

The Triangle

Area 40 Inc.

February 2010

Volume 18 Issue 2

If It Ain't Broke ...

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it" was a comment frequently heard around the state as Area Officers conducted listening sessions. Members attending the listening sessions communicated their sense that we should not limit the amount of literature profits used to fund services, although there was not a consensus or clear majority. The "if it ain't broke" mind-set reflected caution about taking radical action rather than a full endorsement of the status quo. It was generally agreed that we should work toward increasing 7th Tradition contributions.

There were great discussions at the listening sessions, with a wide range of views expressed and questions asked. Members had an opportunity to gain a new awareness of how money and spirituality mix, to become better informed about how 7th Tradition funds are used and to learn some history about funding GSO functional expenses.

In addition to "if it ain't broke", comments shared include:

- We hope that all literature being sold ultimately reaches the hands of an alcoholic or those afflicted by the disease of alcoholism.
- Using literature profits to help support GSO is in line with Bill W.'s original vision for the Big Book and literature profits as discussed in *A.A. Comes of Age*.
- Raising literature prices is like an unfair tax on groups.
- Leave it the way it is, but let's work harder to increase contributions.
- The ideal is self support, but it's always been and always will be a battle.
- I can't spend more than I earn. My group can't spend more than it receives in the 7th Tradition.
- Let's not make voluntary contributions into dues.
- Bill W. wrote on both sides of this issue.

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What Kind of Unity?

As the Fellowship discussed the issue of self-support and the use of Literature profits to fund services, it was obvious that we do not all agree. How do we get through these times of dissent and focus on our primary purpose?

The closing comments at the 2009 West Central Regional Forum by Class A (Non Alcoholic) Trustee and General Service Board Chairperson, Ward Ewing, state how these conver-

sations and discussions can help A.A. flourish and grow:

"...If we can stay focused on our primary purpose and reach out to the suffering alcoholic, then I am absolutely convinced that our membership will grow.

I have also learned, over the course of this weekend, how the Three Legacies are connected, through service, to our primary purpose. Regarding the Legacy of Unity we have heard a lot about divisions

among us. And despite this conversation around differences, we have an incredibly deep commonality—our love for the Fellowship. We have to be united in carrying the message because there are millions of people who need to hear it. So our unity needs to be the kind that's based on varying our differences. Our unity requires us to express our views, so listen to one another carefully and find ways to move forward.

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From Your Editor

Hi Everybody! Happy Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year!!

Area 40 A.A. members had an opportunity to say how we feel about A.A.'s finances during the past few months at listening sessions and through the finance survey. This issue highlights what we had to say. The 2009 end of year financial reports are also included.

Here we go! The Regional Service Conference, pre-assemblies, Assembly, the General Service Conference and the Delegate reports are approaching. I hope your group will be connected through participation in these events.

The March Triangle will focus on the Spring Assembly, including the agenda. Please submit your articles by February 20.

Your Editor, Sharon S.

Finance Survey Results Are In

Approximately 65 responses to the Finance Survey have been tallied and will be included in background material for the 60th General Service Conference in April.

The yes/no answers indicate that people completing the survey feel well-informed about GSO's services and their groups' contributions, think A.A. should continue funding those services using literature profits as necessary, and would participate in a 7th Tradition Workshop.

The detailed survey responses to the yes/no questions are reflected in the table entitled "Finance Survey Yes/No" on this page.

The second part of the survey included discussion questions. Again, respondents were very positive and generally thought their groups were doing a good job. Here are some highlights (see the background information for the Conference for the complete list of responses):

1. Does my group believe the 7th Tradition is a principle of participation in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic?
 - It is giving back.
 - Money in the basket is ultimately about carrying the message.
2. How does my group utilize our 7th Tradition Contributions? What can my group do to increase self-support?
 - We do well in all areas of contributions.
 - We could help members of the group be well informed about the 7th Tradition and how it is used.
 - We buy books for new comers and give some to District.
 - We could bring the 7th Tradition up as a topic or have a workshop.
 - We contribute to all service work.
 - We now contribute \$2-\$5 each as we realized we were not self-supporting at District, Area, and GSO levels.
 - We buy coffee, pay rent, buy literature and send some to District, Area and GSO.
 - We have a yearly speaker event; pay for supplies and rent for meetings; we give scholarships to newcomers for A.A. events. We can ALL put more than one dollar in the basket at each meeting.
 - We could get rid of the pink can.
3. Does my group have good communications about 7th Tradition Contributions received and how that money is spent?
 - Good, but posters or announcements could improve it.
 - Group Treasurers give reports at monthly or quarterly group business meetings with paper copies available.
4. How is the relationship between spirituality and the 7th Tradition expressed in my group?
 - Actual contributions say it all.
 - Actions indicate that we give it away to keep it with both time and money.
 - We do not hoard money, we pass it along.
 - We have regular service rotation and participate at all levels of service and business.
 - We talk about the needs of the group first, making for great unity within the group.
 - Our group is approaching 30 years; makes regular contributions; stays active in service, unity, and recovery; has a yearly group inventory; looks for ways to better carry the message.

Finance Survey Yes/No		
Question	Yes	No
Do you know what services and functions the General Service Office provides for our fellowship?	51	3
Do you believe we should continue to strive fully to support GSO functional expenses through our voluntary contributions, and also continue to use literature profits to cover GSO functional expenses if and when our voluntary contributions fall short?	55	9
Do you believe we should set a limit on the amount of literature profits we will use to cover GSO functional expenses when our voluntary contributions fall short?	14	36
Do you believe we should start decreasing each year the amount of literature profits we use to cover GSO functional services, so that in 10 years we are not using any literature profits to cover GSO functional expenses?	15	26
Do you know what your home group contributes to District, Area, and GSO?	49	5
Would you be interested in participating in a 7 th Tradition workshop?	41	13

Speaking of Self Support

Speaking of self-support. How is Area 40 doing?

Area 40 started 2009 with a balance of \$21,115.28. Thanks to the generosity of Area groups, the Area ended the year in good shape with \$24,735.57 in the checkbook. The operating reserve was \$12,641.17 with a Prudent Reserve of \$10,303 and \$1,791.40 in the Archivist Account.

The total income from group contributions, districts, roundups, 7th Tradition collected at Area Assemblies, and Triangle subscriptions was \$31,684.75. Total expenses for the year were \$30,080.40, 97% of the \$30,939 budgeted.

BUDGET VS ACTUAL BY LINE ITEM January 1 - December 31, 2009		
	Actual	Budget
Income		
Individual contribution	\$60.00	\$80.00
Group Contributions	\$26,224.51	\$26,939.00
District Contribution	\$1,449.19	\$300.00
Roundup Contribution	\$100.00	\$500.00
7th Tradition	\$2,330.37	\$1,500.00
Triangle Subscriptions	\$1,200.00	\$1,100.00
Other Income (recouped from)	\$210.10	\$475.00
Archivist Account	\$110.00	
Interest	\$0.58	\$45.00
Total Income	\$31,684.75	\$30,939.00
Expenses		
Travel Expenses	\$15,475.02	\$19,634.00
Rent	\$5,639.26	\$5,500.00
Literature Expenses	\$267.76	\$600.00
Photocopies / printing	\$2,765.36	\$2,875.00
Dues, registration, fees	\$37.00	
Postage	\$728.13	\$300.00
Supplies	\$895.20	\$460.00
Telephone	\$3,498.53	\$1,220.00
Archivist Account	\$360.29	
Miscellaneous expense	\$413.85	\$350.00
Total Expense	\$30,080.40	\$30,939.00
Net Income	\$1,604.35	\$0.00

Two Year End of Year Comparison		
	December 31, 2009	December 31, 2008
Income	\$31,684.75	\$28,673.07
Expense	\$30,080.40	\$26,327.36
Operating Reserve	\$12,641.17	\$8,795.78
Prudent Reserve	\$10,303.00	\$10,272.00
Archivist Account	\$1,791.40	\$2,047.50
Total	\$24,735.57	\$21,115.28

Budget vs Actual by Committee January 1 through December 31, 2009		
	Actual	Budget
Expense		
Spring Assembly	\$4,463.63	\$5,000.00
Fall Assembly	\$4,003.28	\$4,750.00
Regional Service Conference	\$755.47	\$1,800.00
Regional Forum	\$1,179.31	\$1,800.00
Regional Trustee	\$570.54	\$750.00
Delegate Expenses	\$5,389.62	\$5,889.00
Area Chair	\$452.58	\$1,000.00
Archives Chair	\$5,060.40	\$3,850.00
Corrections Chair	\$0.00	\$250.00
CPC Chair	\$92.95	\$250.00
GrapeVine Chair	\$80.25	\$250.00
Literature Chair	\$299.72	\$850.00
Public Information Chair	\$3,550.44	\$1,450.00
Treatment Chair	\$37.45	\$250.00
Secretary	\$53.25	\$300.00
Treasurer	\$804.30	\$400.00
Website	\$143.40	\$150.00
Triangle	\$2,652.18	\$1,950.00
Area Workshops	\$127.92	
Archivist Account	\$662.17	
Program Services - Other	-\$309.63	
Unclassified	\$11.17	
Total Expense	\$30,080.40	\$30,939.00
% of year elapsed	100%	
% of actual to budget	97%	

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

Heard At Meetings

“My decision not to drink is not sufficient for me not to drink today”.
 Jim C.

“Humility—getting sober somebody else’s way. If you think you have it, you’ve just lost it.” Ron

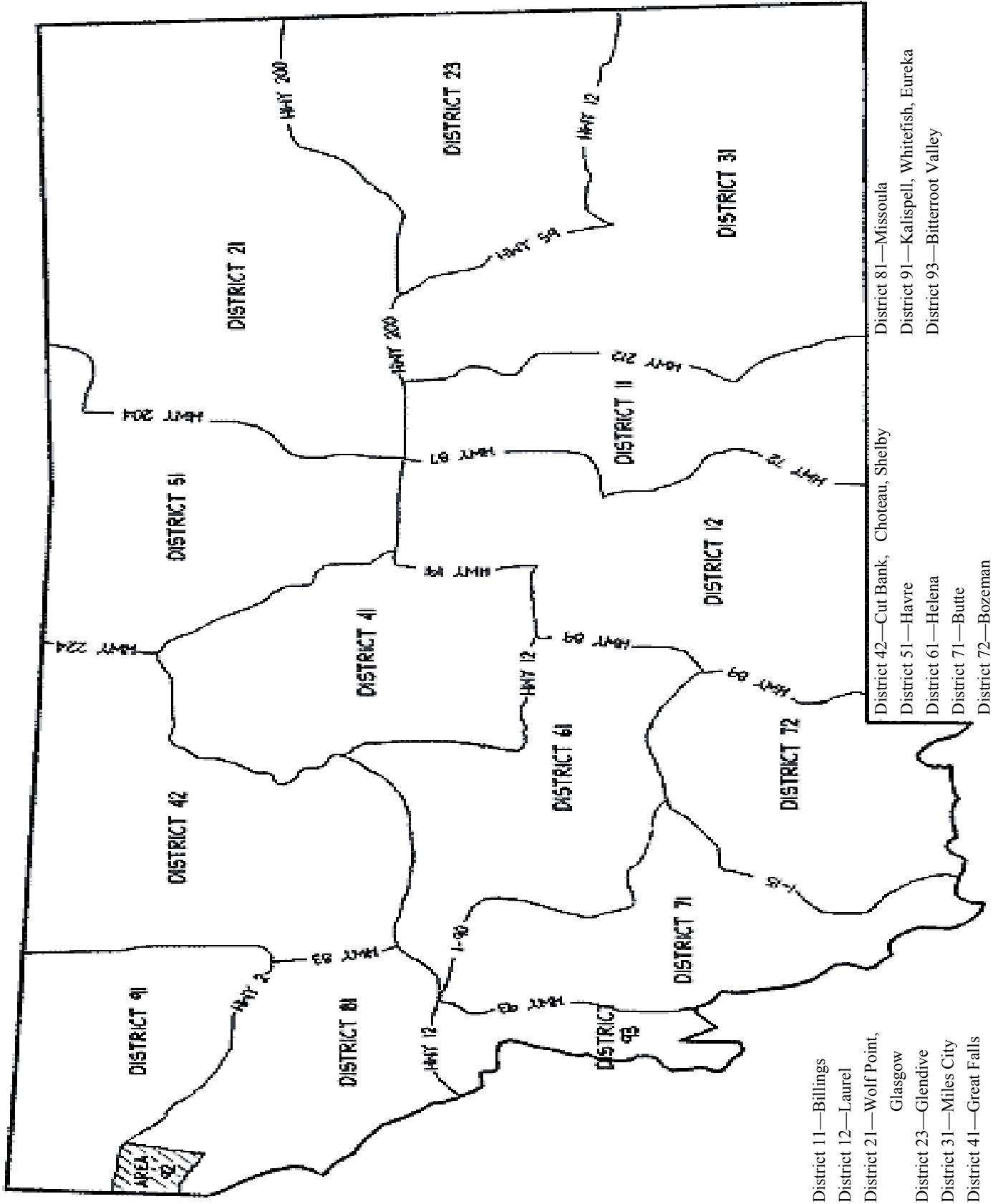
“It’s impossible to steer a parked car!” Carleen L.

“Time spent attempting to change others affords little time for personal change.” Georgette V.

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

POSITION	NAME	EMAIL	COMMITTEE
Delegate	Carole B.	delegate@aa-montana.org	
AreaCh/Alt D	Terry S.	chair@aa-montana.org	
Secretary	April A.	secretary@aa-montana.org	
Treasurer	Linda B.	treasurer@aa-montana.org	Del, Alt,
Archives	Tim H.	archives@aa-montana.org	DCMs-11, 71
CPC	Virginia R.	cpc@aa-montana.org	DCMs-21, 51 DRs-42, 81
Corrections	Mary S.	corrections@aa-montana.org	DCMs-41,42
Grapevine	Richard K.	grapevine@aa-montana.org	DCMs-81, 91
Literature	Lori F.	literature@aa-montana.org	DCMs-12, 31 DRs-91, 93
Public Info.	Tim M.	pi@aa-montana.org	DCMs-23, 93
Treatment	Paula H.	treatment@aa-montana.org	DCM-61 DRs-21, 41, 71
Triangle Ed.	Sharon S.	triangle@aa-montana.org	
DCM 11	Colby D.	dcm11@aa-montana.org	Archives DR Finance
DCM 12	Nick D.	dcm12@aa-montana.org	Literature DR Public Info.
DCM 21		dcm21@aa-montana.org	CPC DR Treatment
DCM 23	Mike M.	dcm23@aa-montana.org	Public Info. DR Archives
DCM 31	Jim G.	dcm31@aa-montana.org	Literature DR Corrections
DCM 41	Lee T.	dcm41@aa-montana.org	Corrections DR Treatment
DCM 42	Gerry L.	dcm42@aa-montana.org	Corrections DR CPC
DCM 51	BilliJo D.	dcm51@aa-montana.org	CPC DR Public Info.
DCM 61	Tom D.	dcm61@aa-montana.org	Treatment DR Grapevine
DCM 71	Kevin M.	dcm71@aa-montana.org	Archives DR Grapevine
DCM 72	Jennifer W.	dcm72@aa-montana.org	Finance DR Corrections
DCM 81	Dan K.	dcm81@aa-montana.org	Grapevine DR CPC
DCM 91	Libbie L.	dcm91@aa-montana.org	Grapevine, DR Archives, DR Literature
DCM 93	Eric D.	dcm93@aa-montana.org	Public Info. DR Literature
Advisor	Andrew W.	advisor@aa-montana.org	
Archivist	Gerry R.	archivist@aa-montana.org	
Webmaster	Alex M.	webmaster@aa-montana.org	

Area Map



Calendar of Events



FEBRUARY

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

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

26-28—*LAVINA*—22nd Annual Spring Men's Retreat—Jaime G., Avern C., Ted A.

26-28—*WHITEFISH*—23rd Annual Sober Ski—Vic D., Bob & Beverly L.

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

MARCH

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

12-14—*SPOKANE WASHINGTON*—Northwest Pockets of Enthusiasm—Robert G.

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

APRIL

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

17—*GREAT FALLS*—12 Step Study—Frank B., Dan D.

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.

NOVEMBER 2010

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

MARCH 2011

4-6—*NORTHERN 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



International Convention Update

The International Convention will need 3,000 to 4,000 volunteers who will greet, give information, staff registration, help with special needs and languages, host shuttle buses, and help with marathon meetings. Would you like to be a Riverwalk greeter, or maybe help with the Kickoff Party-Dances? The web site www.aa75.org is ready for you to register and sign up. The process to get a volunteer account and sign up for volunteer time slots is very easy and friendly. What a great way to participate in this once every 5 year event to celebrate A.A.

(If It Ain't Broke continued from page 1)

Some of the questions offered for further consideration and reflection:

- Does money contributed to “can funds” take away from the 7th Tradition basket?
- How much money is enough? How much of a spiritual principle is enough?
- Do we match consistency and prudence in money spent and money received?
- Could outside entities buying books influence later editions of the Big Book?
- How can we convince A.A. members to put more than a buck in the basket?
- Can we be impacted by a change in buying practices by big purchasers?

The listening sessions were conducted in response to the 59th General Service Conference Advisory Action from the trustees' Finance Committee to “gather input from the fellowship on the following for review by the 2010 Conference Committee on Finance:

- 1) If we continue to use literature profits to partially 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?”

Our Delegate, Carole B.; Area Chair/Alternate Delegate, Terry S.; Treasurer, Linda B.; and past Delegate, Andrew W., visited Districts 11, 41, 51, 61, 72, 81, 91, and 93 to conduction the sessions. The detailed notes from the sessions have been forwarded for inclusion as background material for the 2010 General Service Conference.

(Unity continued from page 1)

Service is the foundation of our unity—not agreement. Service brings to us a kind of humility. Ego, as we all know, is the great destroyer of unity, and service is a way of humility. It's not about me. It's about our principles. And this humility is the foundation for our unity. It provides the strength for recovery and for carrying the message ...” Final Report West Central Regional Forum September 11-13, 2009

We All Work Together

The agenda for the General Service Conference (GSC) will be out soon. It is a good time to check to see whether your group is connected to AA. as a whole. The pamphlet *Circles of Love and Service* says, “Every group has a voice at the Conference if it has an active G.S.R.!”

The pamphlet also states the following:

“All parts of our Fellowship—group meetings, committees, offices, Conferences, and group jobs—have one joint purpose: **to help one newcomer who has a drinking problem.**

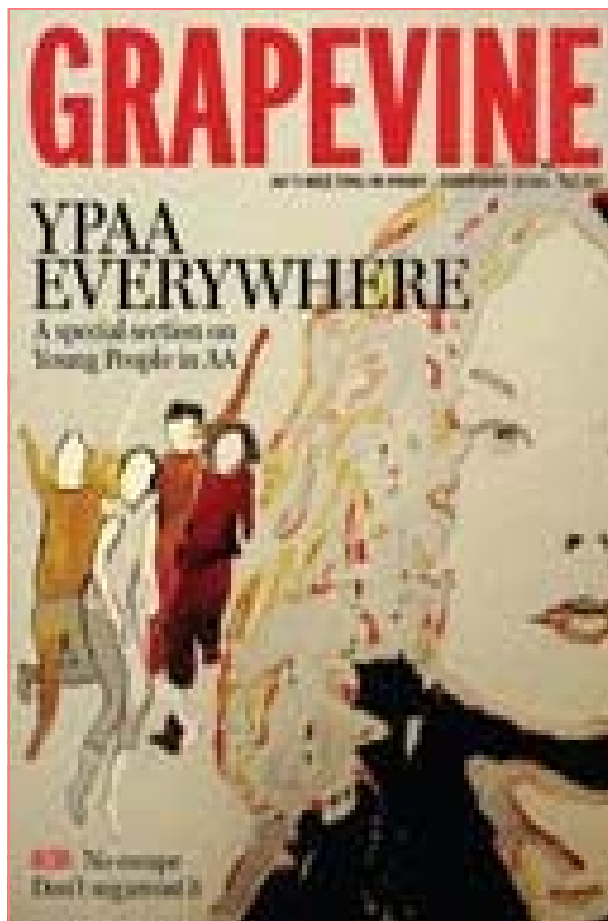
But in order for A.A. to run itself, we have a system for finding out how A.A. as a whole feels about its world affairs, and how it wants to operate.

We need constant, honest communications from one part of A.A. to every other, furnishing a wide cross section of A.A. experience. The General Service Conference makes that possible.

(Of course, neither the Conference, the General Service Board, nor any A.A. committee or office has any power to govern anyone in A.A. “Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”)

You and I may not need a General Service Conference today, to insure our own recovery. But what about the millions of sick alcoholics still stumbling out there in the dark?

When they come trying to find us, we want each of them to get the same loving help we all had. The Conference—and the whole general service system—has that responsibility: **to keep A.A. alive and well for those yet to come.”**



The February 2010 Grapevine is now available!

Special Section: YPAA Everywhere

The next generation picks up the torch of service

- **Embraced by love**
A need for fellowship overrides a newcomer's fear
- **Say no to nothing**
A German "recluse" bursts out of her shell at ICY-PAA 51
- **AA is for us**
N.Y. committee members draw other young people into service by attraction

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