## rea 40 Trianal

Our newsletter celebrates 35 years in circulation!!!

#### **New Beginnings**

I'm a retread in Alcoholics Anonymous. This isn't my first rodeo, but I'm sure hoping that it can be the final! When I was given this fresh start, I was full of fear. I was afraid that I might screw it all up again. I was afraid that my best would never be enough. I decided that I was willing to go to any lengths to get to stay. They told me that if I really wanted to stay, I would need to make a commitment to help me keep coming back, so that my head wouldn't take me out. I was given a job at my home group. I belonged to a large group that believed strongly in greeting newcomers, and making everyone feel welcome. I got to show up early, and stand in the greeting line welcoming all with a smile and a hug. This helped me get to know people, and feel like I was a part of the group. of the group

meetings, cleaned up our group's home. I got to be the group literature chair which included keeping a variety of items in stock, and setting up a display on Wednesday nights at our open speaker meeting. I was trusted with money, and blank checks to buy books. I learned how to be trusted with money, and blank checks to buy books. I learned how to be responsible, accountable, and trustworthy. I learned how to participate and contribute. I got to celebrate sobriety birthdays, and start becoming somebody I could be proud of. I worked through the steps with my sponsor, and I began to see the Hand of God working in my life daily. I remember hearing announcements every week that our "district" needed an "archives chair". I remember thinking "I have way too much going on in my life already. I have no free time, and if I did, why would I want to spend it volunteering to be part of something as boring sounding as that? What do they even do?" I did however decide that my willingness to commit my time and energy to AA had always paid off so far. When we had group elections, I stood for the GSR. I lost, but out of pity they made me the alternate!

Awhile into that 2 year commitment, our GSR Brett had been diagnosed with cancer in his lymph nodes. When he was sick, and on chemotherapy I got called to active duty. Brett really hated not being able to do his job, but he had enough on his plate, and it really felt great

to be there for somebody when they needed it! I also got to make new friends, and participate in the AA community. I helped carry meetings

nothing short of miraculous! I got to have a spiritual experience every Thursday night!

I later stood for Archives Chair, and lost. So after almost all of the positions were filled, I got a month to think about standing for the other's remaining. One was Alternate DCM. I seriously considered the far-fetched possibility of having to stand in once in awhile if I were elected. I decided I was willing to go to any length to learn how to do the best job I possibly could. I was elected. I attended the Area Assembly a few weeks later because I felt it would be important for me to be informed. The District did not fund the newly elect alternate DCM to attend before the start of their rotation, so I went on my own dime. I'm glad I did, even though I slept in my truck, because I got to speak with many DCM's about their experience, and ask questions. Just

I got to start out on another new journey in my sobriety. I had lots of help and support along the way, and continued to form many more solid friendships, and had deep and effective spiritual experiences with so many things I got to participate in. My world just kept getting so much bigger, and so much more full, a trend that has not let up since I joined AA. Despite my feelings of inadequacy, I got to learn and grow. I was surprisingly reassured that I did an adequate job. I even got to serve on the Archives Committee for Area, and at the end of that rotation, I got to stand for Area Archives Chair. I've never had so much fun serving with a committee, and that's the honest truth! As that rotation was waning towards the end, I was very sad, and was fully prepared to not have a position on our Area Committee henceforth. It was so hard to decline other positions that I was being nominated for, but I just couldn't sensibly commit to the possible travel schedule involved. It is such an honor, and a privilege to be asked to do anything in Alcoholics Anonymous. I hope to never take that for granted. I continue to reap what I sow, which is publish the Triangle on the 35<sup>th</sup> year of it's service in Area 40! I look forward to seeing it all unfold together!

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Letter from our New Delegate Circle Around the Triangle Corner of the Archives Past Trustee Sharing Area 40 Committee

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### I am responsible...

#### 75 years ago the first 12 Step work began in Montana

Alcoholics Anonymous has a rich history of activity in the state of Montana. In 1942 the Billings Gazette had an ad printed in the classified section from a drunk who was looking for other's to work with. AA came to life across the state around this same time when sober alcoholics began to carry the message they found to other's in their communities. The reason for AA's quick growth and steady hand of hope is grounded in this tradition of reaching out to those who suffer. AA is mistakenly referred to as a "self help" program by outsiders, but those of us who have found new life within know that by all practical means, AA is a "help others" program! Thank you to everyone willing to continue this trend, and if you would like to know how you can help - get in touch with your local district 12 step committees!!!

#### Letter from the Delegate

Warmest of welcomes to this issue of the Area 40 Triangle, and to the beginning of a new service rotation in Area 40. New beginnings are what the program is about, and the evolution of General Service is an excellent example of that, mostly because, along the way, it has helped so many other new beginnings to happen.

Eighty-two years ago, a couple fellows got together in Akron and invited God and the Fellowship (one by one) into their new venture. The society they began eventually matured to the point that millions of people's lives were touched and changed.

Seven years after that new beginning, in 1942, an alcoholic named Jimmy C. moved from Atlanta GA, to Billings MT. Jimmy C. made the first contact with what was then called, the "Alcoholic Foundation," and expressed his intent to start a group there. This is considered to be the beginning of AA activity in Montana which has grown over time into the work we do today and the fellowship we enjoy.

Twenty-six years ago, I stepped across the threshold of my first AA meeting in Billings, MT. As best I could at that time, I invited God and the fellowship into the middle of my recovery and have since enjoyed the best twenty-six years of my life.

After a few years of counting my blessings, I realized the time had come to "pass it on" as I'd been told to do by those who came before me. I raised my hand to volunteer for my first service position, which was almost as scary as stepping into my first meeting. At first, I thought it was about me doing something good and having a position, but quickly realized that being of service was about much more than that.

"Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." This quote, from page 77 of the Big Book, and the loving examples of all those serving around me, remind me, time and again, that if I am to be of any real use to God and those about me, I need to consider them first in all that I do. For a self-centered alcoholic like me, this was truly a new beginning.

As we begin this rotation, my goal is to do a better job of keeping those priorities in proper order. Each new rotation offers us a wealth of new beginnings to enjoy and celebrate. This year in particular marks the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of Jimmy C's letter to New York, which means that, while we work during this rotation to help others realize their own new beginnings, we also celebrate the incredible seventy-five years of new beginnings that have already been attained here in Area 40.

Welcome to the new rotation are all blessed to enjoy this opportunity to give something back to a program that has saved our lives. Shall we begin?

Gerry R
Panel 67
Area 40 Delegate

# Help us Celebrate 35 Years with the Triangle Newsletter!!!

#### Do you have something to share in the Triangle?

35 years ago the Triangle Newsletter was established as a means for members and groups in Area 40 to share experience, strength, and hope with each other in our effort to ensure that the hand of AA will always be found wherever alcoholics suffer. We want to know what's happening in your town, in your group, and in your recovery! If you have a story, an event, a workshop, or an announcement to share with the fellowship, please send it in to the editor to be included in the next issue! You can send your emails to Triangle@aa-montana.org or mail written submissions to PO BOX 364 Huntley, MT 59037

-WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

#### Letter from the 1st Triangle Editor

I am feeling extremely blessed with my life today as it is nothing like it was even ten years ago. My Higher Power and I communicate on a regular basis and that has made a delightful change for me. Someone in our group said he is now getting on his knees as he hadn't done since he was a child. For some reason I decided to try his idea and suddenly it makes a major difference. I used to go to bed, lie on my back and say thank you God for another day of sobriety and pretty well leave it at that.

My heath problems have been well taken care of and I thank God for that too, as lung cancer could be so very much worse, and my coronary artery wasn't blocked after all. So all is well at least for now with me. I was hurting and decided I had pneumonia again and went to the hospital one evening. They learned I didn't have pneumonia but bronchitis. Fortunately the ex-ray showed the cancer which hadn't been there long at all. A small wedge was removed from my middle right lung and I had very little pain from the three incisions.

Being nearly 80 years old my mind is not as alert as it used to be and my short term memory is dreadful at times but suddenly I will remember something I need to do now and I feel God is doing for me what I cannot any longer do for myself. This has happened so very much lately that I can't help but believe I have outside help.

Yes, I have been sober for over 41 years but it certainly has taken me a long time to get to where I am now. For many years it was enough to just slide through doing as little as possible. The years I was actively involved in service was extremely good for my growth. Sponsoring girls helped and still does, as does being responsible for a new group. My 99 year old Mother last year told me she thought I had finally grown up. Perhaps she is right. Anyhow, my life is one I would never have imagined it could be as I am totally at ease within myself.

God bless each and every one of you. -Maryann W

#### Survey for the Readers

- 1. How often do you read the Triangle?
- 2. Do you often find new important information when reading?
- 3. What do you look forward to seeing in the Triangle?
- 4. What do you wish you could add or see more of?
- 5. If your group chooses not to support funding the Triangle, why?
- 6. Do you see this newsletter as a useful service to the fellowship?
- 7. Does receiving the Triangle help you feel connected to our Area?
- 8. Would you prefer a digital subscription in color via email?
- 9. How could the Triangle better serve your home group?

Please take a moment to help me figure out how to better serve the fellowship in our area as your Triangle Editor. I will do my best to ensure that your newsletter is serving it's purpose! If you are tech savvy, you can view this issue on our website, copy and paste this into an email, and send it to me. Or you can just send me an email with question numbers and your answers. (Subject line: Triangle survey) If you prefer to hand write your answers you can simply do so on a sheet of paper with numbers, and your answers! (If you think it will fit just fill them in above and cut out this section) My email, and PO Box are both listed directly above this survey.

Mike D -Triangle Editor

Your group is part of the Circle around this Triangle
Thank you for making it well rounded

# I just got that previous position figured out and now I have to change?

My first service position was in my homegroup in Whitefish. Our meeting room had no running water and no drain. My task was pouring the dregs of the unused coffee into a five gallon bucket, carrying it down a flight of stairs and pouring it into the gutter on Central Ave. in downtown Whitefish. I would then get a different bucket and go into the clothing store below our meeting room and duck behind a curtain where the new shoes are kept and fill up the bucket with fresh water so that we could make coffee for the next couple of meetings. It all seemed rather complicated and embarrassing at first. I thought everyone would be staring at me while I poured out the coffee that was not used from our meetings into the gutter. (I didn't seem to have a problem stumbling out of the bar across the street all lit up at five in the afternoon). It turns out that no one stared at me or even seemed to mind while emptying the bucket into the gutter. The folks in the clothing store were used to someone coming in every few days to fill up the water bucket and once they got used to seeing the same person for a while they were even chatty and nice.

So fast forward a few years and I'm in a different service position for my homegroup, phone card chair. Perfect, how hard could it be? Pass around a clipboard for people to sign up if they wanted their name on the groups phone card. Well, there was a little more to it then that. It turned out that if your name was on the previous phone card but you had not signed onto the clipboard for the new phone card then you received a call from the phone card chair to see if you wanted to still be included on the card. I hated calling people out of the blue and this job seemed to be one of those God Shots designed to get us out of ourselves. I waited until the day before the rough draft needed to go to the printer to make the phone calls to individuals not listed on the clipboard, there were nearly thirty of them.

Everyone I called was glad to hear from me, a few had moved out of the area, a few had missed the clipboard and were going to get to it later, a few had missed a number of meetings and my call induced promises from them to attend more frequently, and a few had gone out drinking and asked to have their names removed from the phone card. The lesson for me was that the fifty pound phone was really not that heavy at all. It helped remove the imaginary obstacle I had that people would be bothered by my call. Now I rarely think twice when I call upon someone for help or with a question.

As I work my way down the service triangle I see similarities for all of the tasks and service positions I have held. At first they seemed overwhelming and complicated. But if I apply what I have learned; ask for help, don't prejudge or think you know how others will act or react. And most important of all trust the process. After all, this is a Spiritual Program. If we get our egos out of the way and let our higher power guide us we are bound to be of help to other alcoholics and the fellowship of A.A.

Paul L Area Chair

aka

The Spirit of Rotation

#### From The Corner of the Archives:

On December 15, 1942, the General Service Office received a letter from a gentleman by the name of James C. He had moved to Billings from Atlanta, Georgia where he had gotten sober. He wanted to register as a loner and share his hope that one day there would be a fine group in Billings. He continued to keep in touch with the office in New York to help him maintain His sobriety. He placed ads in the Billings Gazette that read something like the following: If you would like to get sober and stay sober I have a way. Call (phone number). In 1945, a man by the name of Andy P. answered that ad when he returned home from Denver where he had gone to "take the cure." Andy was 45 years old, soon to be 46, and was given a Big Book and told to go home and carry the message. Together Jimmy C. and Andy P. formed the first group in Billings. Andy later became Area 40's representative as a Panel 2 delegate to the General Service Conference. Andy was the owner of the Shamrock Bar in Downtown Billings. By practicing the principles and changing his attitude and actions, he attracted a lot of alcoholics who drank in his bar. One of those men was Jack Q. who joined in November of 1946. By this time there were five members in Billings AA. From this humble beginning, most of today's groups in the surrounding communities started.

About this same time there was a man by the name of Doc K. who was the first known recovering member of Alcoholics Anonymous in Butte, MT. In his first years of sobriety, he and his wife, Kay, attended a dinner with Bill and Lois W. in 1942. They were very impressed and inspired by Bill and Lois and returned to Butte in 1945 and immediately started a small group that met at Doc's house for around six months. When Doc and Kay moved, the group moved with them for another 18 months. Due to some life changes and the adoption of a new baby in 1948, the group rented a room and began meeting there. These first men from Butte started to travel to the surrounding communities of Anaconda, Fairmont, Warm Springs, and The Montana State Prison at Deer Lodge. One of the early members, Earl S. was very active in carrying the message in the prison from the mid-50's to his death in '84.

These are two stories that documents how AA got started in Montana. Most groups have similar stories that the groups' old-timers know. Please take a little time and visit with these people and record or write their stories of how your group started and has grown. If you need help call or write or email me and I will assist you any way that I can, also contact your DCM who I have forwarded a copy of a guide for writing a Group History.

I will continue with the early history of AA in future issues of the "TRIANGLE" so keep reading as more will be revealed.

#### Cake Walk?

Each rotation is a chance for a new beginning. My new service position for this rotation is cake person for my home group. The last Monday of the month we have a speaker and a cake. I get to pick the speaker and provide the cake. I'm having fun with this position. The first month was chocolate mascarpone cheesecake. I've been challenged (and I accepted) to make the next one gluten-free.

When we start a new position it doesn't matter how well or how poorly we think we did in our previous service position. Instead, we get to ask ourselves, how do I do this service position? I remember when I first became a GSR (a long time ago - I'm old) and felt like I didn't have a clue as to what I was supposed to be doing. I got told some of the responsibilities of a GSR - show up for monthly district meetings, go to area assemblies - and asked for guidance on others - how do I give a report to my home group when they don't seem interested? The answer to the last question was to keep it short and keep it interesting. Leave them wanting more.

I rotated from my longest service position last April. That position was a four-year term as West Central Regional Trustee. When I started that service position I knew there was a lot about it that I didn't know. By that time, however, I'd gotten used to the idea that when I start a service position I'm not expected to know everything about it. Being willing to learn has been very useful to me. The first year, while participating in General Service Board meetings, I got to use the line, "I know that I'm new at this, so can someone please explain why we are doing it this way?" I've been taught in AA that when I think I know everything about a service position then it's time to rotate. I've come to like that sense of newness at the start of a new service position - finding out how I can be useful in my position.

The other thing I've learned to do is to learn from the people who rotate into a service position that I've just rotated out of. It seems like every time I do, I find the new person has not only doing what I've suggested but is also doing something new and useful in the position. Almost invariably the new person is doing a fabulous job in the position. Perhaps what I learn from this is a renewed sense of humility.

So for those of you in the current rotation, good luck with your new service position. And if you're in Missoula on the last Monday of the month, come on over to my home group. I'd be happy to serve you some cake

Andrew W

#### FROM THE SECRETARY

Hello Area 40,

My name is Melinda W and I am currently serving as your Area 40 Secretary/Registrar. While there are a few responsibilities associated with my new position, the one I would like to address immediately is the role of registrar. That involves communicating with GSO (General Service Office). They need current and accurate information regarding the groups and districts in Area 40. Why is this important? Mainly so that communication can happen!

We are all connected and we stay connected through communication. In order for new GSRs to receive GSR kits, new committee chairs to receive workbooks, newsletters, and any other pieces of information pertinent to AA as a whole, we need your information! Physical mailing addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, ...we need it. SO PLEASE...get your changes to me via the "Group Change Form" which can be found on the Area website, <a href="https://www.aa-montana.org">www.aa-montana.org</a> Group change forms MUST be filled out completely. We need a physical address. We need to know if you would like to be listed in the directory. We need this information ASAP. DCMs can collect group information and send it on to me. I also need DCMs to send me committee chair information. My email is <a href="mailto:secretary@aa-montana.org">secretary@aa-montana.org</a>.

-See you in Lewistown!

#### **AREA 40 COMMITTEE PANEL 67 2017**

POSITION	NAME	CITY	EMAIL	POSITION	COMMITTEE	NAME	CITY	EMAIL
Delegate	Gerry R	Clancy	delegate@aa- montana.org	DCM 11	CPC	Robert K	Billings	dcm11@aa- montana.org
Area Chair	Paul L	Whitefish	chair@aa- montana.org	DCM 12	Literature	Gennifer P	Columbus	dcm12@aa- montana.org
Secretary	Melinda W	Bozeman	secretary@aa- montana.org	DCM 21	Grapevine	Maryann A	Glasgow	dcm21@aa- montana.org
Treasurer	Julie R	Bozeman	treasurer@aa- montana.org	DCM 23	Finance	Steve S	Beach, ND	dcm23@aa- montana.org
Archives	Ramona K-A	Kalispel	Archives@aa- montana.org	DCM 31	Grapevine	Gene M	Miles City	dcm31@aa- montana.org
CPC	Luke S	Kalispel	cpc@aa- montana.org	DCM 41	CPC	Dawn B	Great Falls	dcm 41@aa- montana.org
Corrections	Hugh M	Great Falls	corrections@aa- montana.org	DCM 42	Treatment	Kurt K	Shelby	dcm42@aa- montana.org
Grapevine	Jake H	Whitefish	grapevine@a- montana.org	DCM 51	Archives	Bryan F	Havre	dcm51@aa- montana.org
Literature	Lance W	Great Falls	Literature@aa- montana.org	DCM 61	Corrections	Carol W	Jefferson City	dcm61@aa- montana.org
Public Info	Tim K	Belgrade	pi@aa-montana.org	DCM 71	Archives	Virginia C	Butte	dcm71@aa- montana.org
Treatment	James W	Great Falls	treatment@aa- montana.org	DCM 72	Treatment	Robert E	Virginia City	dcm72@aa- montana.org
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Advisor	Libbie L	Kalispel	advisor@aa- montana.org					

#### FROM THE TREASURER

Greetings Area 40! The new rotation has begun and I'm getting a little more confident in my new service position as your Area 40 Treasurer. At least I was able to print reports for January. Progress! I want to thank all those groups, districts and individuals who contributed so far. Your participation in AA as a whole through your contributions continue to make more 12 th Step work possible at all levels of service. The dollar amount is not as important as the principle of participation which also gives us a sense of belonging. For those who do not know, the Area 40, Inc., address has changed with this new rotation:

PO Box 3878 Bozeman, MT 59772

Please forward this information on to your group's treasurer. It can also be found on the Area 40 Website.

The checking account balance is currently \$23,456.36 which means we have \$11,813.03 for an operating balance, leaving a prudent reserve of \$11,643.33. Total contributions for January were \$4624.22. Expenses for January were \$623.73. The projected budget for 2017 is \$34,930.

For detailed expense reports contact your GSR, or DCM. You can also view them on the website. Reports are made monthly.

Thanks for allowing me to serve.

Julie R. -Area 40 Treasurer

#### **Upcoming Events**

Mid-Winter Social - Joliet, MT (dist 12) Sat Feb 18 4-9:00pm @Joiliet Community Center

Into Action Weekend - Whitefish, MT (dist 91) Feb 17-18
5-9pm Fri 10am-9pm Sat @Bohemian Grange Hall

29th Annual Spring Men's Retreat - Lavina, MT Feb 24-26 4pm Fri- noon Sun @Abba's Haven

Annual Sober Ski - Whitefish, MT (dist 91) Mar 3-5

Meals & mtgs various locations skiing @resort

WCRAASC - Cheyenne, WY (area 76) Mar 3-5
2-10pm Fri 7am-10pm Sat 7am-12pm Sun @Radisson

Pockets of Enthusiasm - Helena, MT (dist 61) Mar 17-18
7-10pm Fri 9am-10pm Sat @1st Presbyterian Church

Pre-Assembly - Boulder, MT (dist 41) Sat Mar 18 10am-2pm @Boulder Hot Springs Hotel

Pre-Assembly - Kalispel, MT (dist 91) Sun March 19 Noon potluck business follows @Alano Club Heart to Heart Weekend - Red Lodge, MT March 25-26 Couples retreat @Rock Creek Resort

Pre-Assembly - Miles City, MT (dist 31) Sat April 1 11am-2pm @Miles City Academy

Area 40 Assembly - Lewistown, MT (area 40) April 7-9
7-10pm Fri 8am-10pm Sat 8am-12pm Sun @Yogo Inn

Flathead Valley Men's Retreat - Lakeside, MT (dist 91) April 14-16 5pm Fri- 12pm Sun @Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

12 Step Study - Great Falls, MT (dist 41) Sat April 29 8am-5pm @Civic Center w/Bob D. From Vegas

Spring Roundup - Billings, MT (dist 11) May 19-21

ALL WEEKEND LONG!!! @Bighorn Resort



#### VISIT WWW.AA-MONTANA.ORG FOR EVENT FLYERS AND DETAILS!!!

In case you didn't know, our website contains TONS of valuable information! Our webmaster Brandon M is constantly adding, and updating details and flyers for the Calendar of Events. If you have an AA event in the works that you would like to post, just email the details/flyer to Calendar@aa-montana.org and it will be added promptly!

The online Meeting Locator contains a list of all the meetings in Area 40 (Montana), and is searchable by city. This part of the website gets roughly 85% of the total traffic which has been averaging 20,000 hits per month! From January 1st to early February, 44% of the traffic was from new users viewing the website! If your groups meeting details need to be added or updated, please contact your district's DCM to do so! If you need their contact info, just email DCM @aa-montana.org (fill in your district # after DCM).

You can also find important documents such as Assembly Minutes, Area Inventory Reports, Area Financial Reports, PDF Forms, and past issues of the Triangle! You can even pay for your Triangle subscription online through PayPal!

AREA 40 INC PO BOX 364 HUNTLEY, MT 59037

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Issue 1

#### CONFIDENTIAL PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR GROUP!

#### Triangle Subscription Form

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A SUBSCRIPTION FOR YOURSELF, A FRIEND OR YOUR GROUP, PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE @ WWW.AA-MONTANA.ORG THE COST OF THE TRIANGLE IS \$10 PER YEAR. PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AREA 40.

SEND 10.	PO BOX 364 HUNTLEY MT 59037	
GROUP NAME		
GSR/CONTACT NAME		
ADDRESS		
CITY, STATE, ZIP		
PHONE NUMBER		
EMAIL ADDRESS		

#### SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:

CENID TO.

Groups are encouraged to be self-supporting for their Triangle subscription fee. "Expired" above the mailing address indicates that the subscription has expired. Groups will receive the Triangle regardless of subscription status because of Past Actions of the Area Assembly.

**Individuals:** If your subscription has expired, please renew to continue receiving the Triangle.

### WHERE TO MAIL GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS:

Area 40, Inc.

P.O. Box 3878

Bozeman, MT 59772

If sending to Area please address check to Area 40 Inc

#### GSO

PO Box 459 Grand Central Station NEW YORK, NY 10163