

CONCEPTS

NORTHERN ILLINOIS AREA LTD AREA 20 SERVICE LETTER

SPRING 2026 VOL. XLX NO.1

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Do you have old NIA Treasurer Envelopes?

If your envelopes have PO Box 808 Streamwood, IL 60107-2971

THROW THEM OUT!

Here is the new address:

NIA Ltd, PO Box 95174, Palatine, IL 60095

Delegate's



Corner

Serving as a first-year Delegate in Alcoholics Anonymous is both an extraordinary honor and a humbling stretch of my sobriety. Walking into this role, I am quickly learning that the General Service Conference is not just an event on the calendar. It's a year-round commitment that asks for time, attention, prayer, and a willingness to grow beyond my comfort zone.

The time commitment alone is real. My first thirty days have been nothing in comparison to what I've been told I can look forward to throughout the year. As Groups and Districts throughout Area 20 know, preparation for Conference begins months in advance: participating in the virtual Pre-General Service Conference breakout sessions, discussing relevant agenda items, reading through background material, participating in Area Assemblies and Committee meetings, and providing my Conference report to the Districts and the Area Committee following the Conference itself.

Conference preparation aside, much of the work during my first thirty days has been centered on communication. Every day there are either email communications or OnBoard notifications from a member of the GSO staff, either introducing themselves to the Panel 76 Delegates, or asking the newly elected Delegates to complete a task or survey, read a document, or provide input on a specific topic. There are also frequent communications, both text, email, and phone calls from fellow Panel 75/76 Delegates throughout the East Central Region – all fourteen Areas. This steady stream of communication is great preparation for what is ahead!

One of the greatest challenges I have right now is establishing balance as I learn how to serve well. As a newly elected Delegate I came in wanting to “get it right,” to represent everyone perfectly, and avoid any mistakes along the way. That mindset can quickly turn into fear, if I don't trust God and the process. This is where I'm reminded that I am not doing this alone. I am but one trusted servant among many, guided by the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts, and a fellowship that has been practicing group conscience for decades. My job is not to have all the answers, but to listen deeply, stay informed, and show up with humility and integrity.

I hope and pray that I will serve the Area with honor by being accessible, transparent, and willing to learn. I am also reminded that leadership in A.A. looks less like authority and more like responsibility. It is an opportunity to practice gratitude, patience, and trust, and to give back to a program that gave me my life.

Lisa S

Delegate | Panel 76

Area 20 Northern Illinois



From the Area Chair...

When I first became involved in General Service, my understanding of Area was limited. It felt distant and procedural and not always connected to the groups where recovery happens. As a GSR and later a DCM, I slowly learned that my assumptions were incomplete. What I did not yet understand was how deeply spiritual this structure can be when participation is present.

I was elected to the role of Area Chair at the Area Assembly September 13, 2025, got my first taste of chairing in December when the meeting was turned over to me halfway through, and officially assumed duties on January 1, 2026. That was enough time to remind me of the importance of remaining teachable. I had read the Service Manual and understood the responsibilities on paper. What I had not fully grasped was the amount of time and activity involved on a nearly daily basis. There are emails and phone calls from people asking questions or making requests, often with a great deal of passion and urgency. There are conversations with trusted servants who are generous with their experience and eager to help with the transition. There is work connecting people to one another, appointing members to administrative committees, and reading and reviewing policy to be sure things are handled properly. What has stood out to me most is the willingness of people throughout our Area to help one another and to serve AA together.

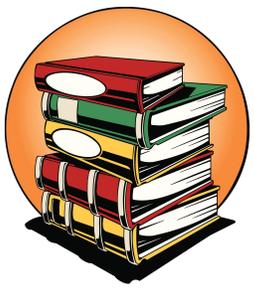
This role has helped quiet my ego. The service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous makes it clear that I am a servant. My responsibility is not to lead with opinion but to help the Area follow the processes we have in place and to facilitate the wishes of the body. When I stay focused on principles before personalities, it becomes easier to let the process do its job and to remember that my role is to keep things moving, not to steer the outcome.

Serving as Area Chair has strengthened my trust in the process and in the good intentions of everyone involved. I see people who genuinely love this program and who want to serve the still suffering alcoholic. Attending regional events has helped broaden my perspective and has shown me the many ways other Areas work to support participation. It has shifted my focus toward fostering an environment that is inviting, accessible, and worth returning to. Part of that responsibility is being mindful of barriers to service, working to remove them where they exist, and being careful not to introduce new ones that could discourage participation.

This experience has made Concept I feel very real to me. The ultimate responsibility and authority for our services rests with the collective conscience of the Fellowship. When participation is limited, decisions may still be made with love, but they may not fully reflect the needs of those we are trying to serve. I was reminded of this while speaking at a young people's conference, using the analogy of receiving an ugly sweater from a loving grandmother when what you really wanted was an Xbox. The love was there. The information was not. Participation is how those two come together.

Whether through your group, your district, or conversations with others in service, your presence matters. Area is where we work together to decide how best to serve Alcoholics Anonymous. That responsibility calls for more than showing up. It asks us to help create an environment where people feel welcome to participate, where listening matters more than agendas, and where service remains the focus.

Aaron V
NIA 20 Chair, Panel 76



GOT ARCHIVES?

As NIA Archivist, I get to feed my nerdiness by looking at all the stuff in our storage unit and trying to make sense of it all. This is a picture of what it looked like before it was moved. A 10' x 10' unit, packed to the brim, with an aisle going around it.

Those beautiful tubs in the middle are the hard work of Ray M., previous Archivist. He made a great start, and I'm trying to build on it.

I've started sorting through the boxes. First, I worked to find all the old Concepts that we had. Then pulling Minutes. While sorting through these, I've also scanned what wasn't already in electronic format. I can say that progress has been made. But we have some holes in what we have.



If you are looking to clean out some files and have a little time to devote to sorting through what you may have, I would appreciate donations of the following Minutes.

2014- 10/18/14 Fall Committee Meeting

2013- 3/9/13 Spring Assembly

6/15/13 Summer Assembly

2012- 5/12/12 Spring Committee Meeting

2011- 12/10/11 Winter Assembly

2009- 8/1/09 Summer Committee Mtg

10/17/09 Fall Committee Meeting

12/12/09 Winter Assembly

2007- 1/27/07 Winter Committee MTG

5/19/07 Spring Committee Meeting

7/28/07 Summer Committee Meeting

10/20/07 Fall Committee Meeting

2006- 7/22/06 Summer Committee Mtg

9/9/06 Fall Assembly

10/14/06 Fall Committee Meeting

2005 - 12/3/05 Winter Assembly

2002 - Fall Committee Meeting

2001 - Fall Assembly

Summer Committee Meeting

Fall Committee Meeting

12/1/01 Winter Assembly

1987 – Winter Assembly

1986 - 4/5/86 Spring Committee Meeting

1977 - 7/23/77 Committee Meeting

Cheryl V – NIA Archivist,
archivist@aa-nia.org

AA GRAPEVINE

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

Did you
know?

March 2026

AA & the Family - The March issue's featured section is "AA and the Family" with touching, powerful stories by AA members about alcoholism and AA has affected their families.

Grapevine Factoid

In 1988, the Grapevine Conference Committee recommended "that the matters of format and editorial policy raised in the "Resolution to the A.A. Grapevine" from Area 70, Vermont, are with the right of decision of the Grapevine editorial staff."

AA Grapevine's Podcast

A new episode will be available in English every Monday at 9 am EST.

[Learn more here](#)

AA Grapevine Subscription

[Learn more here](#)



Did you know.....?

What Is Quad-A?

A.A. Members, especially newcomers, are urged to attend various meetings to find the meetings that are the most helpful to them. All A.A. Meetings have their own special characteristics. Quad-A is the most common reference for group meetings attended mostly by atheists, agnostics, and humanists; however, anyone with a desire to stop drinking is welcome.

Quad-A meetings function no differently than other A.A. Meetings—allowing recovering alcoholics to gather on a regular basis as autonomous groups using the suggested Twelve Steps for the individual and the Twelve Traditions for the group as the foundation for recovery and spiritual growth. We share and learn how to live sober and rewarding lives. Like all A.A. Meetings, Quad-A meetings are for all people with a desire to stop drinking. There are no further qualifiers or disqualifiers

“To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all...” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 46). Quad-A acknowledges recovering persons may have a valid and fulfilling sobriety *with or without* belief in a Higher Power as traditionally understood. For many regular Quad-A meeting-goers, the “Power greater than ourselves” and “God as we understood Him” are interpreted by the individual or ignored altogether. For some of us, it is A.A. itself or the group. Our members have been reared with and without many different forms of religious training; we prefer to refrain from proselytizing for or against any particular creed. We accept the beliefs of the individual without contempt, condescension, or approbation.



What Quad-A Does...

1. We seek sobriety.
2. We go to meetings.
3. We share our experience with anyone seeking help with a drinking problem; we give person-to-person service or “sponsorship” to the alcoholic coming to A.A. from any source.
4. We stress faith in sobriety and recovery and applaud all people, religious and nonreligious, who use A.A. to stay sober and build a new life.
5. We believe in the advancement of individual human dignity and self-worth.

Useful Internet links

<http://www.QuadAChicago.org>
<http://www.AAAgnostica.org>

What Quad-A Does *Not* Do...

1. We do not promote any secular, religious or nonreligious philosophy or point of view. We are not bound to any theology or doctrine. Instead, we suggest A.A.'s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. We feel that whatever-keeps-you-sober, as long as it keeps you sober, is OK.
2. We do not force our views on others. We do not demand you declare your religious affiliations or your lack of them. We do not demand that you do the Twelve Steps “our way.”
3. We do not avoid contact with suffering. We embrace, wholeheartedly, anyone who is having a difficult time separating from alcohol.

Conclusion

Quad-A groups, like all A.A. groups, are ongoing support systems where alcoholics can share their experience, strength and hope to build new lives that are rich with promise. Regardless of the road we follow, we all head for the same destination – recovery of the alcoholic person. There is hope. This program works if you work it, and there are all kinds of help available to help you work it. Together, we can do what none of us could accomplish alone.

We invite you to join us in our pursuit of sobriety and serenity.



“...this was the great contribution of our atheists and agnostics. They had widened our gateway so that all who suffer might pass through, regardless of their belief or *lack of belief*.”

— Bill W., Co-founder of A.A. *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, p. 167

Where Can You Find A.A. For Atheists and Agnostics?

(Quad-A in Chicago has been meeting since 1975.)

We Agnostics SUNDAY 5:00 pm
Unitarian Universalist Church—Library
4848 Turner St
Rockford, IL Closed

Quad A SUNDAY 5:30 pm
Woodmar United Methodist Church
7320 Northcote Ave., Hammond, IN

Quad A SUNDAY 7:00 pm
Gale House
124 N Kenilworth
Oak Park, IL 60301 Closed; Open 1st Sun of month

Quad A SUNDAY 7:00 pm
McGaw YMCA
1000 Grove St
Evanston, IL 60202 Open

Quad A Atheists & Agnostics MONDAY 7:00 pm
Alano Club
5555 N. Lincoln Avenue
Chicago, IL 60625 Closed / Open 1st Mon of month

Elgin Atheists, Agnostics and Everyone MONDAY 7:00 pm
Presence St. Joseph Hosp., upstairs in the Saint Luke room
77 N. Airlite St
Elgin, IL 60123

Atheist/Agnostic Free Spirit Group TUESDAY 6:30 pm
Unitarian Church
656 W Barry
Chicago - North, IL 60657 Closed

NW Suburban Quad A WEDNESDAY 7:00 pm
Schaumburg Public Library
130 S Roselle Rd
Schaumburg, IL 60193 Closed

Secular Sisters WEDNESDAY 7:30 pm
Women's meeting; St. Luke room -
St. Joseph Hospital
77 N Airlite St
Elgin, IL 60123

Discussion & Problem Solving THURSDAY 7:00 pm
West Suburban Medical Center
3 Erie Ct, Rm C & D
Oak Park, IL 60302 Closed

Quad-A THURSDAY 7:00 pm
McGaw YMCA
1000 Grove St
Evanston, IL 60202 Open

Atheists, Agnostics & Everyone THURSDAY 6:45 pm
Room 9 in the Sunset Knoll Fitness Center,
820 S. Finley Road.
Lombard, IL - Closed; Open 1st Thurs of month

Humanist Atheists & Agnostics SATURDAY 11:15 am
United Church
615 W Wellington, Chicago IL Closed

Free Spirit (Quad A) SATURDAY 4:15 pm
United Church
615 W Wellington
Chicago - North, IL 60657 Closed

“Quad-A” is Alcoholics Anonymous for Atheists and Agnostics

As part of A.A., Quad-A is for anyone-

- new to A.A.,
- currently in A.A.,
- being referred to A.A.,
- seeking sobriety who is an atheist, agnostic, humanist, or *anything else*.



We offer this information both for people who have or may have a drinking problem and for those in contact with people who have or seem to have a drinking problem. This information particularly addresses those with a drinking problem who are also disaffected by or uninterested in conventional concepts of “God” or a “Higher Power.” This has been reviewed and authorized as an expression of the collective conscience of the groups listed.

What is A.A.?

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A. A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

—Reprinted with permission of the A.A. *Grapevine, Inc.*





Your Monthly Update on Area District Activities

D11 – Natae S., DCM: The district recorded attendance of 38 individuals from 21 groups for December. All positions have been filled except for a few alternate roles. Our proposal to host the 2026 Big Book Conference has been accepted by the Area.

D21 – A temporary DCM will be elected. Efforts will be focused on maintaining communication, with particular emphasis on GSRs.

D22 – Michael B., DCM: The district is undertaking a review and update of its meeting list, as the current figure of 133 is inaccurate. Kim and Dawn have provided valuable assistance. Plans are underway for both a service workshop and a treatment workshop.

D23 – Jeremy A., DCM: Approximately 70% of positions are filled. Preparations are ongoing for the 2026 Spring Conference scheduled for March 13–15, 2026.

D40 – John S., DCM: All positions, except for those in Literature, BTG, and PI, have been filled. The remaining positions will be filled soon. An additional committee for Events and Workshops has been established, chaired by Robert S., who is already organizing the first event.

D41 – Chris J., DCM: The district made a contribution to ISCYPAA and supplied volunteers for the literature room. A subcommittee for workshops has been formed, and an upcoming workshop titled “The Other Promises” — covering Steps 3, 5, 10, and 12 — is being planned.

D51 – Joe B., DCM: There are 184 meetings in the district, divided evenly between Grundy County and Will County. A GSR school has already taken place. While several alternate positions remain open, all chair positions are currently filled.

D61 – Kyle W., DCM: Five positions have been filled, with the addition of two LCMs. There are six meetings without GSRs that are being addressed. A Young People’s meeting has been introduced. Kyle is also serving as Co-chair for the Spring Conference, overseeing Alcahons.

D62 – Judd W., DCM: District meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month in Boulder Hill. Nearly all positions are filled. The district voted to allocate a 10-minute sharing session at each meeting and is presently discussing the GSO. The district will host the 2026 Spring Assembly.

D70 – Kim S., DCM: Most positions are currently filled. The space for the Pre-General Service Conference in April has been reserved. A BTG workshop is planned. The Archives workshop was successful. GSR School is scheduled for March 7th, and a Bridging the Gap workshop for May 7th. Welcome bags containing books and information were prepared for new service members.

For a listing of all Area 20 District Meetings: <https://aa-nia.org/meetings/>

Has your District Scheduled a GSR School?

GSR School is an informative workshop for GSRs, Alternate GSRs and anyone interested in AA Service.

You’ll learn what a GSR really does, informed Group Conscience, District and Area Structure, AA Traditions and Concepts.

Contact Lorrie F, NIA Alternate Chair, alt-chair@aa-nia.org to schedule your District GSR School

Calendar – Upcoming Events

Pre-General Service Conference Breakout Zoom Meetings – March 22-29th Schedule will be available in March

Tech Knowledge Workshop – D52 – March 22, 11:30 – 2:30 Kankakee Alano Club 1245 E River St, Kankakee

DATE CHANGE FOR PRE-GENERAL SERVICE CONF. WORKSHOP

Pre-General Service Conference Workshop - April 11, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Breakout Hosted by District 70 – Location TBD

Archives Monthly Sharing Session April 12, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Open event. ZOOM MEETING ID: 847 7879 2869 Passcode: 516980 OR Call in +13126266799, US (Chicago)29

76th General Service Conference - April 26 - May 2 New York Hilton-Midtown 1335 6th Ave New York, NY 10019 United States

Sponsorship Workshop – District 51 May 2, 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm Fellowship Club of Will County 1703 N. Broadway St, Crest Hill, IL 60403, 815-405-3039

Archives Monthly Sharing Session - May 10, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Open event. ZOOM MEETING ID: 847 7879 2869 Passcode: 516980 OR Call in +13126266799, US (Chicago)

2026 Spring Committee Meeting - May 16, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm. Hosted by District 61 at Lord of Life Church 40W605 IL-38 Elburn, IL 60119 United States

31st Annual Fox Valley Open - May 16, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm. Lord of Life Church 40W605 IL-38 Elburn, IL 60119 United States

Archives Monthly Sharing Session - June 14, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm. Open event ZOOM MEETING ID: 847 7879 2869 Passcode: 516980 OR Call in +13126266799, US (Chicago)

NIA Summer Assembly - June 20 @ 8:00 am - 3:00 pm TBD

East Central Regional Conference – June 26 – 28th - University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire - Davies Center 77 Roosevelt Ave., Eau Claire, WI, United States

2026 Calendar

Northern Illinois Area 20 Committee Meetings and Assemblies

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION & HOST
Winter Committee Meeting/Service Orientation Workshop	Jan 17	Lord of Life, La Fox Host: Tech
52nd Annual Conference of Delegates Past and Present	Feb 13 to 15	Benton Harbor, MI
NIA Spring Assembly Conference	Mar 13-15	Schaumburg Hyatt District 22 & 23 Host
Spring Assembly	Mar 14	Schaumburg Hyatt Host: Past Delegates
Pre-General Service Conference Workshop	April 11	Breakouts March 22 to 29 Host: D70
76 th General Service Conference	April 26 to May 2	New York Hilton - Midtown New York City, United
Spring Committee Meeting	May 16	Lord of Life, La Fox Host D61
Summer Assembly/Post-GSC Panel 75 Delegate Report	June 20	Location TBD Host D23
East Central Regional Conference	June 26-28	Eau Claire, WI
Summer Committee Meeting	August 1	Lord of Life, La Fox
52 nd Illinois State Conference		TBD
Fall Assembly	Sept 12	Location TBD, cannot be Lord of Life Host D40
Fall Committee Meeting	Oct 3	Lord of Life, La Fox D22
33 rd NIA Big Book Conference	TBD	Location TBD
Winter Assembly	Dec 12	Location TBD, cannot be Lord of Life host CPC

31st ANNUAL



FOX VALLEY OPEN

SAT., May 16, 2026

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
40W605 IL Route 38 • LaFox, IL

Directions:

- Lord of Life is located at the corner of LaFox Rd and IL Rt. 38 midway between Elburn & St. Charles
- From St. Charles and Geneva take Rt. 38 (Lincoln Hwy) 3.6 miles west from Randall Rd.
- From Elburn take Rt. 38 (Lincoln Hwy) 3.3 miles east from Rt. 47

Doors Open 7p • Open Speaker Meeting 7:30p

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THERE WILL BE THREE SPEAKERS WITH SOBRIETY OF:

1-5 Years

6-15 Years

16+ Years

T.B.A.

Susan F.

T.B.A.

Dist. 22, Elgin

Dist. 61, St. Charles

Dist. 64, Aurora

=====

≤ in District 61 N.I.A. ≥ Funded by the Seventh Tradition

For more information: please call 630-287-8722

Tech-Knowledge-E-LEARNSHOP

DISTRICT #

52 ON AA LITERATURE & AA GRAPEVINE



WHAT'S
Discover AVAILABLE
AT YOUR FINGER TIPS

FREE
SHOP

Sunday March 22, 2026 | 11:30a-2:30p | Kankakee Alano Club

FINGERTIP FOOD, H2O & COFFEE
WILL BE AVAILABLE ALSO

+ INFO
847.489.7064

1245 E River St
Kankakee, IL 60901