



REMOTE COMMUNITIES COMMUNICATOR

THE MILITARY AS A REMOTE COMMUNITY

2018 PRE-CONFERENCE REMOTE COMMUNITIES MEETING

IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY

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The 2018 Pre-Conference Remote Communities Meeting

The Military as a Remote Community

The theme for this year's Pre-Conference Remote Communities Meeting at the 68th General Service Conference is "The Military as a Remote Community." This theme came out of the work of the 67th General Service Conference's Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

Our hope is that through the presentations and discussion held at this, the 2018 Pre-Conference Remote Communities Meeting, we begin to address the question of whether we can, or even should, consider the members of our Canadian and US Militaries, both Active and Retired as well as their dependents, as belonging to a form of remote community and, if so, how best can we carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those communities, and, just as importantly, receive their message of hope and recovery.

The definition of Remote Communities is generally understood to be "Any community where it is difficult to carry the message because of language, culture or geography". However, each Area determines how to apply this definition to its specific circumstances. While it would seem easy to classify those members of our militaries deployed in distant lands as remote communities, we hope, through this discussion, to discover what other circumstances, if any, might lead to considering this diverse community in service to our countries as a form or forms of remote communities.

We want to thank all of those who have submitted articles for publication in this year's issue of the Remote Communities Communicator as well as our presenters this year: Dee Payton—Area 03 Arizona, Roger Wheatley—Area 26 Kentucky, Jean-Noel Leclerc—Area 88 Southeast Quebec, as well as the staff at the GSO for all the hard work that goes into planning and implementation of this meeting.

Yours in Fellowship, Gratitude, and Service,

Co-Chair

Phil W., Panel 67 Delegate

Area 42 Nevada

Co-Chair

Bob H., Panel 67 Delegate Area

17 Hawai'i

A Brief History of the Pre-Conference Remote Communities Meeting

This is a brief re-cap of the history leading up to the start of the Pre-Conference Remote Communities meeting.

1970's: The need for the special attention to Remote Communities efforts was identified back in the 70's or perhaps maybe even before that.

July 1993: An informal meeting concerning remote communities was held in Toronto, during the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of A.A. in Canada. Not much happened other than the fact that the need was expressed that something had to be done and members were encouraged to do what they were already doing in their areas.

February 1996: At the Western Canada Regional Forum in Calgary, the then Trustee-at-Large Canada organized a breakfast meeting with delegates, trustees and the GSO Manager to discuss creating a Canadian committee that would deal with some perceived remote communities issues. Outcome of meeting: needed to create a committee, needed to get support to set up a luncheon at the upcoming General Service Conference and work towards holding a special conference geared toward establishing a working committee consisting of 14 Canadian Areas and Alaska.

April 1996: Met over lunch at the 46th General Service Conference with some delegates, some GSO staff and Board members to discuss the movement and to move ahead. A staff member was assigned to help coordinate efforts.

July 1996: In Toronto, the first Remote Communities Conference was held with all 15 Delegates. Several areas reported on the history of remote communities work. It was determined that a remote community was any community to which it was difficult to carry the message because of language, culture or geography. It was also determined from that meeting that we needed to continue to meet and the most effective time would be prior to the yearly General Service Conferences.

1997: The Remote Communities Committee met prior to the opening of the 47th General Service Conference. In attendance were the original 15 delegates a few invited delegates from the US areas that experienced some of the same concerns, several trustees and GSO staff members. The 'remote communities' definition was reviewed and recommitted to, as was the purpose of the committee. The only action taken at this meeting was to open up the membership to the whole conference. It was determined that after 1997 the committee should have 4 co-chairs, one each from Western and Eastern Canada and one each from each side of the Mississippi in the US. A newsletter was also to be developed to assist in reporting what was happening in this vital area of 12th step work.

Present: The Pre-Conference Remote Communities meeting continues with 2 co-chairs and a staff member who provides support and assistance to the chairs of this committee as well the newsletter (Remote Communities Communicator) continues to be produced.

Area 02 Alaska

We happy to announce that we now have an active area committee for Remote Communities. Our area handbook has been revised to include duties and responsibilities for the committee. We are working on establishing a budget, which we hope will be approved at our next budget assembly.



The committee structure is developing nicely. There seem to be a growing excitement on how to reach folks in remote areas of Alaska. We are working to establish Remote Communities Committees at each of our districts.

A workshop was given at our recent Area Assembly and it was well attended. The discussion was about the many different ways we can carry the message to people who are geographic remote. Also it was mention about how we must cultural sensitivity when reaching out to a native village.

There are two Alaska Bush telephone meetings and a third one will be starting next month.

These telephone meetings typically have 20-30 people on the line from Alaska the lower 48 and even Australia.

We are researching how to do video conferencing meetings like our fellow members in Canada are doing.

Nothing works better than a face to face AA meeting. That is why district 8 has supported an annual 12 step

trip to a remote area in Alaska. This year they will be going to Kotzebue.

As one member from New York City said to us recently, "I thought I was going to any length to carry the message when I walked two blocks from my apt to attend a meeting. I can't believe that you folks in Alaska get on airplanes and fly somewhere to hold AA meeting!!!! "That gentleman called GSO and sent us a box of big books to take with us and give out.



The generously and support from AA members to do this important work here in Alaska has been a spiritual experience for me. Bill W., states directly, "Our 12th Step—carrying the message—is the basic service that our fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence."

We live in an exciting time with the advancement of technologies. We are embracing how to better use this technology in our 12 Step work, always remembering the traditions we live by us

A last year 10 of us went to the top of Alaska Utqiagvik (Barrow) and had a wonderful week-end sharing our experience, strength and hope.

Thanks for allowing me to be of service.

Tandy W. Area 02 Remote Communities Chair



Area 03 Arizona

In the early 1980's, Danny B., a Navajo Professor at Northern Arizona University, interpreted a portion of Chapter 5 on to a cassette tape. It was well liked, but nothing else was done. In the late 1990's, Rod B. and Bob C. were attending a special forum in Windowrock, Arizona, and the subject of a Navajo interpretation resurfaced. After that a Navajo member named Milfred interpreted a portion of Chapter 5 that had been well received. Rusty and Bob went over to his house, and in 25 minutes he interpreted the remaining portion of Chapter 5. Bob and Rusty were somewhat skeptical of this interpretation, and after consulting with another Navajo member, decided that it did not convey the true message of Chapter 5. The biggest difficulty in interpreting anything into Navajo is that Navajo is not a written language, just a spoken one. Things were pretty much at a standstill, until about eight years ago, when Rod B. was elected as the first Native American, and Navajo, trustee. He was instrumental in providing a push to AAWS to take on the interpretation of the Big Book into Navajo. AAWS hired World Translations to forward this project. World Translations came in contact with Eugene, a DJ at one of the Navajo radio stations, and hired him to interpret Chapter 5. A couple of AA members of the Navajo Nation, Karen and Priscilla, volunteered to properly vet the interpretation and provide feedback.

Karen and Priscilla, with some help from some inmates from the local prisons, worked for over a year with the interpreter until finally developing an interpretation they felt was accurate. During this time, Area 3 Delegate Dave M. was a strong advocate of the process. After the interpretation of Chapter 5 was complete, AAWS gave the go ahead to continue with the interpretation. Greg T, who was the publications director at AAWS, recruited the Panel 64 Delegate from Area 3, Kathi F., to Chair the committee and follow through on the project. This committee consisted of World Translations, GSO, and members of the Navajo Nation. Through many challenges Eugene, the original Navajo DJ, came back into the picture, and he weathered many trials during the process, including a fire on the Reservation, and personal and family illnesses.

It was decided to interpret the first 164 pages, the Doctor's Opinion, the four forwards, Doctor Bob's Nightmare, two Native American stories, and the appendices. Once these had been completed, there was still the issue of vetting the final interpretation. Most of the people involved were no longer available to perform this very time-consuming process, so during a conference call to GSO, it was decided to go ahead with the interpretation as presented.

During this year's AA Red Road Conference in Albuquerque, the first copy of this interpretation will be presented to the Navajo Nation. The CD cover will have a picture of a Navajo basket on it. The 12 steps were played at this year's PRAASA in Sparks, Nevada. During the open mic session, a Navajo member of AA came up to the mic and expressed her gratitude to AA for providing this tool for her people. There was not a dry eye in the room.

Towards the end of 2017, Area 3 also funded a PSA in both English and Navajo that is played on six Navajo radio stations. This PSA was also played at the 2017 November Assembly in Yuma, Arizona.

One other Remote Community that is being investigated are the Military bases. There are presently seven active military bases in Arizona, three Air Force, three Army, and one Marine, with over 17,900 active duty and 14,700 reserve members. At this point in time, non-military are not allowed to bring meetings on the bases. In a discussion with a retired Air Force Major, the reasoning behind this is to protect the anonymity of the military personnel. If someone were to come on the base and see someone at a meeting in their uniform, they might recognize them if the military personnel was off of the base, and could potentially do them harm just because they are in the military. The Remote Communities Coordinator is presently gathering information from some AA members with ties to the military to see what support can be provided to these remote communities.

Area 15 South Florida

Are We Carrying the Message to Everyone?

Area 15 Remote Communities Committee's mission is to serve A.A. in places where it is challenging to carry the message because of **L**anguage (linguistics and dialect), **C**ulture (customs and beliefs), and **G**eography (distance and locale). Over the years we noticed that we were missing a certain population when we were trying to reach "remote" prospects under the umbrella of Treatment and Accessibilities (formerly, "special needs").

Creating awareness of our mission has been one of the biggest challenges over recent years. Therefore, the first step was to define what a "remote community" is and conversely what it's not. Places considered remote by some are not considered remote by those who live there. We say for example, "Know that 'far' or 'distant' does not necessarily equal 'remote'. It's not the jungle, desert, or frozen tundra" as spirited imaginations can conceive; "remote" could be three blocks away if language and culture are barriers.

When I first took on a *remote communities* service commitment, I figured my car should be better maintained than my Steps and Traditions in order to trudge that proverbial road. My Sponsor set me straight on that early on. He told me that all **three** barriers, not just geography, could separate a willing person from our lifesaving program of recovery. By breaking down the other barriers of language and culture, we could reach out to *everyone*. We had to ask ourselves "are these folks, groups, and loners being visited and helped?" (from Chapter 5 of the Service Manual). Were we reaching that alcoholic in isolation?

We started small by defining our mission, vision, and what we do. We then identified remote groups, members, and potentials. We developed service pieces within the Area and then showed others in Districts how to do it autonomously. We have taken Big Books and literature to the Bahamas and Cuba, discovered a meeting in Russian, started meetings in Cayman Brac (the easternmost island of the Cayman Islands), made outreach to migrant farm workers, and meet quarterly at an Area Assembly to share information and ideas.

Although it may appear we overlap some of the work of the PI, CPC, Treatment, and Accessibilities, we serve a different need. We do often work closely with other General Service Committees and help fill the gap in overall 12-step work. By reaching out to various "inaccessible" communities that might not fall within the vision of other committees, we, in essence "build bridges and fill gaps."

Three Districts have expressed challenges reaching the Haitian Community, which many consider a large underserved segment. We are currently addressing concerns regarding real and/or perceived prejudice, racism, and exclusion due to cultural and/or religious differences. We are trying to reach people of this and other cultural groups reporting stigma associated with Alcoholism in their community. We are trying to connect *remote* persons and groups with ongoing "sponsorship" more effectively. There are folks that want to get sober but there seems to be very little if any effective materials to attract. We have found very little Guidelines and translated A.A. approved literature to bring during these endeavors. We are willing to create it if need be. We are currently developing an Area "Kit", for example, with materials translated into Creole and Russian.

We found that Anonymity concerns can cause people to be reluctant to start groups and/or attend AA meetings because they are concerned that they will be "ID'd" as AA members. Therefore, when reaching out to alcoholics living in small communities, we simply share our 12th tradition to put them at ease.

In conclusion, having some challenges appears to be indicative of the renewed *contagious enthusiasm* for this service over the past few years. The biggest challenge we are facing currently is not in the form of geography, but rather in the customs and traditions of certain demographic communities. If a road map is needed to find remote communities, we currently have a perfectly and absolutely blank one... and that's simply lovely.

~ General Service Area 15 Remote Communities Committee

Area 17 Hawai`i

Aloha kakou. Area 17, Hawai`i, often described as a remote community comprised of remote communities, is located over 2000 miles from the mainland at the nearest point. Not only are we geographically remote from our nearest A.A. neighbors, each of our islands is geographically remote from each other.

Our residents are culturally diverse, comprised of ethnic Hawaiians, other South Pacific Islanders, as well as populations from across Asia, Europe, and the mainland. Walking on our streets you'll hear a variety of languages as well as Pidgin English, truly a language of its own, a melange of the languages of all the cultures that have arrived, often to work as plantation agricultural workers in past times.

A.A. arrived in Hawai`i during W.W. II and was, at least at first, found only among the caucasian community. Of course alcoholism knows no bounds and during the 70's and 80's members of all our communities began to find recovery in the rooms. Today A.A. in Hawai`i is as diverse as our population as a whole.

The military presence in Hawai`i is tremendous with large bases found on Oahu including the famous Pearl Harbor. As such we do see a lot of military members, especially in meetings held near military communities. There are also meetings held on some bases, sometimes open to the non-military public. Further, many of our members in meetings all around the state are military dependents as well as large numbers of retired military members who've chosen to retire in paradise.

As such we have not, at least in recent years, treated our 'local military' as remote communities. Indeed, when A.A. first came to the islands it may have been the rest of the community that was remote from military members, as meetings were held by

military men and contractors during W.W. II.

However, given the number of members of the military stationed here, and the large presence of the navy, we do have a significant population deployed on station outside of Hawai`i. Currently I do not know of specific outreach to these members outside of those provided by their sponsors or within the military itself. I have sponsored men who have been deployed to the Mid-East and I know they have been grateful for communications from back home, in my case through regular email.

Our efforts in reaching out to remote communities in Hawai`i in recent times has generally been facilitated by local members on their own initiative reaching out in different ways.

Culturally

As alluded to at the beginning of this article, A.A. was comprised mainly of caucasian members into the late 1970's and early 1980's. It was only when a small group of Hawaiian members found recovery and began outreach to their own community did A.A. find a foothold among the non-caucasian population. We currently are beginning to reach out to the communities of Pacific Islanders recently arriving in Hawai`i, specifically those from Micronesia. Given language barriers, we have found that until we at least have a few native speaking members in recovery, it is hard to breach the culture gap.

Linguistically

Among the local population present for more than a generation we have found that English and Pidgin are generally well understood and communications at meetings are generally fine. There have been some attempts to reach the Micronesian population including (continued...)

Area 17 Hawai`i (continued)

open meetings with non-alcoholic members of that community who do speak English translating for the members who do not. We have had discussions in the past about translation of A.A. literature, but efforts have fallen short as of this date.

Geographically

Maui County is comprised of the island of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai with the former being lightly populated. Members on Maui have created a number ongoing events in conjunction with members on Lanai and Molokai that have been beneficial to all. Twice a year members participate in an event known as The Crossing. Here members from Maui travel to the other islands and share in fellowship and meetings. Further on the first Saturday of each month a group from Maui travels by ferry to Lanai for a park meeting and a cook-out.

Also found on Maui is the Caravan to Hana. Hana is a town on Maui quite remote from the rest of the island by a long road that must be driven slowly, partly because of the nature of the road, and, honestly, because it is a lovely drive. The event was originally put together by members from Hana and the rest of the Maui as a way to share in fellowship and recovery.

Social Media and Internate

Over the last few years social media, especially in the form of 'secret groups' has played a big part in unifying our far flung A.A. community across the islands.

Our local YPAA committees and communities have been at the forefront of this recently, especially in recent work on bid committees for both WACYPAA and ICYPAA.

Currently, HUIYPAA, (a hui in Hawai`i is a group of folks who've joined together for any number of reasons) has been holding their

ICYPAA bid committee meetings across the islands joined together by internet video tools. Having attended several both in person and virtually, I have to say it is generally quite successful. Just this past weekend, a joint hike was held on each major island that was shared, privately, between groups, building unity, a sense of community, and shared vision. Efforts like this, though not 'directed' by General Service groups as such, show the potential to use technology to bridge gaps that might otherwise separate us.

Conclusion

This leads me to some thoughts on remote community outreach. I was reminded recently by Maui members that remote community work, like everything in A.A. is not a one-way street. While we sometimes may be tempted to think we are solely reaching out to far flung members, it is equally true that they are reaching out to us. We are sharing in a relationship which benefits both sides. If we forget this, it seems likely that we will not, in the end, build unity between our communities.

Let us remember we must always look at our efforts in light of two questions; does it help the drunk and does it build unity? In reaching out to remote communities, I know I need to remember that the drunk I'm helping may, in fact, be me.

Mahalo,

Bob H.
Area 17 Hawai`i
Panel 67 Delegate

Area 18 Idaho



When we speak of remote communities in Idaho Area 18, we might include language barriers within the Latino communities and cultural barriers within the Shoshone Bannock Tribe near Pocatello and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribe located on south western border of Idaho and into Nevada. But, we can also include the geographic rural communities within the sparsely populated areas in Idaho. This includes small towns in the eastern portion of the state, such as Arco and Spencer or mountain towns such as Stanley or Salmon and all the smaller farming and ranching communities in between. Use of the internet to connect with the remote communities is a great means but it's not a viable solution where technology advancements aren't always reliable or even available in some of these areas. We know of many people who are struggling with alcoholism that live in small towns that are miles away from a town that might have a meeting.

There are some members who carry the message of sobriety to many of these communities in Idaho simply by travelling our wonderful state. Most people in these communities are glad to see and hear from us. What better way is there than to

carry the message and meet with another alcoholic face to face?

Our service members can be considered a remote community because of the vastness of their deployments. There may be reluctance to participate either because of the stigma, security clearances or operational safety. We are people who normally would not mix but it does help to carry the message to like-minded people by like-minded people. For example, I don't have any military experience but a veteran would have a better chance of relatability and respect. It is the common thread that removes that first barrier and the chances of relating become even more inevitable. Veterans Administration Hospitals all have chaplains providing services. Our CPC/PI and TSNAC committees can focus on veterans and reach out to these individuals to gain access.

But some remote communities don't always want to receive our message and we are met with resistance, doubt and/or suspicion. There are some who may perceive our program as a religion and that it may interfere with their traditional ways or independence. There are those, too, who have chosen the physical remoteness because they are self-reliant, strong willed individuals and prefer to be 'loners'. But, if the principles of A.A. are applied and an understanding of commitment and trust is demonstrated, then it will help to let them know that this is not an attempt to change their traditional, cultural and independent way of life, but, rather, A.A. is only going to support and strengthen it with the gift of sobriety.

Area 26 Kentucky

The Military as a Remote Community

Most military bases in the U.S. are located in communities where AA is active. In many cases, those who experience problems with their drinking while serving in uniform have access to the lifesaving message of Alcoholics Anonymous. Whether or not they get the message depends on how well we have done local CPC work and made our presence known to those who might refer the suffering alcoholic. Those professionals include the counselors, medical personnel, chaplains, and commanders at the local post, base, or station.

However, the military does not keep people in one place for long periods of time. The military develops people with a variety of broadening assignments. They also understand the spirit of rotation to infuse new ideas into units and to allow people to have new experiences. Therefore, one challenge is often continuity of those professionals and the CPC work never ends. To the recovering alcoholic and to those who need our help, this turbulence also presents challenges and potentially creates isolation in remote communities where there is no fellowship to draw hope from.

Whether deployed to an austere environment or in a foreign country where military bases are smaller and spread out, an AA member or a suffering alcoholic can find themselves a loner in need of support. This experience has the potential to deepen our reliance on a Higher Power and certainly provides the potential for great spiritual growth. It also has the potential to isolate and challenge our new way of life and depending on circumstances tempt us to think alcohol might be the solution again.

So first let us consider the alcoholic on a deployment whether on a ship, at a FOB (Forward Operating Base) in Afghanistan, or a base in Kuwait. There may be a meeting if you are lucky, but probably not. Sometimes AA members start a meeting to help themselves stay sober on deployment. The most common way to do this is to contact someone with meeting space, most often the chaplain, a commander, or someone from the medical aid station.

The recovering alcoholic is seeking to help themselves stay sober by reaching out to others who are sober or

may need help. Very often they find themselves alone. I placed a notice on the bulletin board during Desert Storm that said "Friends of Bill W meet here every night at 1900 hours". I stood by that bulletin board every night after chow with the Big Book clearly visible in my hand so I would be recognized. Nobody came. I stayed sober anyway and went back to my tent to read the book alone and know that you were out there somewhere.

In Iraq someone successfully started a meeting in 2007. A flyer was made after the chaplain offered meeting space in a trailer used for religious services. The flyer was posted in various locations around and somehow people found it and more than a dozen people came to the first meeting. The topic was "how did you find out about this meeting". One member shared she had overheard a group of service members making fun of the flyer because alcohol is forbidden in this country anyway. She interrupted to ask them where they saw the flyer then went to it and got the location.

In Afghanistan meetings appeared in the larger posts when there were large groups of military personnel around. I was stationed at a FOB near Kabul but we had no meetings. I was able to schedule some business at nearby Camp Eggers where there was a meeting listed on a Tuesday afternoon. It was so wonderful to connect face to face with the 3-4 people at that meeting which included a sober Navy Chaplain and three civilian contract employees.

When military members find themselves a loner or remote with limited AA contact, there are several tools available that can help. Our General Service Office, Loners Internationalists, technology, and our AA literature are among them.

The GSO has always been a beacon of light ever since World War II when Bobby Burger and members of the staff would tirelessly write the members who found themselves in such remote places around the world. That service continues today and helped members find each other in Korea during that conflict, start a meeting in Beirut where a brave Marine began the first meeting that lasted until the barracks were bombed destroying the meeting place and literature where (continued...)

Area 26 Kentucky (continued)

The Military as a Remote Community

this young sober Marine died sober defending us.

Loners Internationalists are members who do not have the luxury of a group. When I first deployed to Desert Shield/Desert Storm, I wrote to the GSO hoping they would forward a copy of Grapevine or something. I did not know what to expect. I was placed on the Loners Internationalist mailing list while I was deployed. I also was placed on a list communicated to groups who wanted to support the troops all over the United States. At the point of loneliness where I contemplated a drink in a country where it was forbidden and started to consider how to do that, a miracle happened. I began to get mail from places I had never been. I got mail from individuals and groups who passed cards around for everyone to sign. I got speaker cassettes and literature, AA Grapevine magazines and just an abundance of love in the mail. In one day I received over 35 pieces of mail. My fellow soldiers could not understand how this could be. I knew they would not understand so I remained anonymous and told them I had a fan club. This incredible gift sustained me and gave me a new and profound love of our fellowship.

Our literature is portable enough to be carried on the battlefield and help pass the message on. In addition to what was sent to me I had a Big Book, 12&12, and an As Bill Sees It. Whenever there was a SCUD warning I would grab one of the books and a picture of my family if possible before running to our sandbag bunker.

By the time I had an experience in Afghanistan the letter mail that I truly loved had been replaced by technology. Now we could enjoy daily email over robust communication networks even though we were in the middle of nowhere. Some of my friends were able to use Skype or other services to have video chat capabilities with their sponsor and other AA members. These great modern inventions have made reaching all remote communities a little easier, and for those who are remote it is a highlight of any day.

Military members also find themselves in remote communities while assigned overseas in well established location. When I got orders to a NATO base in Belgium I found a very small English speaking group on

post. There were about 6 members but due to travel and mission requirements the meeting may have just one person with the door open in case we had a visitor or newcomer to a large meeting with up to 8-10 people. I learned to love that group like no other because we were the only English speaking meeting for about 100 miles. Traveling to Brussels was a great joy when there was an event or to attend their daily meetings. Because we needed each other to stay sober a day at a time, that group of people became the best home group I have ever experienced.

In other parts of Europe there were those fortunate enough to have larger AA communities. However, very often a member or someone being released from the military treatment facility in Landstuhl Army Hospital would return to a small kaserne where there was no AA presence. Armed with the tools to begin a sober life, they found themselves in a position much like our pioneer members – no experience but the need to find another alcoholic or to travel to have the benefit of contact with other members. Very often these newcomers struggle to stay sober. Sometimes they were able to get help from a supportive local commander, chaplain, or doctor and find a place to meet, then seek out a suffering alcoholic. In fact, this is how AA grew in Germany to reach countless service members and to bridge the language barrier to German Speaking AA when a local named Max got the message from an Army Sergeant at a public meeting at the Hotel Leopold. That was true CPC work that carried the message that has now grown to many more alcoholics sober in Germany.

Those whose military duties find themselves in remote communities need the continued love and support of our General Service Office, our literature, the fellowship at large, available technology, and the emerging tools that we can creatively provide to stay sober another day. In the best of cases, their presence carries the message to another corner of the world. It is a great example of meeting adversity with serenity and doing the best we can with what we have. Our military men and women are resilient and with just some support can get the same great life we have.

Area 42 Nevada

The Military as a Remote Community in Nevada Area 42

I made a request at the area level for sharing of military experience getting sober staying sober or taking meetings into military facilities. There were some folks that responded

A group consisting of a few veterans includes Fred who wrote me a little of his story of being a veteran and being sober for around 22 years and then slipping away and becoming addicted to pain meds, and other opiates. Fred connected with another veteran Bryce who worked with him. and got him involved in helping veterans. He met a retired Marine who was six days sober and all he could think about was helping that gentleman. That was when Bryce started taking Fred to the VA hospital to help out with meetings. There are requirements at the VA like being a vet also being professional, and it helps having a stable demeanor. It's a mixture of patients both psych and detox.

Bryce, Fred and another volunteer have been vetted by the psychiatrist in charge of the detox ward.

Darrell tells the story and of going to an outpatient VA program for alcohol and drug abuse and getting sober. Back then meetings or sessions were unstructured with the counselors trying to bring conversations back to recovery and solution. Darrell tells a story of getting clean and sober and then trying to take AA meetings back to the VA through it wasn't really successful because they didn't like the order and structure of the AA meetings. Darrell did join the group of guys going to the VA but has since stepped back feeling that the VA wanted veteran only meetings. He felt that separates those trying to get sober from regular folks trying to get sober and gives them a reason to be separate.

Gary is another veteran who got sober in the Army. He joined the Army at the age of 17 and found that he could drink anywhere on base. Immediately upon leaving basic training volunteered to go to Germany where he discovered real beer. After a long New Year's Eve party he swore off drinking for the first time ever at the age of 18 that was to last for two or three weeks. Later that year he was referred to the army drug and alcohol people. He did a 10 week out-patient program, after which he was transferred to Fort Carson Colorado. The

drinking and wild parties were daily and a lot of the behavior was winked upon by the chain of command.

Four years later he was fired from his job as a Sergeant in charge of artillery fire direction station. He attended his first meeting on a Friday night in Colorado Springs after which while outside smoking a cigarette an old gray-haired man told him that he should go to a young people's AA meeting. Gary went to that young people's meeting in the adventure began it wasn't easy as the barracks were a drunk party every night he would get off work at 4:30 shower eat and then head for a meeting he was about three months sober when he headed out to Camp Irwin in the Mojave Desert. Gary asked his spiritual advisor how he could stay sober when he was out in the Mojave Desert surrounded by drinking. He was told hang out around people who don't drink and so that Easter Sunday he found himself singing 'Amazing Grace' with the God squad.

Gary had the opportunity and the honor to serve as a Drill Sergeant at Fort Sill in Oklahoma one morning a private asked him if he was in AA he replied he was and asked the private how he knew. The young man replied it's how you talk to us. Then he told Gary that he had used the saying "half measures will avail you people nothing", the young private's mother had been in AA and he knew that saying.

A few years ago Gary received a call from a young soldier in the Saudi desert.

The young man was calling his sponsor, he was scared and rightfully so, as you are getting ready to invade another country there is a real fear. By the time the 20 minute call was up we were both in tears the next day Gary's Big Book was on its way to the young soldier. That day the young man was walking down the road of tents that the army puts up and he saw a sign which read "friends of Bill come in" he had found another friend of Bill. The young man did come home safe. Don't tell us that there is no God.

Gary takes meetings into his old army base at Fort Irwin every week and we are really glad for veterans and others that are serving our military by taking our message to active and (continued...)

Area 42 Nevada (continued)

The Military as a Remote Community in Nevada Area 42

veteran members of the military.

One last letter that I wanted to share came from a friend named Frank that lives out in the middle of Nevada in a very small town. Frank got sober a few years back and he was able to do A.A. in the Navy. He offers a few observations. One about the first rehab he went to in Colorado

the men were loaded up with Xanax type drugs when the issue of drinking was identified. These men and women were valued and needed back at their jobs. Issues like PTSD were obvious but not able to be dealt with so they use the anti-anxiety drugs. The mes-

sage was clear take the drugs to deal with your problems but don't drink, if you drink your career is over. The anti-anxiety drugs are even truer when talking about our vets in the Middle East that come home. The vets Frank has talked to say they hand out Xanax like candy to keep everyone functioning.

In the Second rehab which was in San Francisco it was different, there were no drugs, and a heavy emphasis on A.A. This was a quasi-military rehab. The doctors there were alcoholics themselves this particular rehab was defunded and eventually closed. Frank found the A.A. meetings on board ship to be very treacherous anything you say can and will be held against you later, because of the hierarchy structure of the military. It is hard for different levels to mix as we do in an civilian AA meeting. There is a large amount of pressure to buck up and keep it to yourself after rehab, The thought was we sent you to rehab you are cured, what more can you want, the rest is up to you. Enlisted folks

are encouraged to continue to run together and not to integrate into the wider civilian A.A. world.

One of the largest motivations in the military is that if you screw up again you'll be dishonorably discharged which means no veterans benefits fear like that can be a great motivator, but seldom for lasting sobriety.



Frank has always felt a kinship with the men and women in the armed services not just as a vet himself but with recovery in different situations, no meetings for months at a time, no one to talk to. Booze all around, it takes a certain commitment, and maybe a more reliant relationship on one's higher power.

It sounds like it might be near impossible to get clean and sober in the military, with all the stumbling blocks along the way, but obviously men and women do get sober, and stay sober, pass it on, and thrive, but it definitely is a different set of rules.

As a Remote Communities Committee member I do feel that there are certain situations geographic and cultural, which create a Remote Community in most Military Bases and VA Facilities.

Thanks Phil W. Panel 67, Area 42 Nevada Delegate

Area 67 Southeast Texas

In 2008, we were notified that we would be deployed to Baghdad, Iraq to conduct combat operations. I was sober 4 years.

As I had never deployed, I started to think about what I could do while I was there to keep my sanity and I decided to gather emails of members of Alcoholics Anonymous with the intent to create a mailing list. This mailing list would be my connection to the people back home, a tether to the sanity that I knew I would need.

Before I actually left the states, I conducted a “commo check” and emailed out a quote from the Big Book, commented as I would if I were in a meeting, asking that they reply just so I would know they got it.

We ended up in a small Joint Security Station (JSS) in northern Baghdad, about the size of a football field, in a warehouse that housed our sleeping quarters, mess hall, gym, and a small computer lab. This computer lab had several stations that we could get on for 30 minutes at a time, when everything worked. I began to send messages back home when I could, and people would respond back to me as they could. I looked forward to getting on and seeing emails from my fellow AAs every day. It became my lifeline because this would be the only communication that I would have for the next 5 months.

One of my sponsees actually deployed at the same time, and was stationed at the main base in Baghdad. We kept in contact through email for the 5 months as well. Simple basic actions such as prayer, reading of AA literature, and meditation became the foundation of my time while not on patrol.

Midway through our deployment, we were moved to very same base that my sponsee was at, where there were air-conditioned living quarters, a large

mess hall, and a mosque that was converted to a chapel. It was at this time that both he and I could meet in-between patrols, and I am convinced that because of that time, we both found peace there. Being able to have face-to-face contact with another person in recovery brought sanity to an otherwise insane place.

We began to investigate whether or not there was a meeting on the base, and if not, if we could use a place, such as the chapel, to have a meeting. We found out that we could use the chapel, but we needed Big Books, literature, and the like. I contacted some friends back home, and soon enough we had all the books that we needed. We developed a simple format, and put together a flyer that we put up outside the mess hall on the 15 foot concrete walls.

At first, the meetings were sparsely attended, but it grew. We had people that were both civilian contractors as well as military personnel and it was an exciting time. I joke all the time that I have never been in a meeting where everyone was armed and no one ever got shot. It was one of the roughest periods of my sobriety, but also the best year of my life. During that time, I found a relationship with God that I had never had before, and a level of acceptance that I could have never imagined. Our experience is proof that AA can be, and is, everywhere you go. The simple fact is that you can take it anywhere, and if you are persistent, and creative, you can stay connected in even the worst circumstances.

What are the challenges/solutions to carrying the A.A. message on bases?

As a member that looks for meetings wherever I go, I have to admit that I looked for meetings in the communities outside of the base. The problem with meetings that are (continued...)

Area 67 Southeast Texas (continued)

on the bases, Army personnel typically are only stationed at a certain place 3-4 years, and then rotated out. Usually, the people that keep a meeting going are from the community as they are established. There is also finding the space, which usually is in the chapel or community center on post. Additionally, active duty personnel cannot commit all the time to a set meeting schedule, so there is that. I believe that the view towards alcoholism and how it is perceived by military leadership is changing as well. Mainly, the Army was only interested in the behavior ceasing, and not involved in a Soldier's recovery. Keep in mind that this is only my experience. As a sober leader, I have been on the other side, dealing with subordinates that were having alcohol related issues, and I had just as much trouble getting them to accept help, to admit they had a problem, as someone who wasn't sober.

What are the challenges/solutions to carrying the A.A. message and supporting members who are on deployment?

Staying connected is the biggest thing, and to set up the best support network one can in spite of the circumstances. Plan for the worst and enjoy it when it is better than you thought. I think that A.A. members should have a network set up before they leave and stay committed to emailing, calling when they can, and setting up some kind of recovery habits while in country.

What are the challenges/solutions to carrying the A.A. message to potential members in cooperation with the Veterans Administration (US)?

This is something I don't know a lot about, but I do know that there are Veterans with severe TBI and also diagnosed with PTSD, and other things that are being treated (or not) by the VA. Many

of the people I know that I have served with have Opioid addictions as well from the pain medications that have been prescribed for them over a long period of time. They also suffer from the lie that a non-veteran cannot understand them. I caution people who say that they are different than "regular" alcoholics as that may be true to some extent based on the severity of their experiences while serving, but in the long run, for me, I am no different than anyone else that walks through the doors.



A.A.
and the
**ARMED
SERVICES**

This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature.

Area 78 Alberta/Northwest Territories

Remote areas are not only in the Northern region of Canada. Alcoholics are in areas isolated from townships or cities where AA may, or may not, be available in terms of geography, language and culture.

The Remote Communities Committee has a 4-folded role:

- Discover, then provide or support the wants/needs of members in remote communities such as literature, speaker cassettes/CDs, cassette players, grapevines, meetings, etc.
- Provide online meeting(s)
- Find ways to include remote members in AA as a whole, specifically at the Area level.
- Collaborating with other committees serving remote areas such as with Corrections, Treatment, CPC, PI and Grapevine.

This committee seems to be about providing 'accessibility' to all members. One important way is through online meeting (s). This gives a meeting to anyone who can't attend 'regular' meetings, don't have a local meeting, meeting choices are limited, local group very small, work away or traveling. We currently have one online Sunday weekly meeting with a second one reviving shortly. We would like 7/week at different times to meet different needs.

Challenges we are overcoming:

- Awareness / knowledge so people can do service work in their District
- An inappropriate number of all races/cultures representation, especially given the magnitude of the problem in remote and small Canadian communities.
- Accessibility / cost to internet in remote communities
- Online/small community challenges: Anonymity, retribution, multi addictions More people needed at the online meeting – sharing, chairing, expanding
- Bringing AA as a whole to the remote communities and bringing members from remote communities to AA as a whole within Area 78. Cost for travel to attend an Assembly is very high.

What can Districts or members do?

- Encourage participation on committees – at District and/or Area level Donate a Grapevine subscription
- Donate speaker cassettes or CD Donate literature
- Find, buy, donate a cassette player
- Show up at the online meeting: share strength, hope and experience with alcoholics with limited access
- Have your District (or share) chair a weekly/monthly online meeting
- Share ideas about accessibility and remote communities. Talk about it! Get excited!

- Have a Remote Communities 7th Tradition coffee can for additional \$\$ to support members in remote areas to attend Assemblies.
- Sign up to be a Pen Pal (or email) with people in remote areas
- Know your District's remote communities. Share the AA Message, services and recovery.
- Keep people in these areas in your prayers every day.

Some highlights:

- Tsiiegtchic NT - People (3 with 30+ yrs.) came onto the online meeting through their Health Center. They later opened their own meeting.
- The Tsiiegtchic health care worker gave the Spirit of the North Pamphlets to Health Clinics in their district.
- We've welcomed members from: NYC, LA, BC, across Canada, Kentucky, members working in camps, moms without a sitter, first timers and our Delegate.
- One gal connected for 3 months while in USA.
- Two grapevine subscriptions donated.

We work to ensure everyone has access to the Wonderment and Joy of our program

<http://area78.org/Data/Sites/1/media/PublicFiles/pdf/RemoteCommunities-ServicePamphle.pdf>



Area 79 BC/Yukon



Area 79 is getting the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to outlying areas in British Columbia and the Yukon, this is no small task. BC Yukon Area is approximately 1,431,250 sq. km, which qualifies its status as the second largest area in the North American service structure. Many of our 800 plus groups, encompassed by 48 districts, are only serviceable by ferry, small plane, boat and even skidoo.

“Far” does not necessarily equal “remote”. There are towns and cities with sufficient resources and amenities to support their AA activities, but that are far away from the majority of the AA population. There are other locations, one only 100 miles from Vancouver, which are remote due to issues of road access and geographical barriers, as well as barriers of culture and language.

We have a standing committee on Remote Communities. This committee has created Area service material to assist members involved in service to remote communities; with a Workbook and Kit modeled after the service material available from GSO, but with contents to meet local needs.

In 2017, Area 79 has helped connect or reconnect over 50 people and 2 First Nations Communities who have reached out for help from AA. One of these is so isolated that recently (last couple of years) telephone lines have finally made it into the community. No internet, or cell phone service is available and one of our Remote Communities teleconferencing meetings is now looking after a regular telephone meeting to this community.

There have been many efforts to reach the alcoholic who still suffers in our remote communities: “Remote Connections Meetings” where a group of members in a larger centre use a speaker phone to hold a meeting with a member in a remote location. Meetings are also being held in cooperation with the Northern Health authority where members in the northern communities can connect via video conferencing, utilized the

system already in place for the Health Authority. Local initiatives have included everything from holding District meetings on ferries where a District is composed of a group of islands to traveling AA meetings in the Yukon that took advantage of the midnight sun in the summer months.

One constant that we will always run into is change, and the other is the persistence of our members to reach alcoholics in remote communities. There are many in our urban areas needing the hand of AA. Throughout the area there is a very large population of Asian and South Asian people. We have listings for a few Punjabi meetings, one in Hindi, and one in Korean. Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese are not reflected in our meeting lists. We know they are there...as they quietly purchase literature in their languages from the Intergroup. This is a cultural issue which prevents some members from reaching out for help by the more conventional methods. We as a Remote Communities Committee struggle to reach these groups of people, but we know the need is there. We are currently setting up a list of members who speak other languages which may serve as a tool for the Remote Communities Chair to use if or when contact is made.

There is one thing above all else, if there is a need, Alcoholics Anonymous will find a solution that best reflects AA as a whole. Area 79 Remote Communities Committee will continue in assessing the needs of our Area, and I am confident will continue to evolve into servicing the remoteness and challenges we meet in our vast part of the world. All of us in Area 79 are humbled by the efforts of those who work so hard to carry our message of recovery into our remote communities. We are constantly seeking new ways and better ways to help our remote brothers and sisters in A.A.

Thank you for my Life
Dick V. BC Yukon Area 79
Remote Communities Chair



Area 80 Manitoba

We are participating in Cross Canada conference calls with many of the other Area Remote committees. We share experiences and ideas on the third Monday of every second month at 7:00 p.m. Central time.

We try to make 2 trips a year to different Remote Areas. Many of our invitations come from communities that are in touch through our Thursday night 8:00 p.m. Remote treatment meetings (we changed the name from 'Telehealth meeting' to avoid affiliation with Manitoba Telehealth). This meeting started in 2010 between one treatment center and a small community and since then it has reached 43 communities and treatment centers. For some it's their

only meeting, for others it has opened up an opportunity to start an A.A. group in their community. It's a teleconference treatment meeting, not an A.A. group, so it was recently decided to no longer collect Tradition 7 and to distribute any money already collected to the arms of service. We have many groups and individuals making literature donations for us to distribute to the Remote areas. Reaching out to groups that would be interested in having us come and do a presentation about The Remote Communities committee is being discussed.

Eight committee members attended the first annual A.A. roundup at Opaskwayak Cree nation (OCN) on November 17, 2017. We had visited the Reserve last year and participated in the Alcohol/addictions Awareness week. Our attendance was well received and when we were told they would like to have an AA roundup the following year we were more than happy to attend. It turned out we all had an opportunity to

share our stories and talk about how service has helped in our recovery. There was a sobriety dinner with over 200 in attendance. There were two AA speakers and an Al Anon speaker. The children from the community entertained us with their traditional Hoop dancing and drumming .

We all had a great time and made many friends. The following day we were fed a big breakfast and did a sobriety countdown. One woman spoke about her last drunk and said after participating with our weekend she realized that there is a solution and she didn't want her life to include alcohol anymore.

In closing the meeting our host shared how much he loved and appreciated what we brought to his community and how he believes that it set a fire under the ones who attended to bring back a once thriving recovery program to the community . They asked if we would please accept their invitation to return next year and bring a bus load of members! We left OCN filled with love and gratitude to have this opportunity to carry the message. Our six and half hour drive home was filled with constant talk of how much service is a big part of our recovery and what we could do for the still suffering Alcoholic.

Yours truly in Service,
Tina G.
Area 80 Remote Communities Chair



Area 87 Southwest Quebec

What are the challenges/solutions to carrying the A.A. message onto local military bases?

I am very pleased to be here today to speak to you about the armed forces as a remote community. I would especially like to highlight the challenges that await us in our efforts to transmit the message of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS on local military bases.

Our military is a big family with strong ties. Despite this, the Canadian army has difficulty supervising its members with alcohol problems. Alcoholics Anonymous is progressing slowly in the imagination of the civilian population and even more slowly in the Canadian Forces.

It was very difficult for someone in the military to admit defeat regarding alcohol, and to reveal his problem became a risky experience that discouraged many.

Indeed, there was a time when the military member believed he had to keep his problem a secret for fear of repercussions. To protect himself, he no longer participated in certain social activities where alcohol flowed freely. His non-participation was then noted in his file. It was however acceptable at the time for soldiers to undergo therapy through A.R.C. (Alcohol Rehabilitation Center) which was anonymous.

It was in nineteen ninety-four that the army changed its vision of people suffering from this disease.

The Canadian military is now more open to alcoholics. When today's soldier consults the army base doctor for his alcohol consumption, the army offers him therapy based on the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous in a center outside the military structure. The army understands that a recovering soldier makes a better soldier. Today, the army encourages their military to take responsibility and join ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

On one of the bases mentioned there was a regular A.A. meeting, but because of a certain reality specific to all military bases, they had to put an end to it. On another base, a chaplain struggled to keep the A.A. meeting going, and for all sorts of reasons, including lack of involvement, he had to shut it down.

Soldiers are nonetheless encouraged to attend ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS meetings off base.

Thanks to our Area Website, a second lieutenant discovered that our area offered a range of services through our regional committees. After browsing through our site, his attention was drawn to the Committee for Cooperation with Professional Communities (CPC) as a committee that could best help him. The officer contacted our central office who immediately

put him in contact with the committee coordinator.

It seems that the problems facing the Canadian Forces affect reservists in particular. After an exchange of e-mails between the person in charge of our committee and this military member, a request was made to a higher level of the Armed Forces. The main purpose of this request is to create a link between A.A. and the military staff on this base, in order to help as many military personnel as possible. The project is moving forward and we should know the Army's position later on this year.

In two thousand eighteen, we must recognize that there are still taboos around alcoholism. We believe that our greatest difficulty as A.A. members will be to break this invisible but very resistant barrier, which prevents us from speaking openly about this disease.

Our troops are in our backyards and yet they seem so far away when we think about trying to help them recover. Today with technology, we could be more proactive with electronic media as a tool to carry the Alcoholics Anonymous message. With frequent transfers and atypical hours, all military personnel use the Internet and social networks to stay in touch with their loved ones.

Should we not also use these same tools to make ourselves known to them? After all, isn't A.A. a solution for ALL generations?

A.A. is anonymous, but should not be invisible.

There is a saying "you catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar". In two thousand eighteen, if we want to make our fellowship known, we should be meeting people where they are and use the ways and means of our time.

The Canadian Armed Forces is a "community" the Area 87 CPC Committee plans to collaborate with.

A remote community is not always remote by geographical distance. Just because we work in an urban environment does not mean there is no "distance" between ourselves and the person still sick and suffering. It can also be a cultural or linguistic distance or professional isolation like our military personnel, who experience a reality of their own.

Lucien J.

Area 87, Southwest Quebec, Panel 68

Area 91 Saskatchewan

Area 91 is large, just over 650,000 square kilometers, but has few people, just over 1.1 million people, with most of the population being in the southern half of the province. We have two districts that cover the top half of the province (some meetings only accessible by ice road). In Area 91 there is still a big disparity of remote communities by culture and language, very few of the AA literature has been translated into the local language; and the recent increase of immigration populations we are finding cultural barriers also to be appearing.

This is the second year that Area 91 has experienced the committee system, as with all the committees at the area level, the Remote Communities Committee is still developing guidelines, but the guidelines are close to being presented at the Area body for approval. The Remote Communities Committee has a District Development Fund that exists on the budget from decades ago to facilitate funding for a service function to be held in a remote community, and more recently, to send a service member to an assembly that would not be able to, and has not been able to, for a period of time.

The Area 91 Remote Communities Committee consists of the Area Alternate Delegate as Chair, 3 DCMs selected at the Area Committee Meeting in the first January of the service term, the rest of the committee is made up of random people as they came in through registration for the first spring Area assembly of the service term, this committee will ideally have the same members during the full service 2 year term.

The Remote Communities Committee did not have any conference actions or conference issues to discuss at the Area 91 2018 Spring Assembly, so Spring Assembly 2018 was mostly determining what remote communities exist in the area, what is being done presently, and what is lacking in the remote communities in Area 91.

The Spring Assembly 2018 meeting also discussed further the guidelines and looked at the District Development Fund. The minutes and discussion from this meeting will be sent out to all the committee members and discussed through email and phone to come up with a finished document for Fall Assembly 2018, where one more review by the committee will be completed face to face and then hopefully the guidelines will be presented for approval at the Spring Assembly 2019.

The guidelines were transposed into a template that Area 91 has adopted for committee guidelines. The committee discussed the purpose, guidelines, committee member composition, any reference materials, history of the document, and

any appendices, which presently consists of the District Development Fund Guidelines. The District Development Fund guidelines were reviewed, what it is, what it is used for, why it hasn't been used, how to inform the members of AA that it is accessible, and maybe updating the requirements so that the fund may be utilized better. The District Development Fund was started originally to fund service functions in remote communities to hopefully get the AA message out to the communities and as a result spark interest in service or even just to start a group. As the fund was not utilized the District Development Fund guidelines were expanded to include as a second choice to fund a GSR that has not been to an assembly in more than 5 years. Before the committee system the fund was administered by the Area Table Officers. A member of the Spring Assembly 2018 committee had been previously funded by the District Development Fund to come to an assembly and he shared his appreciation and journey in service since then.

At the Remote Communities Committee meeting at Spring Assembly 2018 the committee discussed more about our remote communities and what they are in Saskatchewan. We are finding we have remote communities such as geographical, cultural, shut ins, age, and active military (there is lots of retired military in the rooms, but not too much active as it was discussed that the culture is not to have weakness and addictions may be viewed as weakness).

In most of the districts in Area 91 we are seeing an increase in the immigrant population; some even come from countries that it is illegal or dangerous to identify as an alcoholic. We see a need to find a way to reach those new communities.

The possibility of a Remote Communities Committee traveling display was well received, but it was decided that we are still in the infant stage of the committee, so we should see that soon.

Area 91 Trusted Servant,

Randy C.

Area 91 Alternate Delegate & Remote Communities Committee Chair

AA's to Meet At Wiesbaden

WIESBADEN, Sept. 4 (Special)—Members of Alcoholics Anonymous and their families from all over Germany will meet here for an "A.A. Roundup" Sept. 19-20.

Visitors are expected from Munich, Heidelberg, Frankfurt and other large cities. Wiesbaden members of A.A. will throw open their homes to entertain the guests.

Invitations for the strictly non-alcoholic meeting have gone out to all members of the organization who can be located on the Continent.

Assistance in the gathering is being given by Army and Air Force chaplains.

Interested persons should make contact through their local chaplain or through Chaplain R. L. Shay, 7300th Hq Support Wing, Camp Lindsey, APO 633.

CENTRAL BULLETIN

VOL. III, No. 5 415 WILLIAMSON BLDG., CLEVELAND 14, OHIO February 1945

YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

We of the Young People's Group, who meet on Wednesday evenings at West Side Evangelical Church, West 38th and Bridge Ave., are most anxious to have AA as a whole understand our purpose of existence, next to maintaining the AA program.

It is to form a nucleus of a fellowship to attract the returning soldier with an alcoholic problem. We feel that because of our youth we could probably be more convincing than an older AA, whose age might give the impression that he's trying to deny the younger man an opportunity to find himself around some more until he had to give up.

Wish us luck, and show your interest by attending our meetings. We may be young in years, but we are sincere in our purpose and we need your encouragement and advice.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

P.E.O. Meetings—All P.E.O. mem-reservations call 56-1914, ext. 2.

Alcoholics Anonymous—The Tokyo group meets every Monday night at 7 o'clock at the Chapel Center.



SATURDAY

- This Too Shall Pass: Grief and loss in AA
9am - 10:15am | Lane Star Ballroom B | Panelists: Stacy S (San Antonio, TX), Lily K (Houston TX) and James B (Oklahoma City, OK)
- AA in the Military: Being of service while serving your country
9am - 10:15am | Travis A/B | Panelists: Jennifer L (Hagerstown, MD), Greg M (Tampa, FL) and Ashton O (Pensacola, FL)

BOX 4000 May 2009 \$1.50 U.S. \$2.25 Can.

AA Grapevine

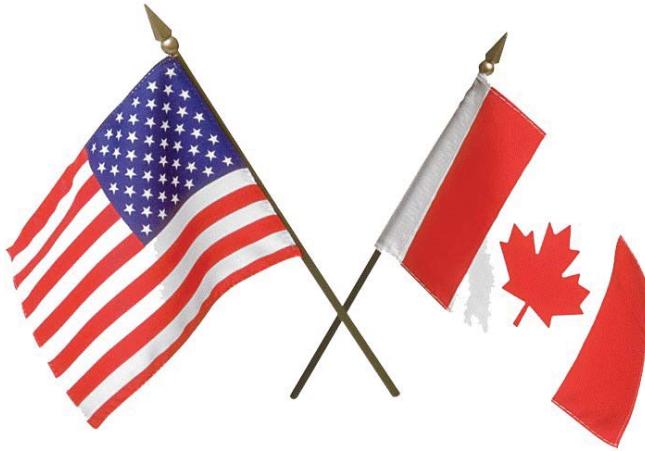
Mail Call For All AAs in Uniform

- We Were All Just Drunk!
- Who Will Wear My Fifth Strip?
- The One Who's It All in AA



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Alcoholics Anonymous is a loosely knit but nevertheless firmly united organization of alcoholics, men and women alike, who wanted to quit drinking but couldn't; who had tried, futilely, medicine and psychiatry only to return to the habit they knew was ruining their lives, but which they were powerless to break.



CENTRAL BULLETIN

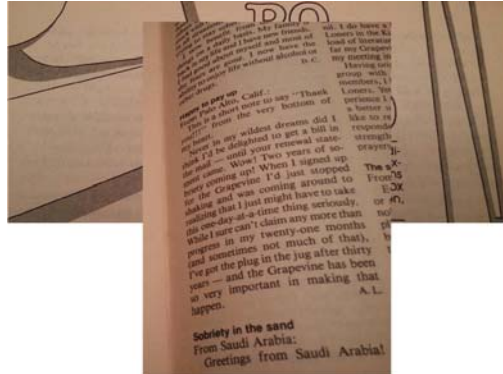
UNSELFISHNESS — HONESTY — TRUTH — LOVE

VOL. I, No. 1 BOX 168, STATION C, CLEVELAND, OHIO October 1942

Editorial . . . A Plea to the Secretaries

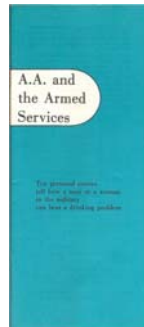
This first volume of the Bulletin is worth an outline of the work of the Bulletin. It is intended to be a monthly digest of only those articles, letters, and reports that are of interest to the entire membership of AA in the United States.

A Prayer (Quoted on Page 89)



Die Vereinigung „Alcoholics Anonymous“ hält morgen, 14 Uhr, im Hotel Leopold ihre erste Versammlung ab.

1953 Munich



AAGRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

Letter From Vietnam

Dear ----:

We know not what a little bread cast on the waters will do. . . . Yesterday, at ----, Howard, as good a pilot as you can want when he's sober, sat down beside me while I was having my coffee. "Colonel---- gave me this magazine," he said.

For a moment I was puzzled. Then I recalled that a couple of weeks ago I'd inadvertently left a copy of the Grapevine in the Colonel's quarters. I always stay with him; he has the only air-conditioned digs in the area. The Colonel told me later that he read the Grapevine, and found in it a good rule of life, even for non-alcoholics. . . . Login to read more

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