

# Stand Up for Service Area 14

## Panel 73 Officer Elections Preview

Elections for North Florida Area Conference Panel 73 officers for 2023-2024 will take place at the Sunday business meeting of the Area 14 Assembly. This coming October. If you are considering standing for an elected office, here are some tips to help you decide.

- ◆ Check out the position descriptions on the [Structures and Guidelines](#) page of the area website to see if one interests you and if you meet the qualifications.
- ◆ Discuss your interest with your service sponsor and, if possible, talk to someone who's held the position previously to get a first-person perspective.
- ◆ If you intend to stand for an elected officer position, download and complete the [Officer Service Resume](#) template from the "Documents" section of the area website (another good opportunity to enlist your service sponsor's help).
- ◆ You'll be asked to announce your intention and read your resume at the July assembly during the Sunday business meeting and to submit a copy to the secretary, who will include it in the July meeting minutes.
- ◆ If an elected officer position isn't right for you, consider standing for an appointed position—service coordinator, administrative committee chair, or other service position—all good ways to gain area-level experience and build your service resume. (Note: The new Chairperson-elect appoints these positions soon after the officer elections.)
- ◆ If you decide to stand for an appointed service position, download and complete the [Service Coordinator Resume](#) template from the "Documents" section of the area website and submit it to the new Chairperson-elect at or as soon as possible after the October assembly. You will not be asked to announce your intention or read your resume to the assembly.

### The Voices of Experience

On the following pages, current Area 14 elected officers share what's been most rewarding about serving in their positions, something they've learned they didn't know before, and advice for those considering standing for the position.

*Structures & Guidelines* also suggests that those seeking office "speak with the officer holding the office you seek to get a good understanding of what the office entails and the time the job requires.

### Area 14 Officer Positions

Click on a position name to learn more or visit the *Structures and Guidelines* page at [www.aanorthflorida.org](http://www.aanorthflorida.org)

#### Qualifications And Duties Of Officers

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[Alternate Delegate](#)

[Chairperson](#)

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[Treasurer](#)

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[Secretary](#)

### Qualifications and Duties of Officers

Please refer to *Structures and Guidelines* for complete information about the qualifications and duties for elected officers. The excerpts below apply to all who seek an elected office:

All candidates should have a thorough understanding and appreciation of the AA steps, traditions, and concepts and be prepared to place principles above personalities at all times.

The following are eligible to stand for offices:

#### **For Delegate and Alternate Delegate**

- All current and past DCMs and Alternate Delegates

#### **For all other elected offices.**

- All current and past DCMs,
- All current and past GSRs
- All elected officers
- Others may stand, if approved by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly

It is strongly suggested that candidates have at least five (5) years of continuous sobriety. It is also strongly suggested that the spirit of rotation prevail.

These are common qualities that each person seeking office should possess:

- Ability to work well with others
- Time and willingness to do the job effectively:

Many of the officer's jobs require additional technological skills. It is suggested that those considering standing for office have the ability to operate a computer. Computer skills are necessary for:

- Performing many job tasks
- Communicating with other panel members
- Communicating with the fellowship in general

# In Their Own Words: Area 14 Current Officers

## Delegate

Ruth R

### **What has been most rewarding about serving as Delegate?**

Being a servant leader for Area 14 has given me the opportunity to make the acquaintance of and subsequent friendships with so many people whom I didn't know prior to serving at the area level.

I know I will carry many of these relationships with me for years to come. My life has been enhanced beyond measure because of these new friends who have broadened my horizons in so many ways—but especially by helping me to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the still suffering all over Florida, the United States, Canada, and beyond.

I wake up every day knowing that I am doing my small part in helping to ensure that AA will be here for many, many years to come.

### **What have you learned that you didn't know before?**

I've learned that it's important to look beyond the number of years someone has (or hasn't) been in general service, or the quantity of sobriety one has (or doesn't have) so that we can hear the new ideas that a fresh perspective brings us.

If we want our area, and indeed our entire fellowship, to continue to grow, we must change with the times and population to ensure that all feel welcome—both now and in the future. Who better to help us in that regard than our younger, newer, and more diverse members?

### **What would you say to someone considering standing for the position?**

If you are considering standing for the position of delegate, and you are qualified to do so, you should stand.

If elected, be real—be you! Be willing to learn. Be open to doing things differently than they've been done previously. Think outside the box. Go with your gut feeling.

Many other trusted servants may not appreciate it at the time, but future generations of members in Area 14 will be grateful for the guidance you've provided—even though they'll never know it was you who paved the way for the changes that helped them fall in love with general service.

You can make a difference. But it all starts with going to the microphone and declaring your intention to stand.

## Alternate Delegate

Mary A

### **What has been most rewarding about serving as Alternate Delegate?**

I quite simply love general service. Alternate Delegate has been especially exciting being so close to the Delegate and the immediate contact with the General Service Conference. Hearing the voices of the members from all over the area and having the privilege to be entrusted with carrying that message.

### **What is something you've learned that you didn't know before?**

The responsibilities of the Alternate Delegate in Area 14 include serving on the Joint Advisory Committee for the Florida State Conventions. This was very far outside my wheelhouse, especially in the role of Treasurer. The commitment that the members who dedicate themselves to the years of work that go into providing the membership with these amazing fellowship opportunities is astounding.

### **What would you say to someone considering standing for the position?**

Do your homework and give prayerful consideration to all that may be asked of you. Have a good working knowledge of the traditions and concepts. Understand how the General Service Conference works. A service sponsor who has traversed the roles of area service is a huge asset.

Be aware that you may be asked to step into the position of Delegate at any time, be mindful of the commitment that deserves. Having served as a service coordinator or other position at the area is of enormous value in becoming comfortable with how the area operates, this can be very different from the group or even the district. Be ready to grow spiritually and enjoy the ride!

# In Their Own Words: Area 14 Current Officers

## Chairperson

Lori P

### What has been most rewarding about serving as Chairperson?

The most rewarding part of my job is seeing our fellowship work together toward our primary purpose— helping the alcoholic who still suffers. I see this through service participation at the group, district, area, and national levels.

In the past few years, I've seen this not only in person, but also through virtual channels. I appreciate that our area has not been afraid to embrace change as difficult as it may have seemed at times.

### What is something you've learned that you didn't know before?

That many times it's not as easy to make a decision as I would have thought it would be. Careful and thoughtful consideration is needed always.

### What would you say to someone considering standing for the position?

Know the literature. Our *Structures and Guidelines* along with *Advisory Actions* provide a wealth of history of our Area and why we do the things the way we do them.

Listen intently to suggestions, then make a decision. Read Bill's "Essay on Leadership"—and use it. Ever remembering that our trusted servants work for the body.

## Alternate Chairperson

Terri-Lynn S

### What has been most rewarding about serving as Alternate Chairperson ?

Interacting with the body in terms of asking them to help the area as well as being available to help them with any issues with the hotel. Asking people to volunteer has allowed me to educate and convince districts about the types of service and the value of area service.

Also, I have loved being able to present topics at the GSR Workshop at area assembly and to inform the GSRs about the details of working at the area level. It was rewarding to receive compliments on my presentations.

### What have you've learned that you didn't know before?

One of the main duties of the Alternate Chair is to be the first voice GSRs hear when attending assembly at the GSR Orientation meeting and to provide topics at the GSR Workshop.

Another main duty is serving as Chair for the Site and Agenda Administrative Committee. During this time, I completed the assembly hotel bid process three times, compiling all of the data from the hotels and presenting it to the committee so the voting members could make an informed decision on which assembly host hotel to recommend to the body.

### What would you say to someone considering standing for the position?

Be prepared to perform many tasks as the Alternate Chairperson. The list is long, but briefly include collaborating with the Area 14 Chairperson to make the assembly agenda, preparing the event orders for the hotel, a very detailed oriented task, and asking districts to volunteer for host district responsibilities for each assembly.

## Treasurer

Richard C

### What has been most rewarding about serving as Treasurer?

The continual opportunity to give back to a wonderful fellowship. And the ability to remember to stay teachable.

Plus, a great lesson that the money contributed isn't mine and how it's spent isn't up to me to say.

### What have you've learned that you didn't know before?

That the position has more to it than meets the eye.

### What would you say to someone considering standing for the position?

If you don't have financial experience, it will be hard in the beginning, but not impossible provided you ask for help from those before you. And remember to have fun.

# In Their Own Words: Area 14 Current Officers

## Registrar

Mary P

### **What has been most rewarding about serving as Registrar?**

Being Registrar for Area 14 has allowed me to learn about service at the area level and the area's relationship with AA's General Service Office. It's one thing to see it on paper, but it's a whole different world to participate in the process.

I've been fortunate to participate in a monthly sharing session organized by other area registrars. It's great!

### **What have you've learned that you didn't know before?**

There's so much! Especially how to host the registrar room on Zoom while also doing it in person!

### **What would you say to someone considering standing for the position?**

Stay in touch with other registrars whether it's through the sharing sessions or other workshops. The sharing sessions are wonderful and allow other registrars and tech teams to talk about ways to improve our data stewardship.

Stay organized. Trust God!

## Secretary

Maureen

### **What has been most rewarding about serving as Secretary ?**

I think it's every officer's and service committee member's goal to effect lasting change at the area level while in their positions. I am grateful to have accomplished that from the beginning of my term. It quickly became clear that the bulk mail permit service that the area had used to mail minutes for decades was no longer useful.

I collaborated with our registrar to ensure we were doing all we could to have an efficient process for mailing the minutes. Together, we determined that the requirements for using and maintaining the bulk mail permit were anything but efficient and could be a deterrent for future secretaries and registrars.

She and I worked together, with input from our chairperson to bring motions to the body, for their approval, to send minutes by email more and to discontinue the bulk mail permit. The body agreed it was time to cut back on the mailed copies of the minutes. With this change, we have reduced the quantity of mailed minutes from 200 mailings to six and are saving over \$2,000 per year.

### **What have you've learned that you didn't know before?**

As Secretary, I learned about the safeguards we have in place to protect the anonymity of our members: Not using last names in the reports included in the minutes as well as providing a version of the minutes on the website that does not include contact information. I also learned how to use footers and watermarks in Adobe PDF, the software used for the final file.

### **What would you say to someone considering standing for the position ?**

The minutes are a compilation of motions made, along with reports from our officers and service committee members, flyers, and financials. The keys for me were to have willingness to learn and to ask for help. I also reviewed the *Advisory Actions* to be sure I was following the guidelines previously voted in by the body. I made sure I had plenty of time to research "how to" forums online and to correct my mistakes.

Time management is important since it sometimes takes a few extra days for the minutes to be emailed or mailed out to the body. Preparing the minutes for distribution after each assembly took me approximately two to four hours per week for four to six weeks, to include the trip to the post office.

Creating and distributing the minutes is a very important part of communication from the area to the DCMs and GSRs, so I strive to have the minutes ready to send earlier than the deadline.

The secretary position also includes updating the *Advisory Actions* with passed motions from each assembly and updating *Structures & Guidelines* as motions are passed to change them. Both of these tasks have helped me learn the history of activities in our area. I have enjoyed working with the other officers and service committee members in this role. I welcome an email or call if you have specific questions and are interested in standing for the position.