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Out-Going Delegate EL N's Final Comments to Area 62

## Spirituality & Service Go Hand In Hand

*Excerpts from Address to Area 62 Area Assembly on Sunday, October 7, 2007*

The world of science did not explain to me the path to spiritual freedom and growth. The world of philosophers was unable to provide evidence of God's love; the world of government was unable to lead me to spiritual freedom. However, an alcoholic was able to bear witness of God's grace and love by being willing to serve, to help me find my way.

I cannot learn about spiritual growth out of a book, and you cannot teach me spirituality. You can show how service works in your life, bear witness that your spirit has awakened by taking specific actions and undertaking appropriate deeds. Clearly, this is not because you are greater than I am, but it is the greatness *in* you.

Moreover, from your demonstration of gratitude for God's grace as expressed through service, I am convinced today that my spirit is alive when I give of myself — service to others and the world about me. I am not alone when I am stepping out of self and reaching a hand to help another one of God's kids.

I believe that our love of God and of one another is a gift of the spirit. What better way to demonstrate that love than to give to others so they may find a way out of alcoholism? We, who have an opportunity to express that love, also have been given a spiritual trust. We are entrusted with responsibilities including passing on to others through sponsorship and example the importance of giving.

The time has come to reflect as well as look forward. I rotate on with feelings of peace in knowing our work has been discharged: to carry the light of hope to those in the darkness of alco-

holism. I rotate knowing that our new Area 62 trusted servants and those to come will safeguard our principles. I am grateful God has changed me and allowed me to facilitate changes in the world about me.

### What is Area 62, and what has it got to do with my sobriety?

All of South Carolina is designated as Area 62 of Alcoholics Anonymous. **Through our elected Delegate we participate in A.A. worldwide. Through our elected officers and appointed committees, a structure is held in place that offers us the opportunity to keep our sobriety for another 24 hours — through service to the alcoholic who still suffers.**

This Area 62 publication is about opportunities for service that are right in front of us. Whether you are a newcomer or have many sober 24-hours, there are service opportunities that need *exactly* what you have to offer.

In this issue I have asked our Delegate and elected officers to share with us their responsibilities, goals, and experience, strength & hope. The Summer issue will focus on Area 62 committees and their appointed functions. Our goals are to inform, inspire and motivate you to take advantage of service opportunities available in your group, district, and area. Let us know how we do!

*Your KIT Editor, Lyn N*

## Delegate: Robert H

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Lyn asked me to say a few words about what I see as my primary responsibilities as Delegate and the major challenges out there. I appreciate the chance to think through the priorities.

A Delegate, in my view, has three primary duties. The first is homework. Delegates have a direct voice and a vote on matters affecting AA as a whole. The Delegates to this year's conference who requested it received almost 600 pages of materials to review to help us prepare. This homework is necessary so that our voice and vote as Delegates are informed and effective.

My next major obligation is to keep us in South Carolina informed about our Trustees, our General Service Office, and our Third Legacy of Service. We in South Carolina are entitled to know what AA as a whole is doing to carry the message, and what we in South Carolina can do to help. I intend to pass this information on.

The last main task, and in my view the most fundamental one, is listening. The final responsibility and ultimate authority for our world services resides in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship. I need to hear your voices, and weigh your views, so that you become part of that collective conscience.

This will be tough. **A past Delegate from another Area once said that the AA Service Structure was created to teach those of us in it humility.** That has also been my experience so far. I trust that those valuable lessons will continue.

Thank you for your confidence in electing me your Delegate. I would appreciate your thoughts and prayers.

## Chairman: David T

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The Area 62 structures and procedures define some of my primary responsibilities as follows: preparing a balanced budget for the approval of the Area Assembly; appointing, along with the delegate, the Standing Committee Chairpersons for the Area Assembly; preparing, along with the delegate, the agenda for each Area Assembly; and from time to time, appointing ad hoc committees to attend to any matter of importance to the Assembly.

The AA Service manual describes my responsibilities as seeing that the Area Assembly meetings run smoothly and effectively. That means that the Chairman should see that

our meetings are conducted within the guidelines of the Area 62 Suggested Operating Procedures, as well as within the spirit of the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts for World Service. The Chairman insures that groups and committee members are made aware of upcoming meetings and issues to be discussed; that we have an organized schedule and adequate meeting facilities; and that meetings and discussions are conducted in a way that is organized and effective. All this is necessary to promote an informed group conscience of the AA groups in South Carolina Area 62.

*The best part is that it's not up to me.* Most of this is accomplished by coordinating the activities the Officers and appointed Committee Chairpersons and helping them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Fortunately, our meeting location seems secure for the next couple of years and group contributions are up a bit, so I guess the major challenge for the Assembly is the usual one-group representation at the Area Assembly meetings. It's unfortunate that we generally only have 50% or fewer of the registered groups in Area 62 represented at any Assembly.

Aside from that, most of the challenges I have are personal, or what my friend Patty calls "opportunities for spiritual growth." I've never been very comfortable with speaking in public or large groups. Okay, well, I'm *afraid* of it. **So I have to overcome a lot of self-centered fear. I can usually do this if I remember AA is a big deal, but I'm no big deal.** Also, the chairman is to be impartial in discussions and not to express opinions in discussion from the podium. As with anyone who loves AA, I've got some pretty strong feelings about AA matters. So I have to learn to keep my big mouth shut, and assure that the group conscience as expressed through the GSRs of Area 62 is heard.

Over the next two years I'd like to continue the work of having our standing committees focus on what work they can do at an area level to reach the alcoholic who still suffers, as well as how they may assist the districts in doing this job at home. Too often we get into the business of committee meetings for the sake of having a meeting. I want to see our committees meet to discuss what action they can take to help others, then follow through on those decisions. Carrying the message is about actions, not discussion. So we need our committees to stay focused on the real goal here and to work with each other to assist one another's efforts. **I'd like to see committees so excited about what they are doing to help others that they choose to meet outside of assemblies because they have so much going on that an assembly just isn't enough time. It happens in other areas, why not here?**

I was asked what qualifies me for this position. Geeze, don't know if I really am qualified. I feel pretty inadequate to the task I've been assigned.

I've been treasurer for two home groups, District 20 treasurer, and Area 62 treasurer. I've been a GSR, and a DCM for District 20. I've been involved in corrections and treatment committees, chairman for the Area website committee, and recently finished my term as Alternate Delegate.

Anything I say would fall far short of what service work has done for me. I guess initially, it made me feel a part of AA. They treated me like I was somebody, when I felt like I was nobody and that helped a lot.

I tried to get out of my first job as treasurer by telling Dave that I'm no good with money, bookkeeping, etc., and he just said, "Well David, this is how you get good at it." So I said yes, because I'd made a decision that if AA asked anything of me, I'd do it. And I was good at it.

Service positions have taught me that I'm better at more things than I ever gave myself credit for. It has become very important to me to be where I say I am going to be and do what I say I am going to do. So, I guess it's made me responsible and given me some integrity that I lacked before coming to AA.

**And maybe, just maybe, in some small way, something I have done in service may have helped someone else to find AA. That's why we do service in AA, for the alcoholic who doesn't know yet that there's a way out.**

**Alt. Chairman: Jim S**  
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As Alternate Chairman, I am to be ready to step in for the Chairman in case he/she may not be able to fulfill their duties. I attend the Committee Chair meetings and offer my support, experience and strength. I am also responsible for the Area Assembly Workshops that take place on Saturday afternoons. I am to provide workshops that inform on various topics of interest concerning the assembly. I am also on call to the Chairman to help in any area that he/she has a need for assistance.

I am also available to attend district and group meetings to provide workshops as well.

I think that the workshops themselves may be the biggest challenge I face. I need to provide accurate information on whatever workshop is given. I also need to be able to ask for assistance, something I am not always ready to do. But I am learning.

My goals are to not only maintain the current value of the workshops but to help improve and expand the interaction at workshops. I need the support of all the current and

past area officers, DCM's and GSR's as I plan to ask some to help and participate in area workshops.

I have had the following service positions: Intergroup Rep, Alt. GSR, GSR, district secretary and treasurer, Alt. DCM, DCM, Area 62 Web Site Chair, and Area 62 Treasurer.

I am not exactly sure what qualifies me for this position other than my willingness to serve the area. At the June Assembly last year, I was leaning toward not standing for office. Both Patti T. and EL N. spoke with me separately and encouraged me to think twice about stepping away from service at the area level. I prayed and talked with my sponsor and stood for office. I believe that the God of my Understanding has me where He needs me to be at this time.

**I don't like to think of service to AA as "work" but rather my way of giving back to our Fellowship some of what was freely given to me. I often think of the first meeting of A.A. that I came to, when I was just about out of hope and needing help. Those doors were opened and ready for me. I want to make sure that those doors stay open for the next alcoholic that needs the answer to his problems.** My sponsor once told me to find something I am good at in A.A. and do it . . . I am still trying do it.

**Treasurer: Linda H**  
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My primary responsibilities as Treasurer are to do my best to be accountable for the correct appropriation of funds received in order to ensure "our common welfare" and stay "self-supporting."

The Treasurer collects group and district donations; makes timely deposits after postings of group donations; pays for our area incurred expenses with accumulated funds; provides efficient financial reports as needed and requested, and has information available as to where our money comes from and how it is distributed, or is able to direct a member to someone with the answers to such questions.

**My major challenges are to have an attitude of gratitude at all times for service work; to not take myself too darn seriously, yet keep my responsibility serious.**

My goal during my term of office is to be of service wherever needed, and to provide the simplest form of communication between members, groups and area.

The main support needed will be a lot of "love and tolerance."

Although I've taken on several service commitments, (and employment experiences) I have to say that something

I heard at an Area Assembly a while back has stuck with me. A member stated “anything that you are good at can be used for the good of AA.” I believe I qualify because of a “desire to not drink” and by putting forth as much honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness as humanly possible to be a good AA member.

Service has been and hopefully will continue to be a huge part of the backbone of my recovery. Service keeps me in touch, keeps me responsible, and “keeps me coming back.”

## Alt. Treasurer: Joanne B

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The primary responsibilities of the Alternative Treasurer is, first of all, to assist the Treasurer — double check what she has done, make collections at Saturday night speaker and Sunday morning business meetings, and make deposits from the Assembly Meeting. My major challenge over the next two years is praying nothing happens to Linda!

**During the term of service, I would like to strengthen my sobriety. I believe service work has enhanced my sobriety. I need the support, prayers and camaraderie of DCM's and GSR's.**

I took Bookkeeping in school, and I had to tell the teacher I would see her the following year if I failed — she passed me with a D-. How little did I know that I would need that when I got into AA and 5 years later I was treasurer of the group. Then I was treasurer for the club and my home group, and became the treasurer of our district. I am also the bookkeeper for a business I work for.

## Secretary: Anne Marie F

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I am honored and delighted to serve as Area 62 Secretary. It is a continuation of service that started when I was very new to AA. Service helps keep me sober for many reasons... the most important of which, is that it gets me out of myself!

My sponsors and many wiser AA's before me pushed me into service from the start. Since then I've built up momentum, and it no longer takes a push! I've discovered that being of service to others is the spiritual condition this alcoholic needs to strive for. I've held various group offices: treasurer, secretary, GSR. I've been a DCM. I chair meetings, greet folks at the door, sponsor, setup, make coffee, and pickup at meetings.

As your area secretary my first priority is to serve you. It will be my responsibility to take accurate minutes at assem-

bly, distribute those minutes to you, send out or reproduce any other correspondence in support of our area officers, conduct workshops when called upon, keep the group roll books for assembly voting, help setup prior to assembly, and other tasks that may pop up.

Service at the area is a personal delight! I get to meet people from all over the state and enrich my circle of AA friends. They are people dedicated to helping ensure our fellowship continues into the future. **I am eager to be a part of the service structure that both Bill W. and Dr. Bob worked so vigorously to build in order that our fellowship might live on long after them.**

## Registrar: Cis G

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My primary responsibilities include record keeping of all the groups in South Carolina (327 and counting); communicating with GSO, GSRs, DCMs, and other officers; and providing reports and data as needed.

The major challenges I face will be working with GSO to confirm that inactive groups really are inactive and have them removed from the directory, database and Area reports. During my term of office I hope to get the database completely accurate and up-to-date. That's the goal, and I'll get as close to that as I possibly can. The information in the database is only as good as the information that is given to me by the DCMs and GSRs. Timely, accurate information is needed. Communication is paramount. Legible handwriting helps immensely.

My past service positions include group secretary, GSR, and convention committee secretary. I have extensive record keeping, secretarial and computer experience from my work experience, which helps a lot with registrar duties.

**My sponsor taught me from the beginning of my sobriety that I was to “stay in the middle of the bed of AA, because nobody ever fell out of the middle of the bed.”** Service work provides a way to stay connected in AA; a way to learn about commitment and responsibility; and a way to show gratitude to AA. Also, the other people who are active in service are the people that I want to be around; I want what they have (terrific attitudes, giving natures, love of AA, and emotional sobriety – usually!).

Keep In Touch (Kit) is distributed at each Area 62 Assembly. Area officers, committee chairs, and AA members share about what is happening in service work around Area 62. If you have a story to share about exceptional service work that carries the message to the still-suffering alcoholic, please send it to 62kitchair@area62.org. KIT presents the experience and opinions of members of Alcoholics Anonymous on the disease of alcoholism. Opinions expressed here are not those of A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or the Area 62 Assembly.