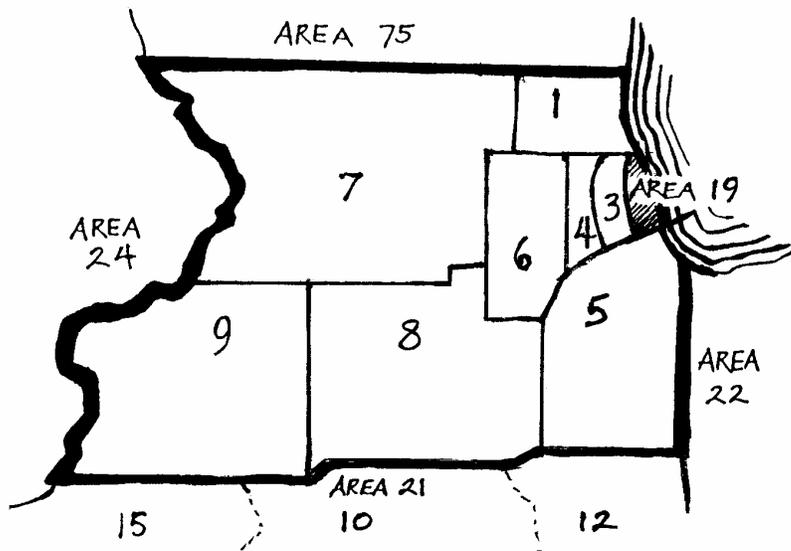


The boundaries of the four Northern section Districts (called State Committee Areas) from a 1952 map of the ten Districts in the Downstate Illinois A.A. Conference. Courtesy of the A.A. Archives at GSO, copies of the map are located in the NIA Archives.



Downstate Illinois A.A. Conference re-districted the combined Delegate Areas in 1960, adding six Districts, and voted to elect its future Delegates from inside the borders of each Area. The general NIA southern border of U.S. Route 24 remains. Courtesy of the A.A. Archives at GSO, copies of the map are located in the NIA Archives.

The Downstate Illinois Conference first discussed a yearly budget in 1957 and an amount of \$1,000 was approved as a prudent reserve fund in 1962. In October 1959 at a Quarterly Conference, meeting Minutes recorded the first discussion about establishing two distinct Area borders. No actual decision was made for a full year.

In October 1960, for the single purpose of choosing Delegates, the Downstate Conference chose a line along U.S. Route 24 to separate the northern and southern sections. This boundary for the two Areas, drawn on a trial basis, exists today as the largest line of our Area 20 border with Southern Illinois Area 21.

There also appeared to be no hard and fast timetables for elections. For example, our NIA Panel 10 Delegate from Mt. Morris, Lee H., was elected in March 1960 to participate in the General Service Conference taking place the following month! In 1962, a committee was formed to develop a procedure to improve the timing of spring election sessions. Minutes of 1963 show a consensus that the Downstate Conference would elect its Delegates in the fall of each year. This timetable continues today.

The Downstate AA Conference established a State Steering Committee at its October 1960 Assembly. Area Committeepersons (today's DCMs) from both the Northern and Southern sections, the two standing Delegates, and all past Delegates served as members of the State Steering Committee. Each Area's committee servants were elected at separate Spring Conferences (Assemblies). The October Assembly again confirmed Loie C. as State Secretary, with a budgeted fifty dollars per year for expenses. Also approved was a motion that future AA State Treasurers were to be selected from past Delegates. Downstate AA strengthened its partnership between the two Areas with the single AA State Secretary, State Treasurer, and single State Chairman positions.

The 1950s' terminology used for trusted servants and meetings took different labels than those of today. The Assemblies were known as "Conferences," the Areas were known as the "sections," and District Committeepersons (District Committee Members, or DCMs) were identified as "Area Committeepersons." Nevertheless, 1960 Minutes used the term "District." In repeated recommendations, all members of the Downstate Conference were encouraged to study the *AA Service Manual*.

The first *AA Service Manual*, titled the *Third Legacy Manual*, was published in 1955. It grew out of Bill's late 1950 pamphlet *Your Third Legacy—Will You Accept It?* contained the General Service Conference Charter, and explained the entire service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous as it had developed to 1955. Districts were clearly identified as "comprising a number of local Groups represented at an AA Assembly."<sup>31</sup> The term "General Service Representative," today's "GSR," was simply identified as an elected "Group Representative."

Early issues of the *AA Service Manual* named the service arms of our Fellowship as they are organized today—AA World Services, Inc. (for the General Service Office and all AA publishing), the AA Grapevine, Inc. (the monthly magazine and "our meeting in print" journal), and the General Service Board (the Trustees, comprised of elected AA members and non-alcoholic "friends of AA"). The Charter, ratified at the 1955 General Service Conference and then presented to the International Convention in St. Louis, confirmed Bill's vision to secure both the present and future of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The original nine Districts of the Downstate AA Conference increased to twelve in 1954 and to sixteen Districts in 1960.

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<sup>31</sup> This identification from the first *Third Legacy Manual* was originally printed in the pamphlet *Your Role in the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous*, December 1953, page 7.

Source: Chicago Area Archives.

**The AAWS-registered Groups of 1960 NIA are listed in Appendix II on page 115.**

The Northern section's eight Districts, our Area 20 in 1960, were first identified as the Northern Illinois Area in the General Service Conference Final Report of 1965. Throughout the 1960s, Northern Illinois continued its partnership with Southern Illinois. From the Minutes of the Downstate AA Conferences, each year the two Areas jointly met at three Assemblies held at different locations around the state. Each Area also met in a separate, fourth Assembly within their borders, north or south of U.S. Route 24.

In 1963, after deciding the procedure for electing Downstate AA Delegates, the General Service Conference approved an Advisory Action that altered the makeup of the General Service Board. The 1963 General Service Conference established six Regions across the United States, with each Region represented by a Class B (AA member) Regional Trustee. Ward M., 1951-52 Panel 1 Delegate from Southern Illinois, was a nominee for the new post of East Central Region Trustee. Before 1963, only two AA (Class B) Trustees were elected from all fifty states. Carl S., the Area 20 Delegate, gave a lengthy report to the Downstate AA Assembly that spring. His reporting helped the Downstate Assembly reach its consensus to support this major item on the 1963 General Service Conference agenda.

Another major change approved in 1966 involved a new ratio of Class B (AA member) Trustees into a two-thirds majority on the General Service Board. The General Service Conference added two new Regions to Canada, and elected the new 1966 Board with eight Regional Trustees and four Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustees. The 1965 Downstate AA Conference discussed and approved this proposal from a resolution passed by the Northern Illinois Fall Assembly held at Rock Island in October 1965.

The sixteen AA Districts of 1960s' Downstate Illinois continued to grow. In Illinois, the Downstate AA Conference began discussion on its third redistricting in early 1969.

Northern Illinois approved a “Resolution of inclusion” in September 1968, from the request of various Chicago groups for representation with Downstate Illinois. Chicago Area 19’s three service entities, the Area office and two Intergroups, had not yet reached a reconciliation or consensus for unity. The resolution, also approved by the Southern Illinois Area, simply stated, “any independent Group, registered and contributing to G.S.O., that was willing to also support the Illinois AA Conference (Assembly), was eligible to become a member of the Illinois AA Assembly.”<sup>32</sup>

The addition of groups from the Chicago Area brought the need for the redistricting discussed at the November 1969 Business Meeting (AA State Committee Meeting) held in Mt. Vernon. Downstate Illinois renumbered all of the AA Districts to compensate for the additional Districts in Northern Illinois Area.

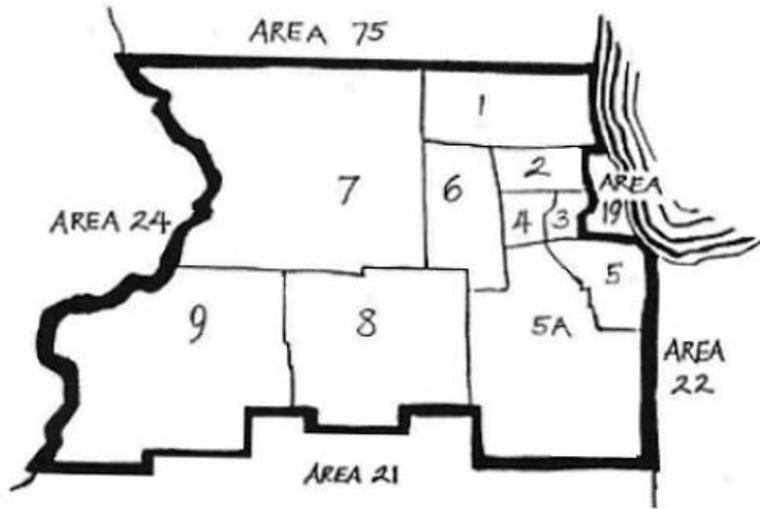
After redistricting discussion at the same November business meeting, the Downstate Illinois Committee tabled a new Motion to divide into three Areas. Proposed as a solution to reduce travel for group representation at the quarterly Assemblies, if adopted, it would have created a fourth Delegate Area in Illinois.

The ten new Districts in Northern Illinois, our Area 20, mapped their boundaries in 1969, and the basic District borderlines remained in effect for the next ten years.

Together, these Districts asserted NIA autonomy in 1972.

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<sup>32</sup> Minutes, 18th Annual Illinois Downstate AA Conference, Leland Hotel, Springfield, October 1968, Loie C., Secretary. Source: NIA Archives.



The original District boundaries at the start of Northern Illinois Area 20 autonomy in 1972, from a 1975 map donated to NIA Archives by Ruth P., who served as the third Area 20 Secretary 1976-77 and later as Panel 28 Delegate for NIA 1978-79.