



# H.A.W.S. **MAINLINE**

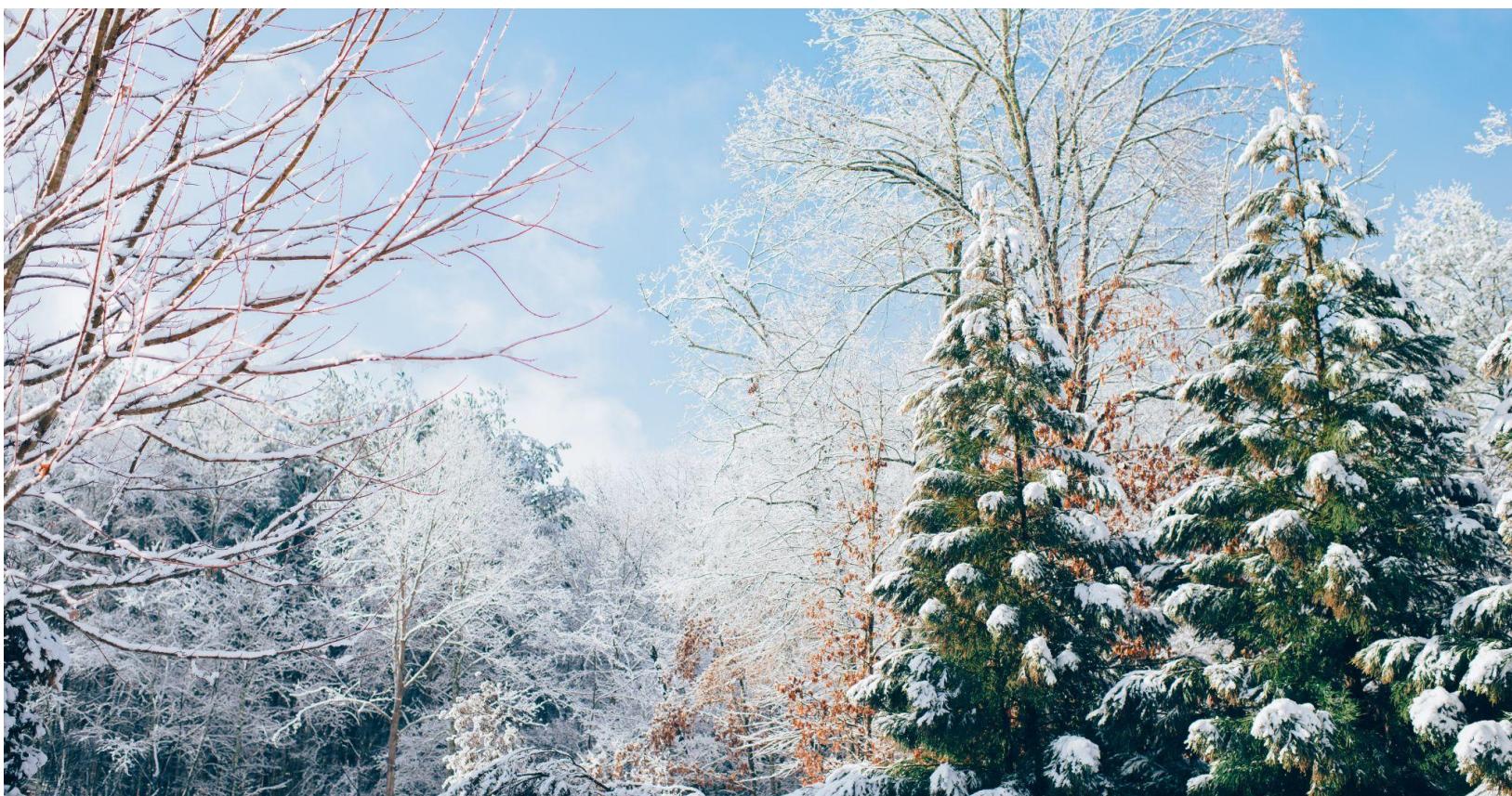
Heroin Anonymous World Services  
Monthly Bulletin

- - -

This informational bulletin's purpose is to increase communication between the groups of Heroin Anonymous throughout the world.



# DECEMBER **2021** ISSUE



*Photo by [Ian Schneider](#)*

## H.A.W.S.O.B. UPDATE

### Latest news from our World Service Office Board

Greetings from the HA World Services Board!

This past month at the HAWS Board meeting we had five new members! This massive "injection" of trusted servants was certainly a rush. Anna A., our new Outreach Chair, Brent B. for PI, Wayne B. as

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)

Treasurer, Matt L. as Vice-Treasurer, and your new Mainline Chair, Logan C.

Our new members have hit the ground running! The Financial Team is already working diligently to streamline and strengthen our financial health while Brent and Anna are using official new HAWS emails to connect with the public and fellowship as we speak. Logan has been acting as Mainline Chair for several months helping to crank out this fire content!

The final numbers from the 2021 HAWS Convention are in and it is safe to say that this event was a massive success. Please see our upcoming minutes for the specific numbers. These funds, along with group and individual contributions help us to function day-to-day and ensure that our lifesaving message gets out to all who seek it. HAWS is always open to ideas for new projects, such as literature or services HA can provide. Your ideas can be submitted to the conference via the referral process on the website.

**We are accepting applications for the following positions:**

- **At-Large Voting Member:** This position is for new members to the board. Its sole function is to show up and help us to discuss and vote on decisions. Eventually these members join other committees and may be asked to fill other roles.
- **Non-Addict Advisor:** This is someone who is not a member of HA. They may be an expert in recovery fellowships, non-profits or possess various business skills that they wish to volunteer for the good of HA.

If you are interested, please send service resumes, references, and inquiries to: [hawssecretary@heroinanonymous.org](mailto:hawssecretary@heroinanonymous.org)

Thanks for letting me serve,

Pat B., HAWS Secretary

## 22 YEARS CHASING THE DRAGON

### Personal Story: Vance S. – Akron, OH

I grew up in Akron, Ohio in the 70's. Yes, I know I am old. I was overweight and picked on relentlessly by my peers. Kids in school were cruel, and back then they didn't care-it was not called being bullied, it was called growing up. When I started fighting back I noticed all the guys wanted to be my friend and girls started talking to me. That showed me I gained respect through violence. Even still, I always felt alone in a room full of people, a feeling that has stuck with me to this day.

Let me get to my using career. I drank my way out of every decent job by my early thirties. My first wife and my kids are not in my life. I remarried and found love, but my second wife died in my arms from an aneurysm. I fell into a drunken haze fueled by benzos. One night while cooking pasta, I was getting ready to drain the water. The pot handle broke off sending the boiling water down on my feet causing second and third degree burns. I do not remember the first night in the hospital but the next day would change my life forever. I learned what debriding is. There are no words to explain the pain from that procedure. A doctor, nurse, and a rep from Big Pharmaceuticals came into my room and told me I was starting a new pain pill and that it

was not addictive. Up to this point in my life I had not abused opiates.

After the first pill, I was addicted and my nightmare began. Not long after, I found myself abusing pain pills intravenously, which started my downward spiral. I began using heroin after the pills dried up. I started having legal problems. No matter how long you incarcerated me, I could never be free from heroin. After a prison sentence, I was in Cleveland in a drug house shooting heroin with an old guy. He told me, "The dragon always gets its pound of flesh." That resonated with me! I knew every time I would use heroin I was going to have withdrawals, and that was always painful.

After 22 years abusing heroin, I started having health issues and mounting legal trouble. I was arrested for the last time and after being sentenced to probation and treatment, I started to become teachable. I got a sponsor and started working the steps. In that fellowship, I could not speak of my drug use. It was forbidden. One especially rough day I found a new vein which I had not used and started having cravings. I had noticed a flyer on a bulletin board for a Heroin Anonymous meeting. This was March of 2014. I attended the second meeting of HA in Akron, Ohio,

called the ABCs of Sobriety and found someone who had felt the cravings that I was going through. They talked to me all night on the phone. They saved my life. In October of that year we started The Messenger of Hope Meeting of Heroin Anonymous, which meets every Monday night at 7:00 PM. We just celebrated seven years tonight. We have had some difficulties, but it has never shaken my loyalty to this meeting or HA in general. How can you repay something that saved your LIFE?

HA has grown to twelve meetings in our area and several other areas

around Northeast Ohio. We now have district, intergroup, and area meetings monthly. I joined the HAWS board as Member-At-Large. I attended the Conference and Convention in Atlanta this year and had a wonderful time getting involved and voting. Get involved in your meetings and be a part of something. How can you repay something that saves your life? By trying every day to help the next suffering addict.

- Vance S.

----- X

## SERVICE SAVED MY LIFE

### Personal Story: Justin W. – Rochester, NY

At three years sober something was missing, and that feeling of restlessness, irritability, and discontentment started to creep-in, despite all the work done in a 12-step program. I had been brought through the steps by my sponsor and, as a direct result of this, I experienced a profound personality change. I had found peace, serenity, and sense of direction in my life. Starting my road to sobriety as a homeless heroin addict, sick and wanting to die every day, I was now

back in college to become an RN, married, and in the process of purchasing my own home. Despite all these things going well in my life, my soul was deeply missing something. Today I know that was service to the fellowship of Heroin Anonymous.

At that time, I knew nothing of Heroin Anonymous. Through my connections in another fellowship I heard that an HA meeting was going to start in Rochester, NY. After a

few weeks I finally made it to my first Heroin Anonymous meeting. I find it hard to describe how powerful that first meeting was. Here were my people, able to discuss problems unique to just us. I will always be eternally grateful to the 12-step fellowship that brought me into sobriety, but I had finally found my home in HA. After a little while, a group of us got together and started the Hope Fiends Group which meets on Wednesday nights at 7PM. Rochester had gone from no HA to three meetings in a matter of months! Something was still missing in my recovery at this point though, and my sponsor kept hammering home "general service." However, as many do, I thought being the business chairperson at my home group was enough. Oh, how wrong I was!

Sitting in front of me, while I write this, scribbled on the bottom of a crinkled piece of paper is the word "Intergroup? Meet next Wednesday Starbucks, 7PM". Penned during a meeting between myself and a few others who were trying to figure out how to bring meetings into our local jails, detoxes, and rehabs. We quickly decided that perhaps we needed a service body to handle business that we deemed out of the scope of each individual meeting. In September of 2017 we had our first intergroup meeting with representation from all the local HA meetings, at that time up to four. We quickly plowed forward with starting a hotline, a website, a

meeting list and even a short simple commercial that still plays late night on our local public access television network. We felt that we were really carrying the message to those who still suffered. We had newcomers coming to meetings after seeing our commercial or calling the hotline after leaving detox. I felt that sense of purpose in my sobriety that had been missing for years! After getting cold called by another member of HA, Brian B. (who is sorely missed by so many), we got in contact with world services and converted our Intergroup to an Area and elected delegates for the first World Services Conference. Grateful to serve, I excitedly took a flight and met delegates from around the country, all there with the goal of serving HA and helping to spread this amazing message of hope. In the big book, the feeling of, "I have arrived" is discussed. I felt the same way at that moment. Surrounded by so many like-minded individuals whose primary purpose was so apparent, I knew I was in the right place. General service was what I was searching for all along.

You know when we make it to our first meeting and hear someone share a story so much like ours that it gives us chills? I felt that again, during a particularly heated discussion on singleness of purpose. I knew that I wasn't alone in the world and my passion for Heroin Anonymous was shared by many other individuals. A connection to, and

---

participation in, general service had reinvigorated my passion for this program of recovery and surely has kept me from ever picking up the needle again. If you felt the same way I did, get involved! Ask how you can help your local intergroup, district, and/or area. Not only will you help those who are still sick

and suffering, you will grow in sobriety, and I hope you find the same joy in service that I experience every time I pick up the phone, log on to zoom, or fly across the country.

- Justin W.

## A PUBLIC FACING RAY OF HOPE

### Committee Corner: Public Information Chair – H.A.W.S.O.B.

Here at the Mainline, we think it is important to humanize higher-level service positions and help our fellowship understand how accessible they are. They have a mystique about them, and we wanted to pull back the curtain and show what the day-to-day looks like, from a real committee member. As well as what the role means/meant to them. We call these columns "Committee Corners".

At the 2021 Conference, we voted to create a new position on the WSOB: Public Information Chair. We interviewed Brent B. from Alabama to find out a little more about him and his new trusted service position.

-----

#### **Hey Brent! Tell us a little about yourself.**

I was a homeless I.V. heroin user who went in and out of jails,

rehab, and twelve-step rooms for years. On my last run, I was giving a man a ride to buy heroin when he told me about a new fellowship that had just formed in Alabama called Heroin Anonymous. I walked into my first HA meeting in late July, 2012, and found a solution. I escaped my suffering that day and have been sober since.

#### **What service positions have you held?**

I took my first service position on September 27 of 2012. I was elected to be the Public Information Chair for my homegroup. At the time, we were the only meeting in the state. I was told I would make HA flyers and try to put them up in rehab, but the treatment centers would never allow it. This was my first challenge in recovery. I started to research PI in the other fellowships and found a passion for this odd

anonymous marketing we do. While the rehabs would not take our materials, I found that the drug courts, correction officers, and health officials were happy to receive our message. I realized if I had heard about HA earlier, I may have stopped using much earlier in life. Through public information work we could potentially save more lives. I have been a GSR, Group PI, Area PI, and Chair of the World Conference PI Committee.

**Can you describe your new position and how it was created?**

I am the first Public Information Chair on the HA World Service Board. There is a PI World Service Committee. They felt there was a need for a PI position on the World Service Board. The Conference PI Committee sent in a referral that was voted on during the 2021 HA Conference. Upon its passing, the board held nominations and elected me to the position.

**What exactly will you be doing?**

I will be playing three main roles. First, I will manage all distribution of information about HA and communications with the public. Second, I will be an available advisor sharing resources and experience to any part of the fellowship that wishes to pursue

further PI efforts. In no way will I be telling any autonomous group or area what they can and cannot do. I'll just share my experience. Third, I will be forming a PI committee to aid in these world PI efforts. If anyone would like to be involved with this, I would love to speak with them.

**Anything else you would like to say to the fellowship?**

In some ways these are dark times. Our members are dying around us daily. No one knows this more than the heroin addict in recovery. There is a ray of hope in the message of Heroin Anonymous. We need your help in spreading this message. Already there are areas and groups who distribute HA flyers through homeless shelters and needle exchanges. They are in emergency rooms handing out HA flyers to overdose patients. HA public service announcements play on the radio and health departments distribute HA business cards with their Narcan kits. With your help we can do so much more. Join us in spreading the message. "No More Suffering."

In loving service,

Brent B.

[hawspublicinformation@heroinanonymous.org](mailto:hawspublicinformation@heroinanonymous.org)

X X X

If you would like your meeting featured in our meeting spotlight or have any other content you would like to submit, please feel free to contact us at [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).

Thank you!  
The Folks at The HAWS Mainline



---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)