

The Triangle

January 2010

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| MCDC-It's A Go! | 2 |
| From Your Area Grapevine Chair | 2 |
| Delegate's Tops for 2009 | 3 |
| The Big Book & Me | 3 |
| All the Great Resources | 4 |
| Humor from Paul & Friends | 4 |
| It Is Uplifting | 5 |
| Anonymity & Social Networking Sites | 5 |
| Time for a Split? | 5 |
| The Grapevine in District 61 | 6 |
| The Voice of the Enemy | 6-7 |
| Officers and Committee Chairs | 8 |
| Area Map | 9 |
| Wanted: | 9 |
| Calendar of Events | 10 |
| My Favorite Party | 10 |
| Int'l Convention Update | 10 |
| Literature Survey | 11 |
| Subscription Form | 12 |

From Your Area Literature Chair

Greetings, Area 40! My name is Lori and I am an alcoholic. My service journey includes a variety of positions both in my home group and in District 72, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Area 40 Literature Committee Chair this rotation.

I would like to share a little information about me (isn't it all about me?) for those of you who don't know me. My sobriety date is February 24, 2000 and my home group is the Vennis Over the Hill Group in Ennis, MT. My first sponsor and I immediately joined with a few others to start a new group in Sheridan, MT where I was living at the time. Because the group was so small, all the members had to help with service positions right away. I became the Treasurer of the Keep It Simple Group, serving in that capacity from August 2000 until December 2002. I then switched home groups to my current one, and was promptly elected GSR (has this happened to anyone else?). I was elected Secretary of District 72 for the 2005-06 rotation, and then DCM of District 72 for the 2007-08 rotation. I can't believe that I am in the second year of the rotation as Area 40 Literature Committee Chair and will soon

be turning over the reins (and the boxes of literature) to a new trusted servant!

As anyone who has attended an Area Assembly knows, a large part of my job is to be the custodian of the Area's literature collection, including the books, booklets, pamphlets, audio and video materials, committee kits and workbooks, directories, guidelines and much more. I make sure that there is a good stock of pamphlets for each assembly and that we have the most current copies of most everything in the literature catalog for display. I also attempt to have the most current Service Manuals available for sale.

In addition, I chair the Literature Committee meetings at each assembly, where we have lively discussions on items pertaining to literature both on the area level and those that appear on the General Service Conference Agenda. The voting members of the committee are the DCMs from Districts 12 and 31, and Representatives from Districts 91 and 93. Other literature fanatics are certainly welcome in our meetings to share opinions, and to help us to come to an informed group conscience.

(Continued on page 11)

From Your Editor

Happy New Year! I hope you will have a full and active year in Alcoholics Anonymous and I hope "active" will include standing for a service position in your Group, District, or Area as elections come up later in the year!

In this issue, you'll be happy to see "It's A Go" on page 2 for the eagerly awaited information about MCDC. The Literature and Grapevine chairpersons and committee members have contributed articles and I en-

courage you to consider the Literature Survey on page 11. Your responses will help Lori and future Literature Chairs better serve you!

You'll also find a preview of information from the listening sessions. Watch for the February Triangle for more. Better yet, I would really appreciate an article from YOU!! I'll need the articles by January 20!

Also included in this issue is a presentation from the Regional

Forum entitled "The Voice of the Enemy". Thanks to Lori G. for her clever presentation!

Thank you to all the individuals and groups who paid for a subscription to the Triangle this past year. Groups receive the Triangle regardless of subscription status. Individuals wanting to receive the Triangle must have a current paid subscription.

Thank you for trusting me to serve! Sharon S.

MCDC—It's A Go!

MCDC will reopen its doors to A.A. in January! Many thanks to the folks in District 61 (Helena) for pulling this together. I want to especially thank Dee G., Rob R., and Karla I. Please forgive me if I haven't mentioned someone who was pivotal in getting this to happen. I was out of the country in November when Steve King, the Clinical Director of MCDC, notified us that we could start the process of resuming meetings and Bridging The Gap (BTG) at MCDC, so the burden fell on others. Even if I had been here, I couldn't have done what they did without their help. THANK YOU!!

District 61 hosted a Treatment Workshop in Helena December 5. The workshop was designed to facilitate communication between A.A.

members and the professionals at MCDC and Elkhorn, exchanging information about what A.A. is and can offer and what the institutions expect of A.A.

At the workshop, MCDC presented a proposal delineating the terms and conditions under which A.A. could participate in meetings. Also presented were a MCDC Policy and Procedure Manual and an agreement to be signed by each A.A. member during orientation. Treatment Chairpersons from Districts 61, 72, and 81 signed the proposal indicating they had read, understood, and would comply with the terms and conditions. District 71 did so at a later date.

On December 14, Karla I., BTG Chair in District 61, and

Kevin S., District 71 Treatment Chair, talked to the staff and residents of MCDC about Bridging the Gap. Karla said, "The residents were excited to hear that A.A. is coming back in and wanted to know how soon the meetings will begin."

Weekly meetings will be held Friday afternoon at 2:30 and the monthly Bridging The Gap meeting will be on Monday afternoon at 1:15.

Everyone who wants to attend meetings will need to attend an orientation, even if they previously attended. They will be expected to sign an agreement delineating their behavior while at MCDC, and they will also be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. These documents will be valid for one year. A.A.

members will also be expected to follow an MCDC approved A.A. format.

I know I speak for Dee G., Kevin S., June K., and Mary Ellen D.,

Treatment Chairs for Districts 61, 71, 72, and 81 respectively, when I say how excited we all are to have this opportunity to serve!

YIL&S,
Paula H., Area 40 Treatment Chair

"Everyone who wants to attend meetings will need to attend an orientation, even if they have previously attended."

Greetings from Your Area Grapevine Committee Chair

Greetings from the Area 40 Grapevine Chair! I hope you all survived the Holidays! Early in sobriety I received much sound advice about how to deal with the holidays and especially with my family members, with many of whom I had damaged relationships. These tips were most often heard in meetings. One of the best tips I heard was to get involved in service work.

Personally, I place service work into three categories:

1. Direct Twelfth step work
2. General Service work
3. Group Service work

Quite a few things fit into more than one of my categories, and it's not really impor-

tant to me that they fit precisely into any one of them. Anyway, the second grouping of service work is how I ended up in my current general service position. So far, I've enjoyed it and, like every other service position I've held, it's been a learning experience.

Grapevine literature has increased its importance in my life since I took on the position, and it's been somewhat of a backfire on me, so to speak. You see, years ago I used to "direct" specific Grapevines or pieces of literature to people in my group. If I thought somebody would benefit from a story in a specific piece of literature or an issue of the Grapevine, I'd place that literature in the

area where they usually sat. Perhaps it was kind of devious, but what the heck, it seemed to be harmless and I imagined I was doing them a favor. Maybe I was! (God, help me to direct my motives!) It was always a joy to see somebody pick up a piece of literature that I had strategically placed in their area. I still do this in my current home group, but I don't do as much specific "directing" towards specific people.

So now here I am wondering if somebody strategically placed this job of Grapevine Chair in my area because of something I might learn. I have been reading and exploring both the regular issue of the Grapevine which arrives

promptly every month, but I also have found a literal treasure trove of information on the A.A. Grapevine website. Archives information is organized into nearly 30 categories including A.A. in Prison, A.A. around the World, Beginners Meetings, Cartoons, and Classic Reprints and provides for hours of browsing, learning, and amazement.

So, if somebody did some strategic arranging and helped to put me in this position, thank you very much. Thank God for it all.

Oh, by the way, consider a subscription to the Grapevine. You won't regret it.

Rich K., Area 40 Grapevine Chair

Delegate's Tops for 2009

Happy New Year! Seems each periodical I read has the "top stories" for 2009. I thought I would steal that idea.

First, at the Area level, Tim M., our Public Information Chair has been very busy. He worked with AnswerNet so that the Area's toll free number will be in several phone books around the state. The small telephone cooperatives which serve rural areas in the state will also list the number. Now, to make this work, each District needs to have someone coordinate this effort and assure AnswerNet has a list of sober alcoholics to refer not-so-sober alcoholics to when they call for help.

The 59th General Service Conference approved two videos to help us reach more suffering alcoholics. The revised video "Hope" and the "Young Peoples" video are now available. These are both very good tools for Public Information, Cooperation with Professional Community, and Treatment work. These are both available for purchase from AAWS.

My life was full in 2009 because of your allowing me to serve as your Delegate. I am grateful for this experience. I'm off to the General Service Board weekend January 28 where the 60th General Service Conference's agenda will be set.

I wish the best for you in 2010 and I leave you with a question. I recently was reading the 12 x 12 regarding step 6. It talked about doing just enough to get by. I am truly a person who likes to just get by – in my A.A. program, A.A. service work, my golf game and my life in general. But, when I dig a little deeper and do a little more, the result is that my life gets incredibly better. I am going to dig a little deeper again this year and see what happens.

Thanks for letting me serve.

Carole B., Area Delegate,
Panel 59

"The revised video "Hope" and "Young Peoples" video are now available ... from AAWS".

The Big Book & Me

Hello, my name is Nick D. and I am an alcoholic. I serve on the Literature Committee and was asked me to share my experience with A.A. literature. I can tell you that A.A. literature has saved my life on numerous occasions. However, the first encounter with A.A. and its literature was not one of those occasions!

The first time that I tried to read the Big Book, it was at the suggestion of one of my friends. At that time, I was not much of a reader because I did not read well. My high school English teacher Mr. Bush liked to call me "James Bond" because my grade point average was .007 and I had made three very half-hearted attempts to pass his class, without success. It was mostly because I was way too busy drinking and being self-centered to make time to

read. Therefore, when I did read the Big Book, I did not get much out of it. Looking back, I can see that I did not understand or relate to what I was reading. I was looking for the differences so that I would not be like "them".

Some twenty years later, I found my way to the rooms of A.A. This was the first time I had been to A.A. without a nudge from a judge. To this day, I do not know what was said in that room, but I heard something, and that something changed my life. Ed B. gave me a Big Book. He suggested that I write his phone number in my book; read the Doctors Opinion, Bill's Story and Chapter 5; meet with him the next day; and not drink. He also gave me some pamphlets to read and he said to call him before I wanted a drink ... not after.

I went home and read what Ed suggested and nothing happened. I went to the meeting to meet with Ed and told him the truth, that I did not understand how this was going to help me. That is when the miracle that we call Alcoholics Anonymous happened for me. That man, Ed B., who I met the day before for the first time ever, sat down with me and we read the Big Book together. He showed me how to read the Big Book, not like a novel, but like a textbook. He showed me that, in the past, I had been reading the white, and now I was to "just read the black"; I had been reading between the lines. There has not been a day since then that I do not thank GOD and A.A. for Ed and the other men who have sponsored me since.

A.A. literature has greatly improved my life, whether it is the Big Book, 12 x12, a pamphlet, an audio cassette, a CD or any of the other pieces of literature in the 39 page literature catalog. Your gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, education, and physical and mental health do not matter; the common thread that connects us is alcoholism, nothing else.

However, no book, pamphlet, poster or public service announcement can carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic; these are tools to help us, the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, carry message of recovery. The message still has to be carried one alcoholic to another.

Nick D., DCM District 12

All the Great Resources

I recently attended a 'listening session' in Kalispell, District 91, on Self Support. Andrew W, Area 40 Advisor (past delegate), mediated an hour and a half workshop. This was in conjunction with a survey about our 7th tradition.

The fellowship is being asked two questions regarding literature profits:

1. If we continue to use literature profits to fund services, should there be a limit?
2. If there is a limit, how do we continue to pay for services if there is a shortfall in contributions?

Participation by our district was good. I believe that we are talking about an issue that has no resolution. MY OPINION is that we are self supporting and that profits from literature sales have always been used. If we rely on the contributions of our fellowship only, we may have to cut services that we now rely on to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. With the use of literature profits, we have been able to maintain our purpose by adjusting the price of books.

Eight dollars for a book that saves lives is not too much to pay.

It was also brought up that maybe New York could go through the services that we have asked them to do and see which ones are working and if there are any that are not. A fellow alcoholic read from *A.A. Comes of Age* where Bill W talked about doing that very thing — of using profits from book sales to support New York.

Thank you, Andrew, you do an awesome job and make these functions fun and very interesting.

At my first West Central Region Service Conference, I heard a speaker share on the 7th Tradition and the money in the basket. He said, "I put one dollar in for my group, one in for the guy that can't and one in for A.A. as a whole." That made me look at my part in contributions.

Serving as literature chair for my district has allowed me to see all the great resources that Alcoholics Anonymous provides. Right now, I am involved in a book study of *A.A. Comes of Age*. What powerful insight into how this

program came about! The enthusiasm and spiritual nature within the group that I meet with is very moving. I love where Bill W. states in the introduction that the first part of this book is in no particular historical order and you may want to go right to page 51 to start reading. I think it would be a great disservice to pass up those first 51 pages. You would miss the story of the little Norwegian who sold his coffee shop and everything he owned in Greenwich, Connecticut, around 1950, to move back to his hometown of Oslo so he could carry the message to his brother who was suffering from alcoholism. He shared in a letter to his far away family, after no correspondence for 20 years, how A.A. had saved his life. They pleaded with him for help. His brother was at the jumping off place, but he was not ready to hear the message of recovery. The Norwegian went to clergymen and doctors to share his knowledge of alcoholism, but they too were not interested. When nearly all hope was lost, and the little Norwegian made plans to come back to America, then his brother called

for help. The brother sobered up almost immediately and went on to start his own group in Oslo. After returning to work at the newspaper, he started running modest ads every day for one month trying to find another alcoholic who wanted help. The group in Oslo started with one other alcoholic and then a third and.....

I know that I am an alcoholic and I know what my purpose is today and for that, I am very grateful.

Mary M., District 91 Literature Chair

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, in paperback for the first time and with a new cover, will be the souvenir of the 2010 International Convention.

It may be purchased by checking the appropriate box on your registration form. You may also purchase extra copies for friends and sponsees at the Convention Center.

\$7.00 U.S.

Humor from Paul & Friends

Thanks to Paul S. and his Seattle friends for sharing their collection of humorous and spiritual thoughts:

- If you're looking to have an image in A.A., look around at the meetings you go to and take a look at whom you're trying to impress.
- An alcoholic is a person who wants to be held while he's isolating.
- Sobriety is the leading cause of relapse.
- If drinking is interfering with your work, you probably have a drinking problem. If work is interfering with your drinking, you're probably alcoholic.
- I often obsessively pursue feeling good, no matter how bad it makes me feel.
- Why did alcohol kill millions of brain cells, but leave the ones that make me want to drink?
- From a newcomer reading the Promises for the first time, "We will comprehend the word "cemetery" and we will know peace."
- There is only one direction to coast, and that is downhill.

(Continued on page 11)

It Is Uplifting

It has been my privilege and pleasure to participate in “listening sessions” in Districts 41, 61, 81 and 93. I hope that most of you have completed and sent in the Finance Survey that was in the October Triangle and is available at our web site. This question of “self-support” and use of literature proceeds to fund our functional service expenses will remain a serious matter for further discussion at upcoming Assemblies and General Service Conferences.

But what I want to share now is how impressed I am with the tone and content of those four listening sessions. In recent regional gatherings, I have sometimes felt that there was more heat than light in the discussions. Finance is often tough stuff for even sober alcoholics. When it comes to money I can still be fear-driven, and I doubt that I am the only one. “What if’s” plague me, clouding my thinking. I grab on to a position, and cling to it with fervor. Those who disagree with me seem threatening, unin-

formed, petty and just plain wrong. Discussion tends to degenerate into name calling and anger.

Not so in the listening sessions! Hard questions of how to pay for our service functions and how to understand and apply our traditions were stated with conviction, but without blaming or accusing others. The dilemma of how to be self supporting — how even to define self support consistent with our traditions and responsibilities — was explored with humility, compassion, and respect for those who disagreed. It was awesome to behold!

The problem is real. So long as we use literature profits to fund our GSO service activities, we can be influenced by outside entities that make large literature purchases. We may be tempted to make our decisions based in part upon what we think the marketplace wants. We are not even certain, as far as I can tell, that we have identified and charged all of the expenses of research, development and approval of litera-

ture as literature expenses. Some of what we are classifying as functional service expenses may include literature costs. While we always have done our best (and always will, I believe) to fund our actual service costs with our voluntary contributions, our track record of falling short most of the time makes this a challenge virtually every year. At what point, if ever, must we provide only those services that we can support solely with our voluntary contributions? Which alcoholics do we leave behind?

Still, watching and listening to members of our Fellowship here in Area 40 grapple with the problem, I am optimistic about the future of A.A. These hard questions and difficult situations present us with opportunities for spiritual growth. That’s what I perceived in our listening sessions: spiritual growth in our search for appropriate solutions to troubling financial problems.

Bill W. characterized our society as a spiritual kindergarten. It seems to me that we

are even now, all these years after publication of A.A. *Comes of Age*, in the process of growing up as a Fellowship. It isn’t always fun to be a part of that process, but it is uplifting. Thank you for letting me be of service, and best wishes for 2010!

Terry S., Area Chair/Alternate Delegate

“I am optimistic about the future of A.A. These hard questions and difficult situations present us with opportunities for spiritual growth.”

Anonymity and Social Networking Sites

Protecting A.A.’s Traditions online is an important subject to many A.A. members and we don’t all agree on whether social networking sites are a private or public venue.

G.S.O. often develops guidelines when there are areas of concern among A.A. members and has developed Guidelines on the Internet, MG-18.

The Guidelines are available on the web site ww.aa.org, select “Literature” then “A.A. Guidelines”. The Guidelines can also be ordered through the literature catalog.

TIME FOR A SPLIT?

Send Area contributions to:

AREA 40, Inc.

PO BOX 21577

BILLINGS MT 59104

Send GSO contributions to:

GSO

PO BOX 459

GRAND CENTRAL STATION

NEW YORK NY 10163

The Grapevine in District 61

My name is Gary and I am District 61's alcoholic Grapevine Chairman. I was asked to write an article for the Triangle about what we do in our district with the Grapevine.

First, I would like to share a little story that I found in the Archives about how the first A.A. meeting got started in Helena. This happened in 1948. A couple of alcoholics were having a discussion about their common problem. One of them had found a copy of the Grapevine on a bus.

He started to throw it aside when he saw a line that caught his eye: "Are you troubled with an alcoholic problem?"

After reading some of the articles he saw frequent emphasis about turning one's thought and life over to a Power greater than oneself.

When he arrived in Helena, he contacted a friend who shared his alcoholic problem. He told his friend about finding the Grapevine and what he had read about this Power greater than oneself. After a long discussion, they both found, to their complete surprise, that neither had taken a drink for a week. The seed was sown and the first A.A.



group was started in Helena. A.A. Group #1 still exists today.

One of the first things I did was read the Grapevine

workbook to discover suggestions on how to make the Grapevine better known and used by the fellowship. We used some of those suggestions and we have had some success.

Next, I got on the Grapevine web page aagrapevine.org to see what else was available.

We found more useful information on the web page.

Some of the things we do in District 61 to "promote" the Grapevine are:

- put past issues in the used magazine rack at the local library
- take a copy to read while waiting for an appointment and just happen to forget it
- take staple free copies to jails
- make used copies available to groups.

We have a Grapevine meeting on Friday mornings where we read an article and then have a discussion meeting about the article that we read. We brainstorm about other ways to get "Our Meeting In Print" out there.

Once a year we hold what we call the Grapefest, usually held in June. The Area Delegate and Grapevine Chair are invited to give reports, and a local member is asked to share their experience with the Grapevine. Oh yes, we do have something to eat at the Grapefest. June 19, 2010 is

the scheduled date for this year's event. Mark your calendar and please join us!

Right now we have the new Grapevine calendars and the Daily planners for 2010 available for sale. These items make nice gifts along with a subscription to the Grapevine.

Again, pass the Grapevine forward.

Yours in Service and Sobriety

Gary E., District 61 Grapevine Chair

".. in 1948. A couple of alcoholics [in Helena] were having a discussion about their common problem. One of them had found a copy of the Grapevine on a bus ... A.A. Group #1 still exists today."

The Voice of the Enemy

Hi, my name is Alcoholism and I kill alcoholics.

Oh, I know you weren't expecting me, but I was here anyway and thought I'd speak up. In July of 2006, there was an interview in the A.A. Grapevine with Jim Estelle, a former chairman of your Board and Class A non-alcoholic Trustee. In that interview he had the audacity to refer to me as the Enemy.

The nerve! I can't stand him. I could neither get to him through the bottle nor through a bunch of drunks at a General Service Conference. To my credit, the only thing that minimized the damage of his interview is the fact that so few of you alcoholics subscribe to the magazine.

Most of you are somewhat familiar with the work I do

within your Fellowship. I have the best luck with newcomers, but I am patient, and can occasionally get someone else. The first few decades of your movement I focused on those steps. Let's face it, some of them are tough, and it often doesn't take much convincing, little thoughts such as "I only hurt myself, so I don't owe anyone amends," or "I don't need to write down every-

thing on my 4th Step," and I'm able to get those folks in the end. You are constantly thinking there aren't enough alcoholics getting your message, but I'm here to say that one sober alcoholic is too many, and you've been a real thorn in my side for 74 years.

A few decades back, I employed another tactic. After all, though you have recov-

(Continued on page 7)

(Voice continued from page 6) ered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body, you aren't cured of me. You like working together, you believe in working together, and since I am already with you, why not *work you together*? If ten of you get together for a group conscience or a committee meeting, I'm there tenfold. So why not beat you at your own game? The Traditions!

It hasn't been as hard as I thought it might. You share your experience with the steps more than you do the traditions. You say, "personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity," in Tradition One. I say, "You're absolutely right on that one. Never forget that it's all about unity, and nothing else matters so much."

You say in Tradition Two something about a loving God expressing himself in a group conscience. I like talking to the old-timers on this one. They know best; they really do. Why would you want a bunch of newcomers who don't know anything participating in a group conscience? Who knows how things work better than those who have been around a long time? Don't bother the group with those important decisions when a couple or three of you who founded the group know what's right. You'll just cause controversy when it's all about Unity.

Tradition Three defines your membership by referring to those with a desire to stop drinking. Now I have to ask, isn't that selfish? I really thought you guys were supposed to be rid of your selfishness! If Bill and Dr. Bob had foreseen the cocaine crisis of the '80's or the meth situation

of today, they would have never written such a thing. It's probably not even what they meant. Your job is to help people. You must let those who need help participate whether they are alcoholic or not. Upsetting people by sending them elsewhere is not conducive to unity.

You say each group should be autonomous. That's the smartest tradition you've got. I'll be the first to tell you that nothing you do *really* affects A.A. as a whole. Spend your group's money however you wish. Let anyone participate in your meeting who wants to. You can do whatever you want, because the 4th Tradition says you can!

You say in Tradition Five that each group has one primary purpose. If I can get you messed up on the rest of your so-called Traditions, I don't have to worry about this one, because your message gets messed up in the process. It's a win-win situation for me. Remember that it's all about Unity, and if that means a few social purposes mixed in, that's okay.

In your Sixth Tradition you say that problems of money, property, and authority can easily divert you from your primary spiritual aim. I say since you were careless enough to lose your copyright on the 1st Edition of your book, you need to be extra careful that others don't get ahead of you in its sales. It's *your* message, and any money as a result of the sale of your basic text should be *yours*.

You're really big on your 7th Tradition. When it applies to you. There are no dues or fees, you know, so that means you don't have to put anything

in the basket. And your group can do whatever it wants with its money. What's GSO done for you lately anyway? What benefit do you get from sending off dollars to Area? Your group will be more unified by sponsoring a dance than by just sending off a check to your district.

You say in your Eighth Tradition that your usual A.A. 12th Step work is never to be paid for. I challenge you to define "usual." Back in the day, they drug drunks off barstools. Nobody does that these days. Hand them a pamphlet. They say it more eloquently than you can. Young people need visual and sensory stimulation, and that means videos. If you hire the best actors, if you don't hide their faces like you're ashamed, the message will get to young alcoholics better than you trying to talk about your experience. Maybe you should look into video games. What with HIPAA and confidentiality, you might get yourself in a whole lot of trouble, so the best thing you can do is drop a fellow off at detox. They know how to deal with folks like that better than you do, and I bet you know one that's AA-friendly that you can recommend to his family.

You say in your Ninth Tradition that A.A. ought never be organized. I say you should form a sub-committee to examine this and report back.

You're very good at Tradition 10's suggestion that you have no opinion on outside issues. Your Nebraska delegate used to frequent bars where the rule was you didn't discuss politics or religion. Your whole Fellowship must have drunk in those same bars. Now let's talk smoking. Let's talk about

whether or not your group should go green and get rid of its styrofoam cups. Let's talk about my latest, and dare I say greatest, subject: Let's talk about diversity.

You say in Tradition 11 that you should remain anonymous at the level of press, radio and films. I say nobody really knows who you are on the internet anyway. You might be able to help someone.

In Tradition 12 you say to place principles before personalities. Doesn't that mean trusting your trusted servants no matter what? You shouldn't risk hurting someone's feelings by questioning his work! How dare you! Aren't you spiritually fit? You're running on fear, aren't you? And regarding your 12th Tradition when it comes to voting, you should always vote the way you think the vote is going to go. It's all about unity, and you don't want to be the one lone person causing disharmony.

Okay, so I've confessed about my work regarding Traditions and a little bit with Steps, and you may be wondering why I didn't mention Concepts. I figure I'll bother with those when the Conference does.

I know you didn't really expect me to talk to you today, but I appreciate so much that you listen so well when I speak. Fine. You can call me the Enemy if you like. But my name is Alcoholism. And I've been around a lot longer than you have.

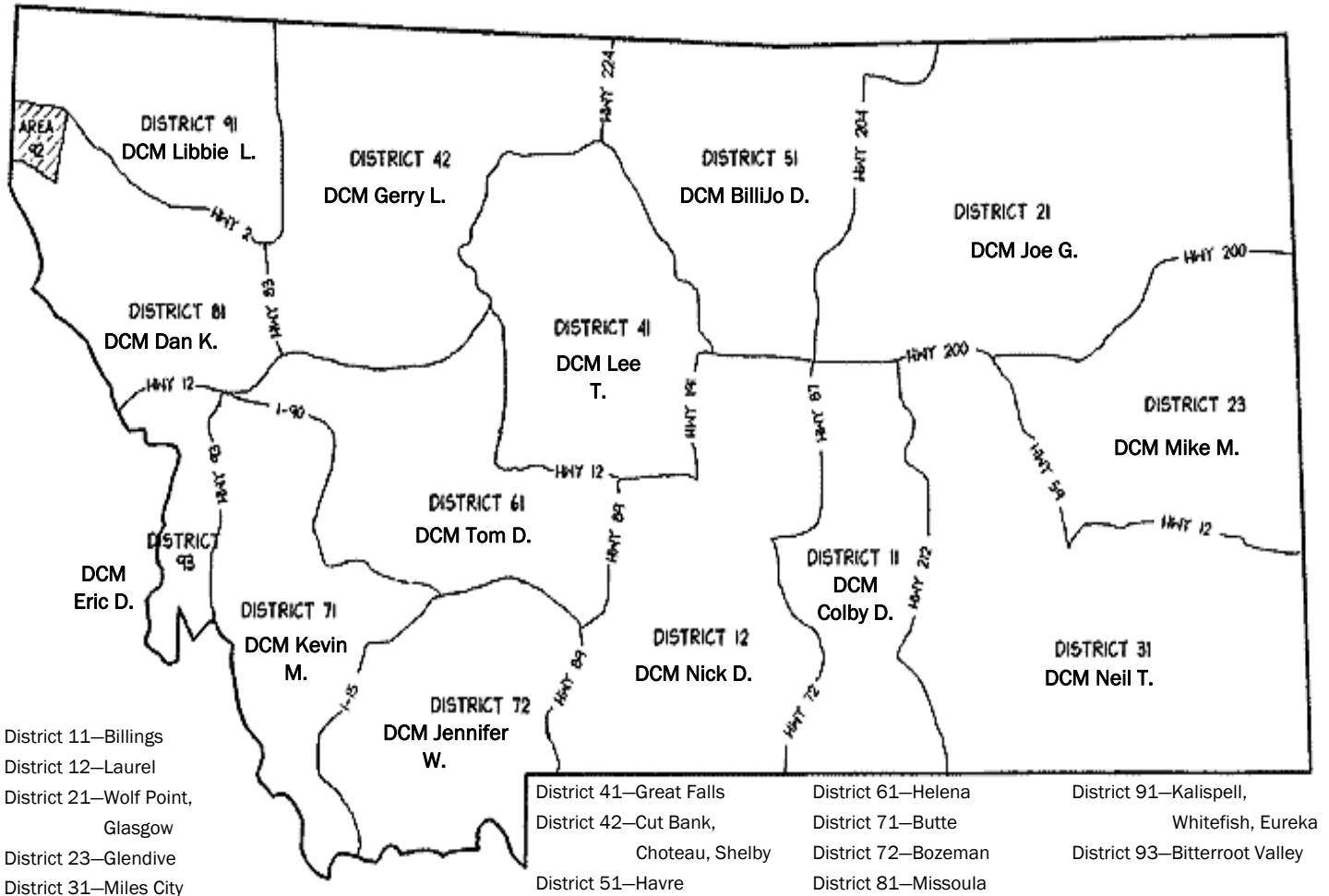
West Central Regional Forum
2009 Presentation

Lori G., Delegate Panel 58
Area 41

Area Officers, Committee Chairs, and DCM's 2009-10

| B. POSITION | NAME | EMAIL | COMMITTEE MEM- |
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Area Map



Wanted:

Stories for Proposed Special Needs Pamphlet

In response to a 2009 General Service Conference Advisory Action we are soliciting stories for a recovery pamphlet for A.A. members with special needs—such as deaf or hearing impaired, blind, wheelchair bound, learning disabilities, etc.

Your stories might include barriers you may have had to overcome in order to hear the A.A. message. Also, any litera-

ture, other tools, or efforts by A.A. members that you found helpful.

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced. Attach your name and address on a separate piece of paper. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not their story is selected for publication.

Please send your sharing to: Special Needs Coordinator,

General Service Office, Box 459, General Central Station, New York, NY 10163

Host City for 2012 WCRAASC

Increase enthusiasm and enhance unity in your district. Gather support from other groups and prepare a bid for the West Central Region Service Conference to be held in Montana March 2-4, 2012.

Bids should be submitted to Terry S., Area Chair, by February 1, 2010. Convince the selection committee that your city would be the best for A.A. as a whole by including information such as airport (flights, connec-

tions, schedules, ground transportation), convention facilities (meeting room capacity, supplemental meeting rooms available, accommodations) and restaurants.

See the planning guide at www.aa-montana.org or contact Mary S., Corrections Committee Chair, or Terry S., Area Chair, for more information.

Calendar of Events

JANUARY

23—**DEERLODGE**—Montana State Prison Orientation—Mary S.

FEBRUARY

1—**AGENDA ITEMS DUE**—Spring Assembly—Terry S.

2012 **WCRAASC BID INFO DUE**—Terry S.

19-20—**KALISPELL**—Into Action Weekend—Brett D., Luke S., Bob M.

20—**JOLIET**—Mid-Winter Social—Sandy A.

27—**BOZEMAN**—We Are Bodily and Mentally Different—Shelly S., Ester W.

MARCH

5-7—**DUBUQUE IOWA**—West Central Region Service Conference—Carole B.

19-20—**HELENA**—Northern Rockies Pockets of Enthusiasm—Kevin S.

APRIL

10-11—**LEWISTOWN**—Spring Assembly—Terry S.

MAY

14—**DEADLINE FOR PRE-REGISTRATION**—A.A.'s 75th Birthday Party "A Vision for You"

14-16—**BILLINGS**—Spring Roundup—Connie O., Johnny B.

JULY

1-4—**SAN ANTONIO TEXAS**—A.A.'s 75th Birthday Party "A Vision for You"—www.aa.org

SEPTEMBER

18-19—**LEWISTOWN**—Fall Assembly—Terry S.

OCTOBER

1-3—**BUTTE**—Fall Roundup—Rick P. 660-1111

NOVEMBER 2010

12-14—**RAPID CITY, SD**—Special West Central Region Forum

MARCH 2011

4-6—**NOTHERN MINNESOTA**—West Central Region Service Conference

SPRING 2011—**GREAT FALLS/MILES CITY**—Local Forum—pending request outcome

APRIL 2011

9-10—**LEWISTOWN**—Spring Assembly

SEPTEMBER 2011

10-11—**IOWA**—West Central Regional Forum

17-18—**LEWISTOWN**—Fall Assembly

TO BE ANNOUNCED—**HELENA**—National AA Archives Workshop—Gerry R.

MARCH 2012

2-4—**TO BE ANNOUNCED**—West Central Region Service Conference

If you would like your event listed here, please email the editor at triangle@aa-montana.org or send it to PO Box 542, Bozeman, MT 59771

My Favorite Party

It was 1990 and I was just coming out of the fog of active alcoholism. I lived in Seattle and the A.A. International Convention was coming to town. I was in the usual financial pit with which many of us enter the rooms. My friend, being of better means, paid the \$55 registration fee for both of us.

My sponsor suggested that I help. I directed attendees to their rooms on the University of Washington campus. It was fun. It was my first convention.

Over the next few days, my sponge-like brain (literally and figuratively) soaked up the history of the traditions with Bill, the beginnings of A.A. in the (then) Soviet Union and eastern Europe, meetings in the Kingdome, and the DANCE!! Never had I seen "old people" dancing to AC/DC and "young people" dancing to Frank Sinatra. It was the best dance EVER and we were SOBER!! Wahoo.

In 2000, I married my A.A. sweetheart. The wedding was planned for the weekend before the International Convention in Minneapolis. We honeymooned in Wisconsin for a few days then we to the A.A. party. I learned that we were not the only couple honeymooning at the Convention. A friend from Seattle had gotten married before the San Diego Convention of 1995. He and his wife were celebrating their five year anniversary. I also was able to see A.A. friends from South Africa, Zimbabwe and all over the country.

We celebrated our five year anniversary in Toronto and plan to celebrate our 10 year anniversary in San Antonio. You don't have to get married, but I encourage you to come to the PARTY!

Rebecca S., Helena

International Convention Update

The International Convention will need 3,000 to 4,000 volunteers, who are like greeters at an A.A. meeting room door, except they are greeting 50,000 people.

The structure of the local host committee is being put in place. See www.aa75.org for a description of some of the subcommittees. The Volunteer Kickoff will be held in San Antonio January 9. Members will be able to sign up to volunteer online sometime in January, after the Kickoff.

Continued from page 1

(Literature Chair from page 1)

Perhaps the most important part of my job is communication – I am asked to be a clearinghouse of information about all literature available from the GSO, current pricing, and ordering specifics. Part of this can be done through written and oral reports to each assembly, and through articles in the Area 40 Triangle. I would also love to be invited to your district (or group) events involving literature to share experience, strength and hope. Another way I feel I can be more effective in this area is through email. If you are a district or group literature committee chair, or an A.A. member interested in A.A. literature, please help me by providing your contact information to me so I can add you to my email list. You can contact me through the Area 40 website, www.aa-montana.org.

It is not too early to start thinking about standing for a service position at the Area. Please get in touch with me if you are inter-

ested in the Literature Committee Chair position – I would be happy to fill you in.

In order for me to be able to address your needs and concerns successfully, I need to know what your needs and concerns are. In that vein, I have prepared some questions to get the conversation started. Don't worry – this isn't a test and you won't be graded!

I encourage you to discuss the questions in the literature survey below (and questions of your own that I haven't thought of) with your groups, and I would appreciate it if you would share the results of these discussions with me and the Area 40 Literature Committee. Who knows – you might discover your own passion for literature along the way!

Lori F., Area 40 Literature Chair

Don't worry - this isn't a test and you won't be graded!

Literature Survey

Who is the person responsible for literature in your group? (If you don't know or don't have one, this might be an opportunity for you!)

Does your group have a current literature catalog?

Does your group have a literature inventory? If so, what is included? Only Big Books and 12x12s, or other books and booklets?

Do you use and stock only A.A. Conference Approved Literature? Why or why not?

Does your group use and stock pamphlets? If so, which ones? What are your most used pamphlets and what does your group use them for?

What is the state of your group's literature display? Is it collecting dust in a dark corner, or do you have a well stocked display in a brightly lit area?

Do you think there is too much A.A. literature? Not enough? Just the right amount?

Have you ever seen or had the opportunity to see any of the videos available from the GSO? If so, do you think they are useful? A waste of money?

Are you aware that the Big Book and the 12x12 are available for on-line reading at www.aa.org? Have you visited the web site and seen all the literature that is available for viewing and/or download?

Humor from Paul & Friends continued from page 4

- If God were small enough to be understood, He wouldn't be big enough to be God!
- I can't do His will my way.
- Joy isn't the absence of pain – it's the presence of God.
- God touches us with a feather to get our attention. Then, if we don't listen, He starts throwing bricks.

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