX
July 17	Committee	TBA
August 14	Assembly	TBA
September 18	Committee	TBA
October 16	Assembly (Area Inventory)	TBA
November 20	Committee	TBA
December 18	Assembly	TBA

**APPOINTED COMMITTEE MEMBER RESUME SHEET
GENERAL SERVICE BOARD COMMITTEES**

TRUSTEES' COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS

NAME: _____ RESIDENCE PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____ BUSINESS PHONE: _____

FAX: _____
e-mail address: _____

DATE OF SOBRIETY: _____ EDUCATION: _____

SPECIAL OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

A.A. BACKGROUND

CURRENT AND PAST ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE A.A.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: _____
DATE: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE ATTACHED.
(Rev. 11/5/09)

MARGENSER

P.O. Box 2683
Salisbury, MD 21802

STANDARD RATE
US POSTAGE
PAID
CLINTON, MD 20735
Permit No. 4543

Return Service Requested

MARGENSER Mailing List Update Form

Send to _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip Code _____

New Correction Change

Group Individual

Email form to: Margenser@marylandAA.org or
mail to Maryland General Services, P.O. Box 2683,
Salisbury, MD 21802