

## AREA 40 SPRING ASSEMBLY 2011

APRIL 9-10, 2011

YOGO INN, LEWISTOWN MT

### Welcome to the Assembly

Sharon S., Alternate Delegate/Area Chair, opened the assembly with the Serenity Prayer at 8 AM. Susan, from District 93, read the Twelve Traditions and Jay, from District 31, read the short form of the Concepts.

Roll call was taken by Linda B, the Area Secretary. There were 14 of 14 districts present with 107 voting members and 30 visitors for a total of 137 attendees at this assembly. The officers, committee chairs, district committee members, area advisor, archivist, and webmaster were all in attendance except for Gary E., Grapevine Chair. Gary had a death in his family and was unable to attend the assembly weekend. (*Our sympathies to your family.*) Carol B, Area Advisor, stepped into the Grapevine Chair position and past delegate, Andrew W., then assumed the role of Area Advisor. Thanks to all, everything went smoothly. There were 7 past delegates in attendance at this spring assembly.

### Orientation to the Assembly- Terry S., Area 40 Delegate, Panel 61

Good morning! My name is Terry S. and I am an alcoholic. You have entrusted to me the job of serving as your Area 40, Panel 61 Delegate to the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous within the United States and Canada. Between Area 40 and the General Service Conference there are other service entities, the regions. Area 40 is one of the 8 areas in the West Central Region, comprising of Northern Minnesota, Southern Minnesota, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota Iowa, and Nebraska.

We have all gathered here today to make the necessary decisions about what Area 40 can and should do to assist the members of this Fellowship as we offer recovery through our 12 Steps to the still suffering alcoholics who are willing to try this program. Would all of the GSRs who are attending their first assembly, please stand up? Now everyone else who is here for his or her first Assembly please stand up and join them? Thank you! Way to go! You are embarking upon another adventure. May you find in this service work the same inspiration that the folks around you have been finding since they first came to assemblies. It's nice to see you here! We've been hoping you would join us – we can use your help. Welcome! All of us are in brand new service positions for this rotation. So this is our shakedown cruise, together, to learn what we are doing, together.

Everybody now, please sign in, so we can get accurate counts of how many members of the Fellowship are here and how many voting members of this Assembly are present. For each district, your DCM has the signup sheet. Please get signed in by 10:00 a.m. this morning. Your DCM will be turning in that signup sheet to Linda B., our Area Secretary, by the end of this morning's first coffee break.

A.A. business decisions require substantial unanimity. Substantial unanimity means that at least 2/3rd of the votes cast on business decision must be in favor of taking the proposed action, or the motion fails. And before we vote on a proposed action, we want to discuss it fully, to hear what all of us think and feel about it. Decisions here in Alcoholics Anonymous are not matters of victory or defeat, with one faction winning and another faction losing. Our decisions reflect our informed group conscience, where a loving God may express Himself.

Our new Area Chair, Sharon S., compiled the agenda we have before us today. In this Assembly, we will discuss items on the General Service Conference Agenda and also items specific to Area 40. The agenda sets forth how we do that – what happens first, and then next, and so forth. As you can see on the agenda, after this orientation, the

individual members of our Area Committee (our Officers and Standing Committee Chairs, our District Committee Members, and our non-voting Area Committee members) will give their reports, letting us know what they have been doing and what is happening around the Area. Once those reports are finished, the Area Service Committees will spread out to various rooms around this facility, and meet to consider the items on each Committee's agenda.

Our Area 40 Policy and Procedure Manual describe the process we follow here, using a committee system, similar to that of the General Service Conference. The manual, which can be downloaded or printed off of our Area web site, also describes the qualifications and responsibilities of each of the Area service positions, the time lines for Spring and Fall Assemblies, and other aspects of how Area 40 functions. It is your friend. It is your guide.

Each Area Service Committee consists of two DCM's, two District representatives and the Committee Chair for that committee, with a couple of exceptions. The Area Treasurer chairs the Finance Committee, which consists of the Delegate, the Area Chair, one DCM and one District Representative. Literature has one DCM and three District Representatives. Any member of the Fellowship can attend the committee meetings. If Area 40 specific items are voted on in the committee, only committee members vote. Typically, the chairs will make sure the voting members of the committee share first, but most chairs welcome participation by non-voting interested members of the Fellowship who attend that committee meeting. Which DCM is on which committee, and which District gets to select the voting District representatives for each committee, is decided by lot, right after the elections at the last of the four assemblies in each rotation, for the next two year rotation.

While the committees are meeting, two of our past Area 40 delegates, Bob H. and Loren B., will lead workshops here in the assembly room. Bob and Loren are two of our long-time trusted servants. I consider them both "elder statesmen," who have much wisdom to offer us. After they both finish, a little later this afternoon, our committee members will rejoin us here, in this assembly room. I'll give my delegate's report, and after that, we will begin discussing the agenda items.

The Committee Chairs will report to the rest of us what their committees thought about each agenda item, one at a time. After sharing with us the committee's reactions to an agenda item, the Committee Chair will typically do one of two things. The Committee Chair may wait for a moment to see if anyone is heading for a microphone. If not, the Committee Chair will move on to the next item. On the other hand, the Committee Chair may instead tell us that the committee has decided we should take some action on the item. The Committee Chair will then read the committee's recommendation (which has been written down in committee, so it is clear and can be read more than once) to us.

Any committee recommendation on an agenda item, read to the Assembly during the report by the Committee Chair, is treated as a made and seconded motion. Sharon will chair the discussion that follows that made and seconded motion, recognizing each of you as you get to one of our microphones. Linda will time your comments (you have 3 minutes to finish what you have to say). In discussing a proposed action (a made and seconded motion) we welcome as broad a range of comments as possible.

We need to finish all of the items on our agenda by the end of this Assembly, Sunday at noon. To do that, we strongly encourage every participant here to go to the microphone and share when you have an opinion different from what others are saying. On the other hand, if someone else has already expressed the opinion you hold, please do not go to the microphone to agree with what they said. Once you have shared at the mike on a particular item, please wait until everyone else who wants to share has had their opportunities before you go back and double dip.

When we decide about an Area 40 specific item, we typically count votes. In discussion before we decide, we want to hear all sides of the item, for, against, feeling kind of both ways, totally confused, whatever! We move slowly. Sometimes it is frustrating. But our goal is to find, on each item, the best decision we can reach, for the well-being of A.A. and to further our primary purpose of helping the still suffering alcoholic to attain sobriety while we maintain our own sobriety. We are less interested in deciding it quickly than in deciding it correctly.

When we do vote on a recommendation, only our voting members – GSRs or acting GSRs, DCMs or acting DCMs, Area Officers and Area Service Committee Chairs or acting Area Service Committee Chairs – will be showing their hands for the counters to tally. The total votes must be at least 2/3rds of the number of voters attending the Assembly (the voters signed in on the signup sheets the DCMs turned in by 10:00 this morning). That is our quorum. The votes in favor of the recommendation must be at least 2/3rds of the votes cast on the recommendation, in order to pass the recommendation. After the vote is counted and the decision made, we welcome and encourage minority opinions. Minority opinions come from folks who voted on the short side of the item – those who voted for an item that failed or those who voted against an item that passed. Minority opinions come from the microphones, and are timed (3 minute time limit, again). Each Area Chair develops a style of handling minority opinions. Some always ask if there are any minority opinions after each decision we make. Others just stand at the podium and wait to see if anyone is headed for the microphones, and if not, ask the Committee Chair who is reporting to go on to the next item. We don't know yet what Sharon's style will be, but there is the opportunity, after every decision on an agenda item, for minority opinions. When the last minority opinion is finished, one of two things can happen. The minority opinions may not have changed the minds of any of the voters in the majority. If nobody who voted in the majority goes to a microphone and moves to reconsider the item, we move on to the next thing on the agenda. On the other hand, the minority opinions may have persuaded at least a couple of voting members of the Assembly who voted in the majority that we should reconsider the item. If so, one person can go to a microphone, identify her or himself as a voting member who voted in the majority, and move to reconsider the item. If a second voting member who voted in the majority then goes to a microphone and seconds the motion, we will vote on reconsideration. There is no discussion after the minority opinions, just the vote, which requires a simple majority in favor of reconsideration. If there is a motion for reconsideration and it passes, we resume discussion about the item, and when we are done, we vote on the item, the motion, the committee recommendation, again. Remember, during our minority opinion procedure, the majority simply listens. You will be surprised how difficult just listening can be! My home group used to have an old-timer, a valued member, who finished his life sober and went on home some years ago now. He always wanted to interrupt and argue with the minority opinions instead of just listening. The majority just listens, and each voting member on either side of the prior vote decides if the decision should be reconsidered in light of the minority opinions. Like I said, we want to get it right more than we need to get it done fast.

This weekend, most of the items we will discuss will be for the General Service Conference Agenda – items affecting AA as a whole. Again, each committee will discuss the items on their committee agenda and the Committee Chair will give report to the floor of the Assembly. However, there will be no recommendation for action, only a report of what the committee thought of the item. We will then have opportunity to ask questions or make comments regarding the agenda item currently before us. Comments and questions are still limited to 3 minutes and if someone has expressed your opinion from the mike, there still is no need to repeat it. Within those limitations, please share your thoughts with us. Everyone's opinion counts – it is your obligation to speak up. And please remember when you go up to the mike to share – the microphone is your friend. Get up close to it. Speak right into it. We want to hear what you have to say.

I'll be asking Sharon for a sense of the Area on many GSC issues. I very much want to know how Area 40 feels about these issues when it is time for me to vote at the Conference. Many of the items may come out of the Conference Committees in different form than they are on the agenda, but I will still have a sense of how you folks view these items, when (with a little help from my Higher Power) I decide which way to vote. A sense of the Area is a show of hands, usually not formally counted, just so your delegate can see if you folks clearly favor or oppose the item, or if you are divided about it. Whether you are at your first assembly or your tenth assembly, if you have a service job this rotation, you are probably new to it. So, for almost all of us, when we don't know what something is or don't understand something, it is okay to ask about it. Our Past Delegates are great people to ask these questions of. They are hanging out in the back of the room. The Past Delegates here today would love to talk to you. We probably won't finish all of the Agenda items tonight, but we will follow our schedule. When we return after the 8:15 p.m. coffee break, this assembly room will be divided down the middle by those curtains, into two rooms. At this end, we will have a breakout session for GSRs. At that end, we will have a breakout session for

DCMs. These sessions are opportunities to learn from your counterparts in other groups or districts. Bob and Loren will lead the breakouts. In the back of this entire big room, there are “ask-it baskets.” You can place your questions in the respective baskets for discussion during the breakout sessions tonight, or you can just come to one of the breakout sessions and ask your questions yourselves. First thing tomorrow morning there will be a whole bunch of reports (as you can see in your agenda). Then, Bob and Loren will provide Past Delegate sharing, after which, if we haven’t finished the agenda items, we will proceed to finish them.

If time permits, Sharon will open the microphones for general sharing after we finish the agenda items. The Area’s Policy and Procedure Manual states that the Assembly shall end at noon on Sunday. During the meal breaks and the coffee breaks, before the morning session or after the close of the tonight’s session, talk to people. Ask questions. Listen to conversations. I’ve been attending Area 40 Assemblies for about 13 or 14 years now. This is a place where I have seen a lot of the same faces year after year. The people who dive into this kind of service work and keep showing up keep staying sober. Most of them seem to really like doing it, too. Stick around; you just might come to like it too. Area 40 Delegate, Panel 61- Terry S.

### Area Committee Member Reports

#### Area Chair/Alternate Delegate- Sharon S.

Good morning everyone. My name is Sharon S. I am an alcoholic and honored to serve as your Area Chair/Alternate Delegate. Welcome, and a special welcome to those of you here in Lewistown for your first Area Assembly. First timer, or not, if you are feeling a bit uncomfortable, uncertain about what is going to happen, or what you are supposed to do, or how to do it, you are not alone.

Terry has given you a great orientation to the assembly. My job, as chairperson, is to keep us on track. We “loosely apply” Roberts Rules of Order. “Robert’s Rules for Dummies” says using we use the principles of Roberts Rules to make meetings meaningful. I am hoping we have that experience this weekend. You have a big part in the “meaningfulness” of this meeting, too. Please to take your thoughts or questions to the mike if someone hasn’t already stated them. Particularly, I encourage you to go to the mike if you have thoughts, questions, experience, information or an opinion that appears to be in the minority. A well-informed sense of the assembly can only be achieved if all sides are heard. To this end, please consider whether your enthusiastic support of one person’s position might dissuade someone with a different position from speaking.

I have had some great A.A. service experience since our last Assembly. I traveled with Carole, Terry and Lee to the Additional Forum in Rapid City in November, participated in the Area Audit in January, got to attend the West Central Region Service Conference in March, and got in the car with Colby and Catherine to attend a great pre-assembly in Missoula.

Most of my work in the past few months has been about communication. I wrote to the incoming DCM’s and standing committee chairs welcoming them to their service positions and providing information to help them get started in their new service positions. I assembled information for this assembly, developed the agenda and distributed it and background material to the Area Committee. I also organized and participated in two audio conferences for the Area committee.

The elected Literature Chair resigned her position in February. Following the policy and procedures manual, I solicited input from the Area Committee regarding a replacement. I got to talk to several qualified, enthusiastic A.A. members who considered their ability to serve. The outcome of that process was that Mary M. accepted the appointment and jumped in with both feet. Thank you, Mary for your enthusiastic willingness to serve.

These two years will be very busy ones for all of us in Area 40. You'll be hearing more details about most of these things in the reports later this morning and tomorrow morning, but please mark your calendars and try to attend, and help out if you can, the following events:

- June 18 Local Forum in Great Falls
- June 19 Local Forum in Miles City
- September 10-11 West Central Region Forum in Davenport Iowa
- September 17-18 Fall Assembly in Lewistown (make your reservations early. The room block expires September 1 and the hotels fill up early as this is a busy time of year for Lewistown!)
- September 22-25 National A.A. Archives Workshop in Helena
- March 2-4, 2012 West Central Region Service Conference in Billings
- April 14-15, 2012 Spring Assembly in Lewistown
- September 22-23, 2012 Fall Assembly in Lewistown

I have been invited to participate in District 21's Wild West Soberfest in August and hope to make arrangements with other Districts for visits sometime this year. The deadline for agenda items for the Fall Assembly is July 1; perhaps I can help your district with the process of getting an item on the agenda.

And, lastly, Terry will be in New York City at the General Service Conference May 1-7. He will be putting in many long hours representing Area 40 and trying to understand and decide what is best for A.A. as a whole. There are labels at each of your tables that you can use to send cards and letters. Past delegates have all expressed their appreciation as they received cards and letters from home.

Thank you for trusting me to serve you and thanks for helping make this a great and meaningful weekend. Area Chair/Alternate Delegate- Sharon S.

#### Secretary- Linda B.

Hello everyone, my name is Linda and I am an alcoholic. Welcome to all that are attending their first assembly. Thank you for allowing me to serve Area 40 for the next two years as your secretary/registrar.

I have a few procedural announcements: In order for all to share and to get through all the area business we have before us, each Area Committee Chair and DCM has 5 minutes for their reports, discussion or comments from the floor are given 3 minutes to share. Please be mindful when the timer goes off; your time is up. I will assess AA penalties to any individual that doesn't adhere to this policy.

DCM's: I have put attendance sheets for each district on the tables by your nameplate, please have those filled out and hand them in to me by the first break which is at 9:45. I use the count from these sheets to determine a quorum for voting purposes. Voting members are DCM's or their alternate, GSR's or their alternate, and most Area Committee Chairs and Officers.

All those giving reports may e-mail your report to me at [lindablack2009@hotmail.com](mailto:lindablack2009@hotmail.com). If you choose to submit your report in hard copy, I will need two copies. In addition, I will need the minutes from all the committee meetings and breakout sessions being held later today. E-mail is more efficient and is preferable, but hard copies will be fine. Remember, two copies...

There are Ask It baskets in the back for submitting questions and topics to be covered in the GSR and DCM breakout sessions tonight. Don't be shy, it's anonymous!

I have been busy updating Area 40's group information at GSO through our database, Fellowship New Vision. I have sent out the group update forms to all district DCM's. The packets were mailed out on February 24<sup>th</sup>. There

are two ways of updating group information. The first is the group update form that you can download from aa.org website. This helps keep your group current in the database and identifies the primary contact mailing address, the new and alternate GSR's. The other way is by the group update sheets that I have mailed out to each district dcm. I have asked that these updates be returned to me by April 10, which is tomorrow. I need to have time to input all new information before the deadline for inclusion in the regional directory. If your group hasn't done their update yet, get with your dcm; they have the update form to fill out. Submissions for updates after the deadline date may result in wrong group information in the directory, but will be current right here/ right now facts at our General Service office and the records department.

Recommendations from committees that came to the floor at the fall 2010 assembly were:

Finance: Vote to approve the 2011 Budget. 102 For; 0 Against; Motion passed.

International Conventions-Regional Forums: Area 40 budgets an allowance of \$900 for expenses that we will incur putting on the Local Forum. 82 For; 5 Against- no minority opinion; Motion passed.

Archives/Area 40 Structure and Policies: The committee recommends that the Area Chair form and AdHoc Committee for the purpose of establishing a protocol and a time line for Area 40 to conduct an inventory of itself. This inventory is to be held at an area assembly preferably in the fall. 110 For; 2 Against- no minority opinion. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted, Secretary- Linda B.

Treasurer- Lori F.

Greetings, Area 40! My name is Lori F. and I am honored and delighted to be Area 40's Treasurer for the 2011-12 rotation. I am also pleased to report that the checkbook is balanced as of March 31, 2011.

My first official act as your treasurer was to accept the books and files from Linda B., who did a terrific job last rotation. On Friday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, Terry S., Sharon S., Carole B., Terry H., Linda and I completed an audit of our books as provided for in our Policy and Procedures document. All was found to be in order.

On behalf of Area 40, I want to thank all the groups, individuals and districts that have contributed 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition funds to the area. We have an ambitious budget this year of \$36,359.94. (*Pie Chart Transparency*). The large blue area on this pie chart, representing 27% of our budget (or \$9,750.00), is for the two assemblies this year. The portion of our budget allocated to expenses for our Delegate totals about 16% (or \$5,889.00), including 11% (\$3,939.00) for funding Terry to attend the General Service Conference later this month and 5% (or \$1,950.00) for travel and other expenses to fulfill his duties within the area. The other "slices" pictured may or may not be self explanatory – I will have a copy of this chart available up front if you would like to take a longer look and ask questions.

(*"Self Support at the Area Level" Transparency*) According to the 2010 Final Report of the 60<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, there are 292 registered groups in Area 40. If all the groups contributed to Area 40, and if we spend our entire budget, the amount needed from each group would be \$124.52. (*"How Area 40 Groups Support Services" Transparency*) In 2009, 133 groups (45.4%) in Area 40 sent contributions to the General Service Office. In 2010, 110 groups (37.7%) sent contributions to Area 40. Also, groups in Montana sent \$29,201.15 to GSO in 2009, a larger amount than was contributed to Area 40 for both 2009 and 2010. (*Graph Transparency*) This graph shows

group contributions to Area 40 from 2007 through 2010. Group contributions for the first quarter of 2010 were \$5,705.73. If contribution levels remain the same for the rest of the year, Area could expect approximately \$22,823.00.

Please take a look at the reports I have provided which are on the table at the entry with the agendas. These reports basically show how our spending so far this year compares with our budget. The two reports, Budget vs. Actual by Line Item and Budget vs. Actual by Committee/Project, are just two ways of presenting the same information. So far we have spent about \$4,200 more than we have taken in. This is not unusual, as with the Spring Assembly, the Regional Service Conference, and the General Service Conference, Area spends a large chunk of our budgeted funds in the first four months of the year. We have also spent about \$1,000.00 more than budgeted to date, largely because we purchased a computer for our Triangle Editor to replace one that seemed to be dying – but I'll let Lee fill you in on that. Our current checkbook balance is \$22,976.68. Our prudent reserve is \$12,119.98, the archivist account balance is \$1,255.95, and our current accounts payable is \$102.32, leaving an operating balance of \$9,498.43.

**Self Support at the Area Level** Area 40 2011 Budget = \$36,359.94

Total Registered Groups in Area 40 = 292\*

**IF** all groups contribute and

**IF** Area 40 spends entire budget, **THEN:** \$36,359.94 / 292 Groups =

**\$124.52 per Group**

\*from 2010 Final Report of the 60<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous

**How Area 40 groups support services:**

Number of Area 40 Groups Contributing

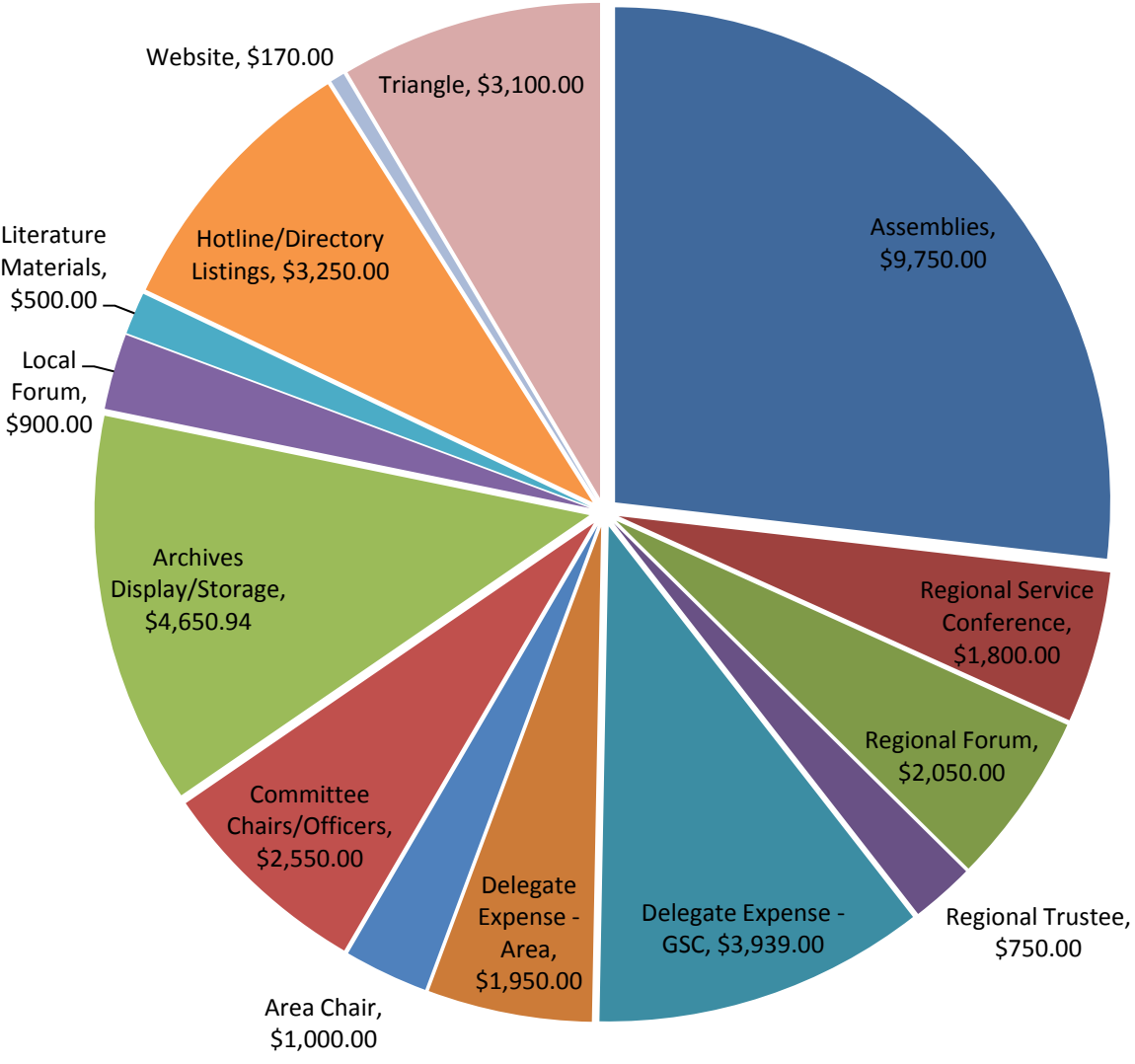
To GSO (2009)	133/292 = 45.4%
To Area (2009)	109/292 = 37.3%
To Area (2010)	110/292 = 37.7%

Dollar amount contributed from Area 40 groups

To GSO (2009)	\$29,201.15
To Area 40 (2009)	\$26,224.5
To Area 40 (2010)	\$24,275.79

# Area 40 2011 Budget Allocation

## Total Budget = \$36,359.94



Yours in service, Treasurer- Lori F.



Triangle Editor- Lee T.

My name is Lee. I'm an alcoholic and your Area 40 Triangle Editor for this rotation. Since the past fall elections I have started down a journey that a past sponsor would typify as: "never a dull moment". While I thought I might go into some detailed lengthy discussions about the challenges and adversities that I have come up against while beginning this service position, I didn't know if I could last through all the awwws and ooohs. I will simply summarize by expressing my gratitude concerning the ever present: Opportunities Allowing Spiritual Growth. Most importantly, I am striving to provide a newsletter that will be as informative as it is unifying; as accurate as it is relatable.

Two of my biggest concerns at this point are getting the group contact information accurately updated, and improving the scope of members participating in contributing articles.

We have had a lot of returns from the Postal Service. This could be due to the rotational changes. Let's work together to reconcile the necessary corrections so that every group can remain in contact with Area and receive a copy of the Triangle.

This is *your* news. What's going on in and around Area 40 and how we, as trusted servants, feel about the work we are allowed to participate in. *Are* we carrying the message, and *how* are we going about doing it? So far, I have your Delegate as the major contributor. Is the purpose of the Triangle to be his forum? I had an impression—and certainly one of the primary purposes of this Assembly—that we are provided the task and opportunity to give *him* a sense of what it is we as alcoholics feel is important to facilitate carrying the message. While his message has been valuable in defining the scope of questions this Area is faced with it is now our turn to set an example and fill in the significant sentiments and passions about our work. I don't want to give the impression that we are supposed to take ourselves too damn seriously. Just step up in the way that only a group of drunks have the ability to do: by *sharing* our passion concerning overcoming our common malady we achieve a sense of humor while recognize gratitude.

I continue to be excited about upcoming months. This is a great rotation with a lot of events that only come around once in a while: the West Central Regional AA Service Conference in our Area, the National Archives Workshop in Helena, and a couple of special Local Regional Forums. I really appreciate those of you who *have* submitted an article, or those who *are* considering a contribution to the Triangle. This month is like Christmas for me. Everyone is expected to turn in their reports to both Linda and myself: great responses, lots of material, however, don't forget the following months. I look forward to serving you and hearing from you.

Area 40 Triangle Editor- Lee T.

Public Information/Report & Charter/Website-Paula H.

Good morning, my name is Paula and I am an alcoholic. Thank you for entrusting the Public Information Committee to me this rotation. Much of the focus of the committee for the past four years has been setting up and working out the kinks of the 1-888 hot-line number. Many thanks to Sean and Tim and everyone else who worked on this and thanks to the folks at AnswerNet too! It is now time to focus on other aspects of the PI committee some of which we will discuss in the afternoon session today of the committee.

I'd first like to report on the 1-888 phone line. All the contracts for numbers in phone books have been signed as they come in. They run between \$5 and \$14 per month. I have heard no complaints from the membership or from AnswerNet. Our website was down for a couple of days last month, but Alex fixed it in a record amount of time. So

far this year, we have not exceeded the \$250 limit per month that Area pays. Therefore Districts have not had to pay extra. Some district's volunteers might want to ask patch callers if they can call them back so we aren't spending so much money in minutes. It is not always possible to do that. You'll have to use your best judgment. Please encourage your groups to send a little extra to Area to cover this 12th step work.

Lastly, please update the volunteer contact and availability information for the hot-line. Alex can help you update the database so that AnswerNet can patch calls quickly without out-of-date numbers and contact availability. By-the-way Alex shuffles the order of contacts every 30 days.

Alex has spruced up the Area Website. It has improved functionality for finding meetings and a wonderful drop-down menu to navigate the various areas in the website. Thank you Alex!

Missoula hosted a well attended Pre-Assembly, Sunday, March 13. I was glad to be able to present the General Service Public Information background. We had a good discussion on some of the items. It is always helpful to me to learn about different perspectives on issues.

Districts have been hard at work trying to get their committee chairs elected. I understand how hard that can be sometimes. Kudos to everyone who made it to Assembly and who serve in all our many capacities in the program. Thanks to all who let me know what is going on in their districts.

Districts 12, 21, 41, 51, 61, 71, 72, 81, 91 and 93 all have PI Chairs. Some Districts have Phone Chairs too! The DCMs in the other Districts are doing double duty to keep their District's phone information up-to-date and let the public know about AA. Some activities Districts are doing are:

District 11 - voted to put the 888 number in the newspaper under support groups. Carol C is the phone chair.

District 21 - PI chair and Committee Member, Joe G's family has been flooded. Please keep him and others in your thoughts.

District 23 - DCM Scott W. is keeping the hot-line contact information current.

District 51 - PI Chair, Mike B is keeping the hot-line contact information current. He is asking folks to have one-year sobriety.

District 71 - Alicia B, PI Chair, reported that she has been working with the nursing program at MT Tech to get nursing students AA literature and schedules. A literature rack has been placed in the ER of St James Hospital for patients and staff.

District 81 - Newly elected PI Chair, Bill C. has distributed pamphlets to the facilities that have racks and contacted local radio and TV stations about PSAs. Mike R, phone chair, is updating hot-line phone contacts. Three women from Thompson Falls made a presentation to the high school there. They have been invited back in May and again in September to present to the PE students.

District 91 -PI Chair, Sandy K, reports that the district is updating their contact information for the hot-line. They have also organized a PI task team, are organizing a PI/CPC workshop, and are making lists of various organizations to offer presentations and literature.

Thank you for allowing me serve! I look forward to traveling through Montana this rotation should I be asked.

Yours in Service, Area 40 Public Information Chair- Paula H.

Treatment Facilities/Agenda- Colby D.

Good morning my name is Colby and I am an alcoholic. It is an honor and privilege to report as your Area 40 Treatment Facilities Chair. It seems only yesterday that we were all gathered together making selections and voting in a new slate of rotational trusted servants. I am excited to serve and be here this weekend addressing new challenges and opportunities.

Since stepping into this new position the phone calls and emails have been flying. Luke S. in Kalispell was the first to make contact as he was very much excited to "get busy" and get things going in his district. Thank you Luke for your enthusiasm and I look forward to sharing more with you.

Some districts are reporting increases for meetings at local crisis centers and outpatient facilities. Active requests from District 11 have been answered by taking several new meeting commitments in the local community on a regular basis supported by the local groups on a rotating basis. Many districts are updating Bridging The Gap and temporary contact information to be passed along to local treatment centers and institutions. As always having an active committee can assist with maintaining the process and continuity as requests are made to have members available to talk with the newcomer. One of the keys to a successful treatment facilities district plan is to have and maintain current updated contact information; I encourage all of you to be diligent in this area. This can only be supported by a host of volunteers willing to carry our message.

April 16, 2011 District 61 will be hosting a Corrections and Treatment Workshop, cost is \$10.

I was able to attend the Pre-Assembly conference in Missoula, and meet with some of you regarding treatment activities and opportunities in your local areas. The dialogue was great! I would welcome the opportunity to make the trips to your districts and be an integral part of assisting you with getting meetings or other educational opportunities into in the treatment facilities in your areas. I look forward to your requests and participation thus ensuring access to information and meetings to all who suffer from alcoholism.

Respectfully submitted, Area 40 Treatment Chair- Colby D.

Archives/Area 40 Structure & Policy- Joe H.

My name is Joe and I am an alcoholic. Welcome to the first of four Assemblies in this rotation. I especially want to welcome those of you who are attending your first assembly, what an exciting time. Everything is new and fresh and at times a little confusing, but you are with others who have experienced this before and are willing to share their experience with you.

I have the honor and privilege of serving as your Archives Chair. There are 5 of us on this committee. The other 4 members consist of 2 DCM's from District 23 and District 91, and two representatives chosen from District's 11 and 81. In addition to our archives duties our other assignment is Structure and Policy for Area 40. Our Area is also hosting the National Archives workshop in Helena, MT. This will take place September 22nd through the 25<sup>th</sup>.

I am in the process of preserving and digitizing the archives for District 41. If your district is interested in this process, I would love to participate in a workshop at your district and share what we have done in District 41.

I am looking forward to renewing old friendships and making new ones as we trudge this road of happy destiny while we conduct our Area business and send our Area Delegate off with a sense of our area as he conducts the business at the General Service Conference. Yours in love and service, Area 40 Archives Chair- Joe H.

#### Corrections/International Conventions-Terry H.

Hello, My name is Terry and I am an alcoholic. I am grateful to serve as your Area 40 Corrections Chair. I started out my rotation participating in the Area 40 Audit. Pink Can Funds were transferred to a new account and the new mailing address for contributions is PO Box 135 Shepherd Mt. 59079.

I have had many requests for formats for meetings in jails and Montana State Prison and for shared experience on starting meetings in correctional facilities. To some I have supplied literature or formats or pink can information and pink can covers. To others, I have supplied contact information from other districts so they can communicate with each other. The Pink Can Funds have provided 120 soft cover Big Books to alcoholics who are confined since starting this rotation.

I have been in communication with Pat Wright; our liaison with Montana State Prison. On Jan. 22, 2011, I attended a volunteer orientation at Montana State Prison along with two other AA members. It was very interesting and even a little frightening but lunch was great. I would encourage anyone with a possible interest to attend the next orientation which is May 14<sup>th</sup>. The orientation starts at 8 a.m. and last until about 3 p.m. and lunch is served on site. Applications need to be received about 3 weeks prior to the orientation. They can be sent to: Tom Wilson RAC Montana State Prison 500 Conley Rd. Deer Lodge Mt. 59722. I have applications with me.

The Montana Women's Prison has orientations quarterly and no application is necessary. See me if you want to get on the list to be notified of the next orientation. Women only are allowed to take meetings into the Women's Prison but men and women can participate at Montana State Prison.

I will be attending the Corrections and Treatment workshop and Luncheon in Helena on April 16th. I have been invited to put on a workshop by District 21 at the Wild West Soberfest on the weekend of Aug. 12<sup>th</sup> and I look forward to doing that. I can't wait to hear music from the band, Halcoholic.

We started out the year with a balance of \$5825.19 in the Pink Can Fund. There have been group contributions of \$1588.85 and an expenditure of \$856.80 for literature. The current balance of the Pink Can Fund is \$6557.24. There are several issues regarding the Pink Can Funds, such as, "How are these funds distributed? The Area corrections Committee and hopefully the District Corrections Chairs will be communicating about this and we will have more to report at the Fall Assembly.

Yours in Service, Corrections Chair- Terry H.

#### Finance-Lori F.

Report given with Treasurer Report.

Grapevine/Policy & Admissions (GSC) - Gary E. given by Carole B.

My name is Gary E., alcoholic Area Grapevine Chair. Also, Policy/Admissions is our secondary assignment. I greet you with heavy heart wishing I could be at the Assembly this weekend but, my oldest granddaughter lost her fiancée last Saturday to Bacterial Meningitis. We will be attending the Funeral today.

First, I would like to thank Sharon for her help, Carole for chairing the committee and Jeff J. for setting up the display this weekend. I was so looking forward to setting in the committee because we some hot agenda items that we have to deal with this weekend. Somebody said the other day that we ultimately know is in charge at the end.

Some house cleaning items. Most of the items on the display are for display only but, I have subscription forms that are for the taking and grab a Grapevine magazine, read it, pass it on, or return it. No charge for the magazines. Any item that is back on the display can be ordered on the web page at [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org).

I will close now by saying that it is privilege to serve Area 40. Yours in Sobriety and Service, Grapevine Chair- Gary E.

Literature- Mary M.

Hello everyone, my name is Mary and I am an alcoholic. As of March 1<sup>st</sup> I have had the honor as serving as the Area 40 Literature Committee Chair for this rotation. I served on the Literature Committee last rotation when Lori F was the Chair, so I had an awesome example of service at the Area level. When Sharon called me and asked if I would be willing to stand for the Area Literature Committee Chair, fear said 'not at this time' but God and my sponsor said, 'walk thru your fear.' So thank you for this opportunity.

I want to thank Jay T, DCM District 93 for bringing the Area Literature Display to me in Missoula at the Pre-Assembly we attended March 13<sup>th</sup>. I also would like to thank Lori F, Area Treasurer, for ordering Service Manuals, Literature catalogs, and restocking the current literature display that is at the back of the room. The Service Manuals are on the back table for sale, \$3.50 for regular print and \$8.00 for large print, and there is an 'On Your Honor' can right next to them. The books are for display only to show you what is available for Conference approved literature from G.S.O. Feel free to take some pamphlets with you.

**I wanted to share with you something Bill W wrote in a May 1964 issue of the Grapevine:**

*"Suppose, for instance, that during the last twenty five years AA had never published any standard literature... no books, no pamphlets. We need little imagination to see that by now our message would be hopelessly garbled. Our relations with medicine and religion would have become a shambles. To alcoholics generally we would today be a joke and the public would have thought us a riddle. Without its literature, A.A. would certainly have bogged down in a welter of controversy and disunity."*

I've placed some important information from G.S.O. Literature on your tables to take back to your groups and I would like to share some of it with you now.

**"Deadline Extension for Story Solicitation-"A.A. and the Armed Services" pamphlets:** In December of 2010, a call went out for new stories to update the pamphlet "A.A. and the Armed Services," with a deadline of February 2011. They had received 15 stories by February so the deadline has now been extended to July 15, 2011. They want stories to include recent experiences from members in active duty and a section which focuses on veterans of the armed service...." The information on how and where to submit your stories is on your tables or you can also contact me.

**Projects ongoing:** The 2010 Advisory Action that the revised pamphlet “*Questions and Answers on Sponsorship*” be approved became available upon depletion of old inventory in February 2011. [word ‘local’ removed on pg 22] The 2010 Advisory Action that a paragraph regarding closed meetings be changed in the pamphlet “*Frequently Asked Questions about A.A.*,” will be included at the next printing of the pamphlet (around May 2011).

**Other literature that is frequently overlooked:** *Box 459, About AA*, and the Archives newsletter, *Markings*, are available via the AA.org website for a free digital subscription, or a hard copy can be sent by postal subscription, except for *Markings* is only available in a digital format. Digital format helps GSO reduce costs & requests seem to be picking up 300-400 people a month. Come join the Literature Committee meeting today and thank you for this opportunity to serve Alcoholics Anonymous and thank you for my sobriety.

In Service, Area 40 Literature Committee Chair- Mary M.

#### Cooperation with the Professional Community/Trustees- Libbie L.

Thank you all for coming here this weekend. Welcome to all who have come for the first time, and to all those who have been here before. I am very excited to be your Area 40 Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee Chair. I look forward to a great two year rotation and I am sure I will have many opportunities to learn and grow. I’ve enjoyed studying the background material and am excited to share this with you this weekend.

I recently returned from a 2 week trip to Haiti. During my visit, I attended the only AA meeting held in this island country of approximately 10 million. They meet every day at 5 PM at #9 Delmas 60 in Port au Prince. It happened to be about 10 minutes away from where I was staying. At the meeting, they read from a French Big Book and shared in Haitian Creole. One of the men at the meeting had 28 years of sobriety. He spoke English and told me that they have translated the first five chapters of the Big Book into Haitian Creole. He showed me his plastic spiral bound typewritten copy. It is his desire to bring this work that they have started to GSO in New York City. They would love to get the whole book translated and printed into the language of the people of Haiti, not in French, which is not understood or read by the majority. This is what is needed there to help our fellow suffering alcoholics. I’ve been inspired to see what I can do to help make this happen, and it also reinforced my commitment to support GSO in their global efforts.

I also did some of my first CPC work while there. I provided the meeting information, Grapevines and a pocket big book and 12x12 to the contact people in Country who will be working with future volunteer groups to this area. Their background in mental health and counseling has brought them some familiarity with our program. This information was very well received and was much appreciated. Now I have to get to work in my own jurisdiction.

While looking through my new CPC information I found an article that Bill W wrote in a 1958 Grapevine publication. He writes in Let’s Be Friendly with Our Friends: Friends on the Alcoholism Front:

*Today, the vast majority of us welcome any new light that can be throw on the alcoholic’s mysterious and baffling malady. We don’t care too much whether new and valuable knowledge issues from a test tube, a psychiatrist’s couch, or from revealing social studies. We are glad of any kind of education that accurately informs the public and changes its age-old attitude toward the drunk. More and more, we regard all who labor in the total field of alcoholism as our companions on a march from darkness into light. We see that we can accomplish together what we could never accomplish in separation and in rivalry.*

In working with a newcomer in AA, with an Area committee, or with professionals in this Area, I plan to remember those words. We can accomplish great things together by forgoing separation and rivalry. I will gladly share and provide information about CPC work and our program to anyone who will listen.

“You can never go where God is not.” is something I recently heard in a prayer. It struck me as being a simple, comforting truth. I know that God is with us here this weekend, and will continue to be with us in our future ventures. Thanks for being part of my sobriety. Area 40 CPC Chair- Libbie L.

### DCM Reports

District 11- Brandon M.

Greetings Area 40 from District 11. My name is Brandon and I am an alcoholic, currently serving as DCM for District 11. Currently, District 11 is composed of 26 groups with approx. 126 meetings during the week. District 11 boundaries are on the north, Roundup, on the west Laurel (well, Laurel is actually in District 12), southern side includes Busby, Ashland and Lame Deer, with Hysham being our eastern border.

Out district meets the 2nd Saturday of every month at 2931 Colton in Billings. Late last year we moved to our current location, which we share with South Central Intergroup of Montana. On the average we have around 6 - 8 GSRs attending our meeting.

All of District 11's chair positions have been filled, I would like to thank Eric E. from the Traditions Group for stepping into the role of Alt. DCM after Dan had to step down. Financially our district is doing well, sitting at or above prudent reserve most of the time. Group contributions also remain steady. Our district currently has 6 service commitments for our groups on a monthly basis. These include a First-Tuesday meeting at Rimrock Foundation, a Men's and Women's shelter meeting, a meeting at the Psych center in Billings, and one at the crisis center. We draw out of the hat to choose groups to fulfill these commitments.

The Alt. DCM and I have made a list of groups we will be visiting this year. Our goal is to visit every group in District 11 at least twice a year. The first round of visits we hope to conclude in the next two months.

Now on to the WSRAASC - the district was kind enough to send me to Nisswa, MN for the 2011 WSRAASC, held in March 2011. This is my first experience at a regional event, and the event did not let me down. Seeing 300+ alcoholics in one place, at one time, was quite the sight. I am proud to say that while there was some heated discussion, no fights broke out, and no police were called - a tribute to power of this program. In June, I will be attending the Local Forum being held in Miles City. Another one of those opportunities that I am excited to be able to participate in. In September of this year, I plan on attending the Regional forum, being held in Davenport, IA. Considering my native state is Minnesota, and knowing all of the banter that goes back and forth between these states, I am sure there are some amends that need to be made - HAHA. I am looking forward to this event as well, as I have never been to a Regional Forum.

Some upcoming events in District 11 are as follow: May 6th - 7th, the Yellowstone Group (Billings) is having a Big Book weekend. This event will include a speaker meeting on Friday and a Big Book study on Saturday. Detail can be found on the Area website (I believe there is a flyer available for download there).

In closing, I would like to thank the groups and members of District 11 for allowing me the opportunity to serve District 11 and Alcoholics Anonymous as DCM this rotation. Service works has always been (A big thanks to the

Traditions group and my sponsor for driving this home) and continues to be a cornerstone of my recovery. In service, Brandon M. DCM - District 11

#### District 12- Sandy A. District 12 Report

District 12 has currently has 35 meetings in 8 towns, which includes 2 new meetings in Big Timber on Wednesday & Sundays at 315 W. 8<sup>th</sup> St., Apt. C1, and a new 12x12/Big Book meeting in Harlowton at the American Lutheran Church on Monday nights at 7 pm. As well as a meeting that is held each Tuesday night at 7 pm at the Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch for the girls. The women's meeting that was held in Laurel on Thursday nights at 6 pm has disbanded.

The district is financially sound and retains no debt. GSR's for 5 of our 8 communities are active at the district level. We currently have four committees, Grapevine Rep, Daniel M., PI & CPC, Steve O., Treatment & Corrections, Cheryl D., Literature, Nick G. We have a new secretary/treasurer, a District PO Box and EIN number.

District 12's Annual Mid-Winter Social was held Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> in Joliet with the district providing ham and turkey, and attendees providing a delicious assortment of side dishes. Our speakers sharing their experience, strength and hope for the evening were Pam R, Absarokee Al-Anon and Nick D, Joliet AA and previous DCM for District 12. Our gratitude to the many that attended and continue to attend this successful and joyous event every year. The Mid-Winter Social for 1012 is tentatively planned for February 19<sup>th</sup> in Joliet, save the date, we'd love to have you all attend.

A future workshop is in the planning stages. Once details have been completed, Flyers will be available on the Montana AA website.

The upcoming Annual Fireman's Point Campout has been set for August 19-21, 2011 at Fireman's Point, ½ a mile south of Columbus on Hwy 78. The campout has evolved to 2 nights and 3 days. Friday night kicks off the event with a potluck and speaker to follow at 7 pm. New to the campout this year is a SOB (Sober Old Bikers) Poker run slated to start at 10:30 am with a meeting by the river at the half-way point, ending again at Fireman's Point by 5 pm for our Area 40 Delegate, Terry S. giving his report from the GSO conference at 5 pm. Also new is a scheduled river rafting trip on the Stillwater with a rafting company out of Absarokee, there is a cost to participate and Carpooling from Fireman's Point to Absarokee will happen at 12:45 PM on Saturday. A BBQ Saturday night with Chef Dave R., grill master, preparing the meat provided by the district. A 7 pm around the campfire, a yet to be announced Speaker will share at 7 pm, "Resentment Burning" will end the evening after dark. Sunday morning a pancake breakfast and camp clean up will end the weekend. Camping is free, with no utility hookups. Flyers are located on the back table. Please put the date Aug 19-21 on your calendar for Great Food, Fishing, Sharing & Story Telling, Fellowship, Friendship plus So Much Fun - it may be Illegal! District 12 DCM- Sandy A.

District 21- Laura S.

#### **District 21's Spring Assembly Report**

**Laura S., DCM**

We are a huge piece of real estate with a teeny-tiny population. It is a two to four hour drive between groups. Plentywood, Wolf Point and Poplar have two meetings a week and Glasgow has ten meetings a week.



Culbertson and Scobey are inactive. The long distance between groups makes it hard to form decisions that include everyone and cohesion is difficult. At the last Assembly I called our District "the little District that could". This Assembly I call our District "Far-rural Country".

On the fun side, we are celebrating our "Second Annual Wild West Soberfest August 12 through 14 near Fort Peck Lake. Terry S. will give his Delegate Report, Sharon S. will give a workshop on "Spirituality and Recovery" and Terry H. will give a workshop on "Corrections". We will have speakers and Big Book, Twelve & Twelve and Discussion Meetings. There will be lots of good food and plenty of other activities. Flyers Available. Come visit us under the true Big Sky.

District 23- J. Scott W.

Everlasting Regards from the Sunrise District: I'm J. Scott W. and I am an alcoholic. The past six months have seen the number of the District's groups diminish by one with one group becoming inactive and no longer meeting. There are (6) Groups in the District-- (3) registered, (2) unregistered and (1) inactive:

\*In February, the Savage, MT Big Book Discovery Group decided to no longer hold meetings, a special Thank You to Jody R. for her dedication as trusted servant for that meeting;

\*Glendive has (2): the Life Again and the 12 to Life Groups;

\*Sidney has (2): the Welcome Home and the Monday Noon Groups;

\*And (1) in Fairview, the Young People's Second Chance Big Book Group.

The Fairview Young People's Group continues to meet on Monday Nights at the trusted servant's home. Another special Thank You to Zach D. for his dedication.

The Glendive groups meet (5) days a week between them. Monday through Friday.

The two (2) Sidney groups, also hold meetings (5) days of the week between them. Attendance has been steady for both groups. The Monday Noon Group, which meets on Mondays at Noon (duh), features a luncheon, prepared by yours truly, on the last Monday of the month. If in Sidney on that day, stop on by for a meeting plus lunch on me. The Welcome Home Group meets on Tuesday, Saturday -am and pm, and Sunday. The Sidney Groups meet at the same location, which is handy for those seeking a meeting.

Since the last assembly we have held (3) District Meetings, (1) which was not held due to a lack of a quorum, but was held in conjunction with a New Years Eve Party/Potluck so not all was for naught; (1) where we elected incoming trusted servants-myself included; and the most recent where we held a potluck and discussed the upcoming Spring Assembly and other business.

We have had (2) Festival/Party's down at the Savage Community Center. A Halloween Festival sponsored by the Welcome Home Group and a New Years Eve Party sponsored by District 23. Good food, fellowship and fun was had by those in attendance. For those of you interested, continue to look on the Area website for future events.

One future event to plan for is the Lower Yellowstone Soberfest at the Glendive MT Lions Camp in Makoshika State Park, which is held the third weekend of August. This year's event, August 19-21, is still in the planning stages. so more will be revealed.

District 31- Corrina H.

Piv-Woh-na'ut (Good Morning in Cheyenne)!

My name is Corrina and I am an alcoholic. I am DCM for District #31, and my home group is the "Colstrip 3&4 Group". We have quite a few meetings in our District, considering the size of our District. The Baker group meets on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. The Colstrip group meets Mondays & Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., with a "Speaker Meeting" being the first Friday of the month at 7:30. The Forsyth Group meets on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 7:00 p.m. The Jordan Group meets on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays at 7:00 p.m. The Miles City Group meets every day of the week. The Terry Group meets on Monday evenings, and we are not sure if they are going to join our District or the Billings district. I understand the Lane Deer Group wants to join our district too, but I'm not sure how we are to go about requesting that they join our district. A lot of the members attend the Colstrip meetings and showed interest in joining our district.

I am new to this job as "DCM" and so any advice I can get would be greatly appreciated.

We had our first District Meeting of the year in Colstrip, on 2-5-11. Scott W. came from Billings and addressed our group. This was great! He presented some history of our upcoming "forum". He told us that Jim M. of New York will be a speaker at our "forum". His topic will be corrections.

Scott also told us the importance of organizing our district for the upcoming forum. We will need to expect 150 people and we need to establish committees for: Greeters, chair set-up, meeting clean-up, coffee makers, etc.... Our meeting closed at 12:40.

We had another district meeting on March 31, 2011, in Miles City at the Convent. At that time, Lance was nominated and voted to the task of being our Treasurer once again. He gave us a report of having \$664.24 in our account. At that meeting, we also voted on the idea of all the GSR's being co-signers for our checking account. The motion carried.

At that meeting, we authorized funds for our DCM to attend the assembly. Voted, and a check was written at that time.

Meeting was adjourned.

I'm not sure if I need to write down all this information for this presentation, but here it is! Thank you for allowing me to serve. -Corrina H.

District 41- Casey L.

As a new DCM, I have truly appreciated the help and support from former dcm's like Lee T. Many thanks. A lot of love and support from so many other GSR's and group members. What a great bunch of AA's to serve with. I had a terrific time at the West Central Regional AA Service Conference in Nisswa, MN. I learned so much and what great hosts. I look forward to many among us being able to attend the next year's West Central Regional Conference in Billings.

Our treatment and corrections meetings are well attended with a Friday night speaker meeting at the RMTCC. Our CPC chair, Jeannie R., is putting on a clinic on how to get a committee together. CPC is doing a great job.

We currently have 16 active groups in District 41 and 180 meetings per week. District 41 is having good group participation. Eleven of sixteen groups have updated their group information. Hopefully, all 16 will be done shortly. Most committee chair positions are filled and their committee members are growing with great support.

We are excited to be hosting the Spring Roundup in Great Falls at the Heritage Inn. We welcome you all to join us May 13-15. Founders Day picnic will be June 11<sup>th</sup> at Ryan's Dam and the Local Forum is June 18<sup>th</sup> also at the Heritage Inn. This year at this assembly, we have a small table with a large turnout of GSR's and committee

members, thus are unity is at an all time high. AA in District 41 feels energized. I would like to take this time to thank the fellowship in District 41 for allowing me the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

Yours in service, Casey L.

District 42-Duane C.

Hi everyone, my name is Duane C. and I am an alcoholic. I am the DCM for District 42. Since we visited here last fall District 42 has been doing pretty well. We have 7 groups in our district and in a short time we may get one more. Some of the Choteau Group helped start another meeting in Augusta. All our groups say they are doing well; several groups report getting new members.

On a sad note, the GSR for the Chester Group passed away. He was active in district and will be missed. The Shelby Group held a Christmas party on Dec 18, 2010. It was well attended.

As DCM for District 42, I got to participate in two teleconference calls, one on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> and then again on March 27<sup>th</sup>. I didn't say much, but I listened a lot. Thank you. Duane C.

District 51- Leo B.

Hello, my name is Leo and I am an alcoholic. I am the DCM for District 51 from Havre. I am looking forward to the assembly this weekend and to sitting on the Treatment Committee. We also have a member, Jim B., sitting on the Literature Committee. I am Pleased to see that we have a wonderful representation from our district at the assembly. Our District Meeting is held the third Sunday of the Month with the exception of the months of the Area Assembly. We have 35 meetings weekly throughout the District as well as a meeting at the Detention Center in Havre and the jail in Harlem and a meeting at the assisted living center in Havre. Two of our groups have monthly speakers. and we are looking for persons willing to speak as we have nearly exhausted our resources. All groups are represented by a GSR with the exception of two. We also have all of our District positions filled with the exception of one; the Corrections Committee Chair. Our BTG and Treatment Committee Chairpersons are one in the same. I am pleased as well to announce that we have a new noon meeting at the Van Orsdel Methodist Church on 5th Ave. in Havre. It is called aptly The Noon Meeting. It is a closed meeting and it is doing very well, perhaps one of the better attended meetings in the district.

We have several activities scheduled for the summer. We are making plans currently for the Havre Mini Conference which is Oct 7, 8, 9, 2011 at the H.R.D.C. Building which is located at 2229 5th Ave. in Havre. Those are always a very good representation of Hi-Line recovery and they always have some very good speakers. In the planning phases also are four Sobriety Campouts one in each of the months of June, July, August, September. They are all held at Beaver Creek County Park which is the largest county park in the nation and one of if not the nicest. Flyers for both the campouts and the Assembly are on the flyer table. I hope to see many of you at the Mini Conference as well as the campouts. They are certain to be a very good time and a wonderful opportunity to fellowship. Additionally in the planning phases is a joint district potluck/workshop which will be held later this Spring.

Thank you for allowing me to serve. Yours in trusted service, Leo B. DCM District 51

District 61- Anne B.

Greetings, Area 40! District 61 enjoys 95 meetings put on by 44 groups in Helena, Boulder, Townsend, Lincoln, White Sulphur Springs, and Elliston. Attendance at District meetings is good and we just filled our Literature chair position. We have 15 GSRs in attendance at this assembly

We've got a lot going on in District 61. Next weekend, April 16, starting at 11 AM, we will put on the annual Corrections and Treatment workshop which features AA speakers and professionals sharing with one another to provide information about what AA does and does not do as well as give AAs a better appreciation of the professionals and their work. This mutual sharing has led to improved relationships and understanding about AA in the community. Please come join us; I am selling lunch tickets at \$10 apiece so come get yours before I run out. June 25 we will host our annual Grapefest in Helena. Along with Grapevine-related fun and festivities, our Delegate, Terry S, will give his Conference report.

September 22-25 we are thrilled to host, for the first time in Montana, the National Archives Workshop. I am personally very excited about the learning more about Archives and seeing the displays that illuminate our history.

October 14-16 we will host the Fall Roundup and later on Karla will give you a report about the exciting goings-on there. We have a dynamite group of speakers selected and it will be a great celebration of recovery.

We don't have a date set for the annual Attitude of Gratitude in November, but stay tuned. It is a privilege to serve you as DCM in District 61 and I thank you. Anne B.

District 71- Peggy H.

Hi, My name is Peggy Holland, and I'm an alcoholic. I am also the new D.C.M for district 71 which includes Butte, Anaconda, Deer Lodge, Dillon, Drummond, Jackson, Lima, Phillipsburg, Opportunity, Sheridan, Twin Bridges and Whitehall.

We have a lot of corrections and treatment facilities in our district. We have meetings available to our pre-release as well as the other correctional and treatment facilities. We set them up with sponsors who help the ones in the centers to be able to get to the meetings that are held, as well as sponsor them to get out among other things. The CCP ( corrections connections program) is the pre-release treatment program. They hold one speaker meeting every month and they are allowed to go to a meeting that has been around AA called "Back to Basics." It helps people start in the 12 step program in four weeks. It assists in getting people into the right frame of mind, to get a sponsor, and get to more meetings.

Second, there is the WATCH program for DUI offenders. They are in the program 24 hours a day for 6-8 months. They are allowed to attend meeting a couple of times a week. Jimmy R. who had gone through the program and lives in Opportunity started a "dinner meeting" which has been a great experience. Bridging the Gap, Fred P. comes to attend this meeting which has also added to the greatness of these get togethers, in my opinion. Third, there is a START program for re-offenders at MCDC. The state treatment facility which holds meetings on Friday at 2 PM is "Thank God" being run by Helena, Missoula, Bozeman and if there are any districts I forgot please forgive me. District 71 is very grateful for all of your help. We have the state hospital in Warm Springs which we do get people into for meetings also.

I also want to talk briefly of the Bridging the Gap program on behalf of Fred P. He goes around to some of the treatment facilities and does his thing, re:AA. He passes out cards to the individuals who are pending release and which hold the details of the names to be able to be contacted to get to their first meeting. Fred P. and I are going

to discuss the situation of the chances of this information being misplaced or lost, as AA representatives we are responsible for "being there" for these people. A way to form two systems so that no one is left behind. The Jail meeting is still going. We have some volunteers but do need more. We are also planning a workshop on sponsorship, the date has been picked as June 11th. Gary O. and his committee are working out the details for that. When they the rest of the details are worked out flyers will be dispersed.

The district has purchased a computer for district use and I am not computer literate, but am learning and attending a class in May. I would like to thank Sharon, Linda, Alex, and everyone who has been so helpful to me. The DCM email address is district71@live.com  
Yours in service, Peggy H.

District 72- Catherine J.

Our district is very busy planning and thinking about some events we can organize and support in 2011, like a Founder's Day event in June to host our Delegate's Share and a Unity Day is being discussed for the fall of 2011. Our CPC has been very active from organizing events like a talk at Montana State University for the Sack Lunch Seminar, and making contact with counselors. Ennis put on a Cabin Fever Party and it was very successful.

PI has been doing there best getting meeting lists out and collaborating with the high school. Treatment and Corrections work together like CPC and PI in getting people involved in service. Our Archives Chair will be attending the Archives Conference.

We now have a facility called Vince Grant Hall in Bozeman. District is now holding its monthly meetings there. We have enthusiastic GSR's and Active District Chairs. It has been great these first few months of serving in the District, visiting groups and attending group conscience meetings regarding the 61st Annual Conference Agenda, sharing information online and in person. In Love and Service, Catherine Johnson

District 81- Erin G.

Hello my name is Erin and I am an alcoholic: and I am the District 81 DCM. Our district spans from Thompson Falls to Superior with many towns in between. There are approximately 115 meetings held each week in this district by 41 AA groups. Our district meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of every month at the Alano Club (450 W. Broadway Street in Missoula) from 2-4 p.m. Currently, all of our committee chairs are filled and between 15 and 20 GSRs are usually in attendance. Since our district spans across such a large geographical area we see less attendance from some of the smaller towns, although we do have regular attendance from several GSRs who travel over an hour to reach us every month. Now that the snow is melting (hopefully) the alternate DCM and I will be expanding our group visits to include all the towns in our district. We are looking forward to meeting more people who may not be able to attend the district meeting.

Our service commitments include: meetings to MCDC in Butte on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month; meetings to the Providence Mental Health Center two times per month; meetings weekly to two correctional facilities; and, meetings weekly to the Teen Recovery Center.

Most recently our District hosted Pre-Assembly and we thank everyone who attended from across the state. We had over 40 out-of-towners including several Area Chairs, our Area Delegate and Alternate Delegate. It was a very informative afternoon.

The Area 40 2012 Fall Roundup committee has been busy planning the festivities that will be held October 5-7 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Missoula. The committee meets almost monthly. A Valentine's Day Party/Fundraiser was well-attended by AA members. Our Round up PI chair is in attendance today with plenty of save the date fliers for you to distribute in your districts.

District 91- Sam B.

District 91 still reaches from Eureka to Elmo. There are 21 active groups with 8-10 groups regularly attending our monthly district meeting. That is 113 meetings a week. The District business meeting is held at 3 PM the 4th Sunday of every month with a rotating meeting location where the host group representative volunteers their meeting hall for the upcoming meeting. Once in awhile there are a few group members attending that actually are interested in General Service. It seems to work very well as it brings the district to the group. We have had approximately half of all groups represented at district. A motion was passed to assist in the funding of GSR's to the Area Assembly for groups that cannot afford to send a representative. Into Action Weekend in February was outstanding. Terry and Virginia were most excellent speakers. Next year, The chair of the event is Matt H.. who is our new, most active, Grapevine Chair. Venue and Speaker have already been picked. Sheldon from Las Vegas will be our guest for that event February 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of next year. Keep your eye open for the flier. We have Delegate's day scheduled for next month on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Four of our standing committees, PI, CPC, Treatment, and Corrections are planning a joint workshop later in the year. The Spring 2012 Spring roundup committee is now meeting monthly with speakers and venue already chosen. Also, keep your eyes open for fliers for The Flathead Valley Intergroup Campout at Emery bay on the Hungary Horse Reservoir. The last one had about 80 people at the Speakers meeting on Saturday Night. The Serenity Group's Founders Day Campout at Talley Lake and the Whitefish Groups Campout are also big events. Last month, I had the privilege to attend my first WCRSC in Minnesota. It was a life changer. I presented on the topic of Diversity in AA: Inclusiveness not exclusiveness. My focus was on Spirituality: Agnostics and Atheists in AA. I found it very difficult to be objective. Thanks for allowing me to serve. Sam B.

District 93- Jay T.

My name is Jay and I am an alcoholic, District 93 DCM. Greetings from the Bitterroot Valley. We have 15 groups with 29 meetings a week. We will be starting this spring off with our Spring Fling Saturday April 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be a potluck, talent show ending with a candlelight meeting. Then we will have Norm's Picnic put on by The Darby/Conner Group on the West Fork River on June 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>. Potluck Saturday night followed by a campfire meeting. Sunday morning potluck breakfast followed by a Speakers meeting. If you like you can camp-out also. Then on the next weekend June 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> we will be having our Annual Bitterroot Picnic & Camp-out at Painted Rocks State Park Campgrounds. There will be potlucks Friday & Saturday nights and we will supply hamburgers & hot dog. Sunday morning we will have breakfast and we will supply eggs, sausage & potatoes around 8:00 am. Then around 10:00 am Terry S. will be giving his Delegate's report. You can come up earlier in the week as some of us get there Wednesday. There are fliers on the back table that will give you more information. In closing we would like to thank District 81 for putting on the pre-assembly and all who were there. In Service, Jay T.

Area Advisor- Carole B.

Greetings, Hello Area 40 For the first time in two years, I've submitted my report on time! In November, I participated in the outgoing and incoming delegate discussion with Terry. Then in January per the Area Policy and Procedures, I participated in my final Area Audit. Your contributions are being spent in accordance with the Policy and Procedures. I provided advice in the two Area Committee conference calls. If Coop from Rhode Island is listening, I am also active in corrections work in District 11. He strongly encourages past delegates to stay active. Throughout the weekend, I'll make sure the coffee is flowing and I will continue to be available of advice is needed. Thanks for letting me serve. Carole B.

### Main points:

The new design of the website went live last week in January. What follows is a list of the main points

#### 1. Infrastructure:

1. Moved from deprecated ASP to mainstream PHP code. Easier to maintain for current and future webmasters. Easy to find support
2. Moved from Windows server to Linux server – (faster, more secure, cheaper)
3. Moved from two Access databases to a single MySQL database – (faster, more secure, added functionality – enterprise database model, easier to maintain)
4. Moved away from Frames base design. The list is long as to why Frames are a bad idea so I am providing a link for reference. <http://godbit.com/article/why-are-frames-bad>
5. Moved away from HTML4 to HTML5 and CSS3 to leverage and support emerging technologies
6. Created a testing server that allows the webmaster to test all functionality as long as needed before pushing to the live server
7. Implemented SVN as code repository and revisioning system which allows to see all historical changes done to each file on the website
8. Added functionality to receive emails and text alerts if any of the dynamic pages are not returning data
9. Added code to the all pages to leverage reports from Google Analytics

#### 2. Design and use:

1. Made finding meetings the main event of the website.
  - a. Number of clicks to find a meeting in any specific city has been reduced from 4 clicks to one click. Two clicks if needing to print
  - b. The print function is now on the same page. Do not need to go to a separate page
  - c. Print page will now format automatically.
  - d. All information on any particular meeting is now available on one page removing the need to click to a new page to get address.
2. Reduced the number of files needed to display the identical data by 300%
3. Used the concept of Progressive Enhancement to give modern browsers a better experience while allowing older browsers to render the site correctly
4. Leveraged media-queries which allow for alternate layout to accommodate mobile devices including iPhone, iPad and Android phone, without having to create special pages for such devices
5. All sections of the committee page are one click away using the footer links. The footer exists on all the pages of the site
6. The design and layout of the AnswerNet pages were left untouched to allow them a seamless transition to the new design

#### 3. Admin Sections

1. Reduced the login pages to one for both the Meetings and 888 admins
2. Streamlined the look of all admin pages for easier use.
3. Removed the need to check if the cities are in the database
4. Added functionality to admin pages to facilitate repetitive entries

Lastly, I would like to thank the folks around the state that volunteer their time and keep current the information we provide on the site.

Thanks for letting me serve; it is a privilege and an honor, Area Webmaster- Alex M.

## Area Archivist- Gerry R.

Good morning everyone, my name is Gerry and I'm an alcoholic. I also have the privilege of serving as your Area 40 Archivist. As always, a warm welcome to old friends, new friends, and soon-to-be friends, with a special welcome to everyone who is here attending their very first Area Assembly. One bit of advice for any of you who are new to the assembly – make friends with your chair. You may think I'm kidding but, the two of you are going to be spending a lot of time together this weekend, and it's always a good idea to stay on good terms when one is in that intimate a relationship.

On to Archives! Since my report at the Fall Assembly, I remained quite busy for a couple of months. The weekend after the Assembly I traveled to Macon, Georgia where I extended your invitation to the attendees of the 14<sup>th</sup> National AA Archives Workshop to travel to Helena, this September, and attend the 15<sup>th</sup> version of that event. I was assured by many that they are coming. I will be giving a full report, tomorrow morning, on the progress of our planning for that event. So, stay tuned.

The weekend after returning from Macon, I set up a display at the Butte Roundup which was very well received. A few weeks later I presented a display at a workshop in Bozeman, and two weeks after that I presented another display and a power point presentation on AA history, for District 61 in Helena. The week after Helena, I attended the Special Forum in Rapid City South Dakota.

Since then? Nothing! Nada! Nobody loves me.

I do have a couple potential dates coming up. I've heard rumors of a Roundup in Great Falls, and whispers about maybe, the possibility of a potential invitation coming from District 51, but that's unconfirmed. Let me just say now, that I and the Area 40 Archives Chair Joe H. are both available to bring a good half day of Archives presentations along with a display to any event you are having. If you aren't having an event, make one. We'll be there.

The display behind me is an historical representation of the changing face of AA and the AA service structure in Area 40. I hope you get a chance to look it over, and realize that you are now a part of that history. I will be available for any questions you might have about it.

At the end of this assembly, during general sharing, I will bring forward a floor action suggesting that Area 40 allow the archives repository to move from its present location of 324 Fuller in Helena, to a new address at 534 North Last Chance Gulch, also in Helena. I will be available this weekend to discuss the reasons for this request with anyone who is interested, and will also present them during the floor action. What a joy to be sober today. What a privilege to be of service. Thank you for both. Area Archivist-Gerry R

## Workshops

The first workshop was presented by past delegate, Bob. H. "We are Responsible for A.A.'s Future—Let It Begin With Us." Those attending the workshop were broken up into six smaller groups. Bob asked each group to study two of the Twelve Traditions and present how that tradition can apply to the topic of the workshop. There was excellent discussion and sharing.

The second workshop was presented by past delegate, Loren B. "How to Increase Participation in A.A.—Striving for Self-Support in All Our Affairs." was the topic presented. Loren shared many idea of how to encourage



participation. Some of those are: invite people to join in, make it attractive, ask for help, give people questions to ask and answer, and encourage and show newer members how to do service positions. Anything from opening a meeting to an area position has been done first by someone sharing their experience and helping the newcomer do a service that then makes the newcomer feel "a part of".

### Delegate's Report-Terry S.

My name is Terry S. I'm an alcoholic. It's my pleasure and privilege to serve as your Area 40 Panel 61 delegate to the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in the U.S. and Canada. Sharon gave me 45 minutes for this report, and I expect after less than half that long I will be ready for you folks to ask questions. So, whatever I don't cover, or whatever you want to hear more about, be ready to hop up to the mikes and ask about it when I ask if you have any questions.

Since you elected me to this service position last September, I have participated in a workshop at the Fall Roundup in Butte (District 71), an Additional Forum in Rapid City (Area 63, South Dakota), the Area 40 audit, done this year in Bozeman (District 72), the Into Action Weekend in Kalispell (District 91), the 2011 West Central Regional Service Conference in Nisswa (Area 35, Northern Minnesota), a GSR School in Helena (District 61), a pre-Assembly in Missoula (District 81), two Area 40 Committee telephone conferences and two West Central Regional telephone conferences.

First of all, our Area 40 finance books balance and no money is missing. We do an informal audit at the beginning of every rotation. We do trust our trusted servants, but we still count the money and make sure the books balance. It's the responsible thing to do. Second, if you want more detail about what I have been doing so far this rotation, either talk to me on a break, or go to our web site and read the delegate reports for Spring 2009 and Spring 2007. Spring 2007 was Andrew's first delegate report, and Spring 2009 was Carole's first delegate report. What our delegates do is generally the same every rotation, so when you read what they reported, that's pretty much what I've been doing, too. Third, Area 40 Committee telephone conferences are NOT for making decisions about Area 40 matters. We do that here. Our telephone conferences are to share information, to discuss what is going on. I suppose some day we might have a real emergency, so serious that we absolutely have to get something decided now that can't wait until the next Assembly. If that ever happens, then the Area 40 Committee can be polled (be voting, in other words) on an item that would normally be decided at an Assembly, like this one. Otherwise, telephone conferences are for sharing and not deciding.

What I want to share with you next is what I have learned in attending and participating in all of the events I've listed for you. Here it is: Alcoholics Anonymous is alive and active in Area 40 and in our Region. We are trying to do a better job of assuring that the hand of A.A. is there whenever any alcoholic, anywhere, reaches out for help. We are taking a hard look at how we might better carry our message to Native American Alcoholics. We are continuing the efforts, so ably supported in the past by Robby S. and so many other of our elder statesmen and women, to grow our trusted servants and always to be aware of the questions and issues facing our Fellowship. With the recent changes to our Area web site, we are working to improve its effectiveness as a means by which alcoholics can find us. We are looking at ways that we can be there for alcoholics coming out of corrections and treatment facilities and going to communities across our Area and our State. And, we are looking at what we can do to assure the future of A.A. and its 12-Step program of recovery, for our future members, whether they are our children or the children of strangers.

All is not rosy in A.A. these days, and some of us, even some of our best and oldest members, fear for the future. But fear and faith cannot exist at the same time in the same heart, and A.A. has weathered larger wars, deeper economic crises and greater internal conflicts than those we face today. I see all of you here, and I recall, just from the brief time I have been here, all of the folks who came here for past assemblies, ready to do whatever it might

take to keep this program available for the next generation. We are that next generation, here today and I believe with all my heart and soul that A.A. can survive and will survive, with the help of God and our principles, through whatever dark times may lie ahead. And you and I will not want to miss out on the spiritual growth and camaraderie we will share in walking through those troubles! So long as we are true to our primary purpose and strive to follow and protect our three legacies, we can hold up the light of recovery against the darkness of alcoholism and we can share this way out with those willing to do what we have done.

We live in interesting times. Grade school kids and ladies in their 60s (my wife, for example) now read electronic books. A.A.W.S. is developing the means to make A.A. literature available for sale online in electronic book 1 format (eBooks). The latest report on that project indicates that we are trying to figure out how we can provide access through methods such as developing our own applications (our own "apps"), which individuals can install on their own

eReaders, and then be able to obtain and read our literature. I think among our goals in this project are (1) for A.A. to maintain control of its literature when offering it to interested readers, and (2) to make it very clear to everyone who looks at our eBooks that the provider of the eReader (whether Apple or somebody else) is NOT affiliated with the provider of the eBook (© which is us, A.A.). We still move slowly in A.A., but moving slowly in this digital age can feel very, very fast, indeed. We, Area 40, have to pay attention and to participate in the decision-making about A.A.'s future, whether it involves eBooks or anything else. We owe it to the drunks who will come to A.A. in the future to help keep the message of recovery clear and undiluted. For this weekend's work, the background material on the General Service Conference Agenda items has been available since mid-February and the background material on the Area 40 agenda items has been available (to the extent it was provided to Sharon) since soon after that. Today and tomorrow, we are going to grapple with our Area 40 items and

search out an informed group conscience about each one. And after listening to the reports from our service committee meetings and the discussions on the Assembly Floor about the General Service Conference items, I will be asking Sharon to get a sense of the Area on many of those items, so I can be clear about where Area 40 stands on them. My Conference Committee assignment is Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities. I have heard folks

say that the Treatment committee has a "light" agenda compared to some of the other Conference Committee agendas. Maybe so, but this happens to involve subject matter that is dear to my heart. I have family members and good friends who have conditions that make it more difficult for them to receive what A.A. offers. How do we include them? How do we maintain the integrity of our program and still make it accessible for them?

I couldn't have gotten sober without Alcoholics Anonymous. If I could have done it myself, I wouldn't be here. And if, when I did come to A.A., I couldn't have climbed down the steps to get to the basement meetings or I couldn't have heard the words spoken in meetings with no sign language interpreters, or I couldn't read the book because of my learning disabilities, or nobody in A.A. spoke the same language that I did, then I would be dead today instead of

here at this Assembly. So, I look forward to participating, as your delegate, in the "TF/SN/A" committee's work. On the floor of the conference committee, I will be voting with the rest of the Conference members on proposed actions. And there could be some interesting proposed actions. If you have thoughts or questions about the revisions to "The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs," or the cost versus the value of *The Grapevine* to our Fellowship, or what we should do about the fact that our contributions have not increased to cover our functional service expenses, or whether the Conference needs a voice in setting its agenda, or whether we need more pamphlets, or whether the proposed policy on full face videos is okay – whatever it is that you feel strongly about, SHARE IT. If you don't tell us, we won't know what you think. And when I get to the General Service Conference, what you all didn't tell me, I won't know, and I won't be able to use what I don't know in deciding upon and voting for what I believe is best for A.A. So if nobody has said what you are thinking about an agenda item,

speak out! I'll be flying out to New York on Saturday, April 30, and flying back on Saturday, May 7. My wife is coming with me, but no Area 40 money will pay for her expenses. I'm going to be very busy with the conference, but she is perfectly capable of having a wonderful time in New York with no help from me. While she is having a great time, please do write to me while I'm at the conference (using my full name):

Terry S.

Crowne Plaza Times Square Hotel

1605 Broadway at West 49th Street  
New York, NY 10019

Your phone calls, text messages and emails are also welcome. I am participating in the General Service Conference as your delegate, so keep in touch! When I return, I look forward to sharing with you about what happened at the conference. Right now I have confirmed dates to present reports on the General Service Conference to 8 of our 14 districts:

May 14 – District 41	May 22 – District 91
June 11 – District 81	June 25 – District 61
June 26 – District 93	July 16 – District 71
August 13 – District 21	August 20 – District 12

DCM's, please, if your District hasn't scheduled a report, let's get together this weekend and get one scheduled. You've already heard all about this, but I am going to tell you about it all again! The next 12 months are going to be booming with action for Area 40! We have that Local Forum, a day each in Great Falls (District 41) and Miles City (District 31) on June 18-19. We have the National Archives Workshop in Helena (District 61) on June 22-25. The West Central Regional Forum this year is on September 9-11 in Davenport, Iowa (Area 24). The very next weekend, Ken B., our West Central Regional Trustee, will come and join us here in Lewistown (District 41) for our 2011 Fall Assembly, on September 17-18. The first Fall Assembly of each new rotation is typically devoted to conducting the business of Area 40, which this year may include the Area taking its own inventory. Sharon S., our Area Chair, would love to have agenda items submitted for this Fall's Assembly, so long as you get them to her by July 1, 2011. And, to top it off, early next year, Area 40 is hosting the West Central Regional Service Conference in Billings on March 2-4, 2012. It is gonna be a ride! GSRs, new or experienced, raise your hands, please? Thank you for being here! You are vital to the health of A.A.! Your group's voices speak through you. DCM's, you, along with our GSRs, carry information home to the Fellowship about what happens here, and about what is happening at the bottom of the service structure, at the

Conference, at the General Service Office, and within our corporations and corporate boards. You are the necessary connection between the groups and the rest of the service structure. Without you, A.A.'s service structure couldn't keep working to help one alcoholic share with another. And another thing I wanted to mention – GSO and Area 40 want to be your pen pals, folks! GSO communicates with A.A. groups through the newsletter *Box 459*, published quarterly. Area 40 does the same with our *Triangle*. Please make sure your DCM has your updated group contact information. DCM's, please work with Linda B., Area Secretary, and Lee T., *Triangle* Editor, to keep our contact information entirely current. Alcoholics Anonymous treasures its minority opinions. It's up to all of us here, today and tomorrow, to pay

attention and encourage and listen to the minority opinion. The voice of every member present here matters. If you voted in the minority on an agenda item, and it passed, after the decision is announced, do the right thing, whether you want to or not, and get up to one of our microphones and share the reasons you voted in the minority. For sure, it's a good idea to

get up and tell us all what you think BEFORE the vote – don't save it for the minority report! But if you believe we have made a mistake, and nobody else is telling us about why we might want to reconsider our decision, get up and tell us about it. The only force on earth that can prevent the manifestation of our Higher Power in our informed group conscience is our own silence, our own unwillingness to stand up and be heard. When I came to Alcoholics Anonymous I was clueless, useless, helpless and hopeless. You, the folks who were here when I arrived, have taught me, by your examples as well as by your sharing, everything I know about being awake, being useful, being helpful and having faith. Participating with you – in service, in unity and in recovery – rocks! If you have any questions or comments, folks, now is the time for you to head for the microphones. All right, let's get started taking care of Area 40's business. Thank you for choosing me to serve Area 40 and Alcoholics Anonymous! Terry S., Panel 61, Area 40 Montana

## Floor Assembly-Committee Reports, Motions, and Discussion

### Public Information-Paula H.

#### **A. Consider 2010 annual Web site report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site.**

There were 22 changes and additions made to the GSO web site in 2010. Among the most notable were: there is a rotating archives exhibit; we are now able to stream PSAs; a digital, downloadable version of the the "upside-down triangle" was added in three languages; the new Conference-approved young people's video, "Animation" was posted; and a non-interactive version of the 12 and 12 was created and is compatible with Assistive Technology. There is also a request from an Area to add a state-wide toll-free number to the "How to Find a Meeting" section on the web site.

#### **B. Consider that the 2011 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted by area on a random basis as was done in the 2007 A.A. Membership Survey.**

The Committee agreed with the Conference Committee.

#### **C. Consider approval of the General Service Board "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates."**

The Committee agreed with the Conference Committee that full faces of actors be used with disclaimers.

Discussion: There is no current policy on full face exposure. It is the sense of Area 40 to not use full faces in videos. Older version with full faces will be retired as they are timed out of distribution.

#### **D. Public Service Announcements (P.S.A.s):**

##### **1. Review current television P.S.A.s for relevance and usefulness.**

The Committee was impressed with the PSAs. Comments that television stations are not required to publish PSA's by FCC regulations

##### **2. Consider production of new television P.S.A.s.**

The Committee agreed with the trustees' PI Sub-committee that a media plan be developed before any more PSAs are produced. Discussed whether French and Spanish PSAs be developed which reflected those cultures. Didn't have enough information to make a decision.

Comment that maybe there should be a moratorium until a media plan is developed.

#### **E. Consider revisions to "Understanding Anonymity" which include text on the topic of anonymity in the digital age and answers the question "What should I tell my loved ones about protecting the anonymity of the A.A."**

members they may meet?"

Background material was not attached. The committee discussed the importance of anonymity on social networking sites and in death notices.

Comment that verbage added to ""Understanding Anonymity"" would be helpful on questions about media sites like Twitter, Facebook, or blogs

**F. Consider revisions to "The A.A. Fact File."**

The background material was not attached so we had no comment. For the committee only.

**G. Consider a revision to "A.A. at a Glance."**

The Committee agreed with the Conference Committee that the clause "...or "How to Find AA Meetings" on the home page of our website www.aa.org."

**H. Review contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook.**

The Committee reviewed the contents of PI Kit and Workbook. They discussed taking pamphlets to professional's offices when we go and to encourage others in our districts to do the same. Also, discussed that this would be a good time to contact radio and TV stations as media attention is focused on drunk driving.

Report and Charter

**A. The A.A. Service Manual, 2011-2012 Edition:**

**1. Review revisions from the A.A.W.S. Board.**

The background material was not attached so we had no comment.

**2. Review draft of description on trustees emeriti.**

The background material was not attached so we had no comment.

**3. Review list of editorial updates.**

The Committee reviewed the updates and found no problems.

**4. Review revised text forwarded from the 2010 Conference Committee on Trustees regarding the nominating procedure listed as #2 on page S67.**

The Committee reviewed the updates and found no problems. One person found the loss of the dates unfortunate.

**5. Consider request to change the phrase "new kid on the block" to "a first year delegate" on page S52 under Personal Experience in section "Preparing for the Conference."**

The Committee agreed with the group. Comments were that this was related to someone's

personal experience and we don't change someone's personal story. Terry asked for a sense of the area. The majority were in favor of keeping the text as is.

**6. Consider suggestion to revise the text on “inactive service workers” on page S37 in Chapter Four to reflect that the appropriate local entity is responsible for addressing inactive G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s and add similar text to Chapters One and Three.**

The Committee agreed with the group.

Discussion:

Change text to “It is the group's responsibility to take care of this task.”

**7. Consider request to review and update the section “What Goes On at the Conference” on page S55.**

The Committee agreed with the Area 59 that the Service Manual should reflect the actual practice of starting the General Service Conference on Sunday instead of Monday.

**B. Conference Charter:**

**1. Consider request to recommend adding “the right of Petition and Appeal” to the Conference Charter as found in The A.A. Service Manual.**

The Committee did not feel it had enough information to make a decision.

**2. Consider request to “address and remedy the inconsistencies between the Current [Conference] Charter and the Original [Conference] Charter” as found in The A.A. Service Manual.**

The Committee was confused as to why this was submitted since GSO staff found no documentation to support the inconsistencies.

Discussion: There are 16 discrepancies from the original Charter. There needs to be more information to form a collective conscience.

**C. Discuss A.A. Directories (Canada, Western U.S., and Eastern U.S.).**

Technical failure. We didn't have a printout of the material, therefore there was no discussion.

**D. Discuss General Service Conference Final Report.**

Technical failure. We didn't have a printout of the material, therefore there was no discussion.

Area 40 Web Site

**A. Consider a request to add Libby and Troy meetings on Area 40's website.**

Background: A member of one of those groups contacted Terry S, Delegate, Area 40 about this. Libby and Troy are not in Area 40, but they are in Montana. It is difficult for visitors to those cities and people coming out of treatment and corrections programs to find these meetings. It

also makes Bridging the Gap difficult. After some emails back and forth to Area 92, the Area in which Libby and Troy reside, and to Area 40 Webmaster, Terry called a teleconference of the Area Committee. After discussion, the PI committee chair was directed to take this item to the PI committee.

After input from the Area 40 Webmaster, Alex M, and discussion the

**Public Information Committee recommends that the Libby and Troy meetings be added to the Area 40 website."**

Discussion:

The webmaster could just add the groups from Libby and Troy to our website or just provide a link to Area 92, which they belong to.

Has Area 92 been spoken too? The delegate is aware of the request to list Libby and Troy under the Montana website. Where did this request come from? The request came from an individual speaking for groups from those cities. There is a concern that keeping information current is difficult since they don't fall under Area 40. It would be better to add Libby and Troy's cities to our Montana cities, but have a link to Area 92. This request should be made clear and permission be made between Area 92 and Area 40. Vote: For 71, Against 17

**The motion passed.**

Minority opinion: First things first, putting the cart before the horse. Should be asking Area 92 before putting those groups on our Area 30 website.

There was a motion to reconsider. It was seconded. Vote to reconsider failed 54-38. Only simple majority is needed.

**B. Consider that there is a discrepancy in Area 40 Policy and Procedure manual on the oversight of the Web page. It is unclear when the Webmaster should go to the Delegate when and what the Web Master should take to the PI Committee.**

The Website "Website Guidelines" reads: "The Webmaster ... This person also deals directly with the Web hosting service regarding technical matters and reports current status to the Area Assembly. The Area Delegate, or designated substitute, will provide oversight and review of all proposed changes and external links."

Policy and Procedures G8.8 reads: "Also, as an alternate assignment, the Public Information Committee shall consider all business pertaining to the website operated by Area 40 Inc. ....

"G8.8.2 The Public Information Committee will oversee the Area Website contents. Ever mindful of our Tradition of anonymity.

"G8.8.3 It is understood that any changes, alterations, or matters of policy concerning the website will remain channeled through the Public Information Committee and the Area 40 Assembly."

**The PI committee decided that the Area 40 PI Chair, Web Master and Archivist should research this further and bring back to the committee in the fall.**

### Hot-Line

The PI Chair received an email from the AnswerNet contact asking what the agents should do about calls concerning AA-sponsored events.

The committee came up with three options which the PI chair will pass onto the AnswerNet contact.

1. Refer the caller to the district where the event will be held.
2. The agent can go to the calendar link on the website to see if there is a flyer.
3. The agent can refer the caller to the calendar link on the website.

### Other

A. Marketing Plan- A marketing plan was submitted by Off The Wall. After a teleconference call it was decided that if the PI committee, a district, or a group felt it is appropriate, it can present an agenda item on this matter.

The PI committee discussed the marketing plan and took no action.

### B. State-wide Opportunities

Carol B wrote an email to Area 40 PI, CPC, Corrections and Treatment Chairs about contacting state officials and agencies to inform them about AA. She asked the the committees take this under advisement.

Due to time constrictions this item was tabled until Fall Assembly.

Thank you again to the PI Committee and interested members.

Yours in Service, Area 40 PI Chair-Paula H.

### Treatment Facilities/Agenda-Colby D.

I would like to thank all of those who attended and participated in our Area Assembly – Treatment Facilities committee meeting. A special thanks to Shannon M, alternate GSR from Bozeman. for taking notes of our discussion and proceedings. Attending the meeting were 17 members of which 5 composed the committee body. (attendance list attached)

The meeting was opened with introductions and delineating composition of the voting members of the committee. A brief overview of the voting process and use of “Roberts’ Rules of Order” was provided by the committee chair to be observed.

The committee body was informed that Terry S., delegate for Area 40 is a sitting member at the General Service Conference – Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs Accessibilities.

Member’s present representing the voting body were:

1. Colby D. – Area 40 Treatment Chair
2. Leo B. – DCM Dist. 51
3. Casey L. – DCM Dist. 41
4. Jerry K. – GSR Dist. 31



5. Brett H. – GSR Dist. 11

Non Voting Member's present were:

1. Shannon M. – Alt GSR, Bozeman
2. Margaret B. – Dist 81 Treatment Chair, Missoula
3. Kevin C. – Dist 93 Treatment Chair, Florence
4. Tom D. – Dist 71 Treatment Chair, Anaconda
5. Luke S. – Dist 91 Treatment Chair, Kalispell
6. John B. – Dist 31 GSR, Colstrip
7. Bill G. – Dist 61 Treatment Chair, Helena
8. Jamie H. – Dist 61 GSR, Helena
9. Jeff J. – Dist 61 Alt. GSR, Helena
10. Sharon L. – Dist 61, Helena
11. Jamie S. – Dist 51 Treatment Chair/BTG, Havre
12. Terry S. – Delegate, Area 40

Colby D. began the meeting by first indicating what our duties would be during this session. The General Service Conference agenda was read pertaining to the two areas of oversight and participation for the Area 40 Spring Assembly;

1. Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities
2. Conference Agenda Committee

Beginning with the following: **Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities**

A. Review draft recovery pamphlet for alcoholics with special needs.

**Action:** The committee was not furnished this pamphlet for review as this item would be discussed at the General Service Conference.

**Notes from background material:** It was discussed that the draft pamphlet would be reviewed by the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities primarily to determine whether or not the item

that has been presented to them meets the intended goals of the pamphlet as outlined in the history on the cover pages for this agenda item.

Also, as with all Conference-approved A.A. literature, the Conference Committee will be looking at the pamphlet to see “that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A. principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the “A.A. Fellowship.” (Concerns about routine grammar, punctuation, editing, etc. will be addressed by the Publications Department,).

Once the Conference Committee has reviewed the draft pamphlet for the alcoholics with special needs, several things may happen. Among them:

1. The committee might approve the pamphlet and recommend the pamphlet be approved by the Conference as a whole.
2. If approved the Conference Committee, recent experience suggests that copies of previously confidential items are sometimes made available to other Conference members prior to voting on it.
3. The Committee might also send the pamphlet back to the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities with any significant concerns about the proposed pamphlet.

In any case, it is not until the pamphlet comes out of the committee process to the floor of the Conference itself that the item is viewed by anyone other than the members of the Conference or Trustees’ Committee.

**B. Discuss report from the trustees’ Committee regarding the changing “Treatment Facilities’ Committee to “Treatment” Committee in committee titles and in A.A. literature.**

**Action:** Background material was shared. The consensus of those attending the committee was, the change in name would not improve the functioning of the committee, nor their role in discussing the “A.A. Recovery Program” to treatment facilities or other outside entities. It was felt that the cost to reprint literature and other documents was not a prudent use of our operating funds and would not improve the presentation of A.A. to outside entities. By way of unanimous vote the committee recommended against the changing of the titles currently utilized within the fellowship.

**C.** Consider removing the line of dialog from the video “Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous.” – (Uncle Sam is not gonna come in and bail us out)

**Action:** Discussion of the background material was shared. Many were not aware of the line dialogue due to not having seen the video previously. It was shared that the line of dialogue in question appears at the 12:37 minute mark of the video just prior to baskets being passed at the meeting representing our 7<sup>th</sup> tradition. It was also noted that the line in question was difficult to hear due to muffled and low sounds. Additional, background on the video was shared regarding when it was first distributed in 1991. It was further discussed that at the 2007 General Service Conference, it was recommended that: “The video Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous be revised, retaining only the script, and that sample footage or a progress report be brought to the 2008 General Service Conference on Treatment Facilities. **Note:** The cost would be \$50,000.

At the 2009 General Service Conference, it was recommended that the revised video, Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous, be approved.”

The 1/31/2011 minutes of the trustees' Committee in Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities: The committee considered and agreed to forward to the 2011 Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities a proposed Conference agenda item to remove a line of dialog from the video Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous—"Uncle Sam is not gonna come in and bail us out."—the next time the video is reprinted noting the cost of \$8,235 for making the changes in all three(3) languages on the DVD.

Members expressed concern that from the time the recommendation was made to revise and subsequently approve the revision to remake the video why the changes were not part of the initial revision. Although most agreed that the political climate had changed but most believed that the cost outweighed the benefit since in its present form it is difficult to catch and hear the comment. The members felt there was no basis to suggest that the comment solicited affiliation with any outside entity or political concern, that this comment taken in the time the video was first released was just a comment by a participant in an A.A. meeting with no cause for concern or further merit of consideration. The committee recommended against making the changes to the video.

#### D. Review contents of Treatment Facilities Kit and Workbook

**Action:** Background material was shared. The 2010 Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities reviewed the Treatment Facilities Kit and Workbook and suggested the following changes/additions be made where fiscally feasible:

1. The DVD "Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous" be added in a hole-punched vinyl sleeve instead of in the current jewel box casing.
2. The "Young People's" video to be included in the kit as a suggested tool for use with young people in treatment.
3. That suggestion for use of the two DVDs and the A.A. Grapevine be included in the Kit.
4. That changes be made in the Treatment Facilities Workbook to reflect that the A.A. message is carried to alcoholics in a wide variety of treatment settings, including outpatient settings.

In addition, the Committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities develop two sample Bridging the Gap forms (one (1) for treatment clients and one (1) for A.A. members willing to serve as temporary contacts), taking into consideration examples from local committees already using such forms. Forms would also eventually be included in the Treatment Facilities Workbook. It was reported that prior to the assembly Terry S., Delegate, Area 40 had requested that the committee forward to him sample forms currently utilized in Area 40 BTG so that he may take with him to share when at the General Service Conference.

Two other requests that were discussed by the committee but not included in their formal report to the 2010 General Service Conference were: 1) breaking out the list of Kit contents into one list in each language; and 2) creating a list of suggestions for the section of the kit that has a tab called 'Local Experience.'

The committee reviewed the agenda item and expressed that the current Workbook/Kit should be a living document with guidelines and suggestions that presently members felt adequately provided guidance and suggestions to those involved in Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities service work. The current Workbook/Kit we believe met those objectives of its intended purpose and the changes proposed are recommended. The cost of additional items was not considered, or costs were minimal given the amount of Workbooks/Kits distributed.

**E.** Review Contents of Special Needs/Accessibilities Kit and Workbook

**Action:** Background material was shared. Kits and Workbooks for C.P.C., Corrections, Public Information, Treatment Facilities, and Special Needs/Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate Conference Committees during each General Service Conference. The 2010 Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities reviewed the Special Needs Kit and Workbook and suggested that:

1. The kit be incorporated in a three-ring binder instead of the current pocket folder to achieve parity with other service kits.
2. "Shared experience with carrying the A.A. message to those with less visible challenges such as illiteracy, autism, etc., be gathered and added to the Special Needs Workbook when feasible.

In an Activity Update from G.S.O Treatment Facilities and Special Needs Accessibilities staff member to Special Needs/ Accessibilities Committee chairs the following information was included: At the 2010 General Service Conference , the Special Needs/Accessibilities Kit be made available in a 3-ring Binder and sold at the same price as other service committee kits. The binders have been ordered, and should arrive in the office at the end of October. When assembled, a complimentary Kit will be sent to all area Committee chairs. The price of the Kit will be \$12; product No. M-48; color burgundy. (The previous pocket folder 'Kit' format was not priced and not available for purchase).

The committee did not review the contents of the Special Needs/Accessibilities Kit but agreed that the kit is a useful tool and should be a living document that incorporated changes as they are identified.

The second committee assignment was to review and discuss items on the 2011 **General Service Conference Committees – Conference Agenda Committee**

The standing area committee recognized that they had little or no voice but merely to report to the assembly body those items on the Conference Agenda Committee to the Area 40 Assembly body.

**A.** Review suggestions for the theme of the 2012 General Service Conference.

**Action:** Background material was shared with all members in attendance. The list of previous General Service Conference themes from 1966-2011 was shared and included were 67 suggested themes for the 2012 General service Conference. Members present were asked to review the list and make a selection on the list provided. Of those members reviewing and expressing a preference of the suggested themes, "Come for Sobriety; Stay for Life" 9 (13 preferred), "Gratitude – An Action Word"(1 preferred) we among those chosen with the preference give to the first item listed above.

**B.** Discuss presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2012 General Service Conference.

1. Discuss presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2012 G.S.C.

**Action:** Background material was shared with all members with suggested topics for the 2012 General Service Conference. Members present were asked to review the list and make a selection on the list provided. Of those members reviewing and expressing a preference of the suggested topics, “Life is More than Sobriety”(5 preferred), “Young People in A.A.”(1), “The Spirit of Rotation as it Affects A.A. as a Whole”(1 preferred), “In Action; The Only Way in Alcoholics Anonymous” (1 preferred), “Keep It Simple” (1 preferred), “Does the voice of A.A. members reach the Conference”(1 preferred), “Singleness of Purpose” (1 preferred), “Carrying the A.A. Message in the Digital Age” (1 preferred), “Never Too Old or Too Sober for service Work” (1 preferred), “Sponsorship – Paying it Forward” (1 preferred), Importance of Service in A.A.” (1 preferred).

2. Consider reducing the number of presentation/discussion topics planned for the 2012 General Service Conference.

**Action:** Background material was shared with all members in attendance. The list of previous presentations 1985-2011 was shared and included were 139 suggested topics for the 2012 General Service Conference. It was noted that previous General Service Conferences had from 3 to 5 topic suggestion with 4 to 5 under each topic as workshop breakouts. Consider reducing the workshops in order for the General Service Conference inventory process allowing ample time to discuss, report and share on the findings and recommendations. It is proposed that this process be done over three (3) consecutive years beginning in 2013 thru 2015.

Excerpts, from the trustee’s Committee on the G.S.C. October 30, 2010 meeting:

The committee reviewed the schedule for the Conference week and noted that the following changes have been implemented to improve the flow of the Conference and allow sufficient time for committee reports and Conference business:

- a. The G.S.C. begins on Sunday morning.
- b. The trip to the G.S.O./Grapevine offices on Tuesday is scheduled for every other year, alternating with the visit to Stepping Stones on Saturday. In 2011 members will visit G.S.O./Grapevine Offices.
- c. The Remote Communities Meeting (not on to the G.S.C. week agenda, will meet on Saturday.
- d. Committee reports begin Wednesday afternoon rather than Wednesday evening.
- e. A *revised* Floor Action procedure has been implemented.
- f. A full archives presentation is schedule for every other year.

Presentation/Discussion topic is schedule for the Sunday afternoon session.

h. International presentation moved to Sunday, this change facilitates and additional hour allotted for committee reports.

Memo from Don Miller, Conference Inventory Planning Committee, 1/21/2011. After Reviewing the Conference Inventory Planning Committee (CIPC’s) proposed Conference Inventory Plan to be forwarded to the 2011 General Service Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions, it was suggested that we let you know some of it, if approved, will directly affect the conference planning process.

We thought early warning of the following excerpted sections of the Conference Inventory Planning Committee’s proposed Inventory Plan would be of specific interest to the Conference Agenda Committee:

A. Location and Calendar:

The inventory be conducted at the General Service Conference.

The inventory take place at three (3) consecutive Conferences: 2013, 2014 and 2015 implementing a three (3) year plan.

B. Schedule:

Inventory be conducted during the regular Conference week, using the time allotted for the Workshop for group meetings.

At least two of the topic presentation time slots be combined for groups to report back to the full Conference body followed by full Conference sharing.

The members of the committee expressed acceptance of this item stating it would allow the General Service Conference body, and committees ample time for discussion, review and sharing of the findings, or recommendations.

**C: Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2012 General Service Conference.**

**Action:** Background material was shared with all members in attendance. A list of 133 workshop topics was presented and reviewed as well as past Workshop Topics from 1985-2011. The committee reviewed the list but made no preferences, but was mindful of the previous item and the need for the General Service Conference to conduct its' inventory as requested by the fellowship.

**D: Review the General Service Conference Evaluation Form.**

**Action:** Background material was shared with all members in attendance. The committee discussed briefly that the evaluation form is a useful tool for evaluating the overall effectiveness of any event and that useful and helpful comments are always welcomed to improve the experience or processes. The committee did notice that the form is quite lengthy, 11 pages, and suggested that may be an electronic version be made available which may help collate and capture comments more quickly.

**E: Consider a request the trustees' Conference Committee meet annually with the Conference Committee on Agenda and the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions to address matters concerning the Conference agenda and Conference Policy.**

**Action:** Background material was shared with all members in attendance. Terry S. attended this portion of the breakout session to discuss and hear concerns regarding this item.

**Background notes:**

Excerpts from January 29, 2011 trustee's Committee on the Conference Minutes:

"The committee **agreed to forward** to the 2011 Conference Agenda Committee a request that the trustees' Conference Committee meet annually with the Conference Committee on Agenda and the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions to address matters concerning the Conference Agenda and Conference Policy and that these

meetings take place prior to the January General service Board meeting. It is expected that the Conference Agenda Committee address only that portion of the request that pertains to the Conference Agenda Committee.

From the Conference Committee on Agenda 2009 Report:

“ It was recommended that the following be the workshop topic for the 2010 General Service Conference: “Discuss the General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process”, and that all background provided to the 2009 Conference Agenda Committee regarding the General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process,” be sent to the members of the 60<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference in February 2010 as background for the 2010 Conference workshop session along with any additional, related background material that may be compiled by the General service Board, the trustees’ Committee on the Conference, the General Service Office, or there sources.”

From January 31, 2009 trustees’ Committee on the Conference minutes:

“The committee considered a request that the Trustees’ Conference Committee meet annually with the Conference Committee on Agenda and the Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions to address matters concerning the Conference agenda and Conference Policy and that these meetings palace prior to the January General Service Board meeting. The committee directed that the proposal be forwarded as accompanying background to the Conference Committee on Agenda as part of the ‘Subcommittee on Coordination of Agenda Items’ background.

From 1993 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions:

“In order for groups/districts/areas to fully participate in the Conference process, the following steps be taken:

- a) Conference agenda items be submitted as early as possible but no later than  
January 25 each year.
- b) Final Conference committee agendas be automatically sent to all Conference  
members by February 15 each year.
- c) Background material for each specific committee be sent to its members  
by February 15 each year, with the other committees’ background material  
available upon request.”

From the 1973 Conference Agenda/Admissions Committee:

“It was recommended that:

All delegates try to get suggestions for the 1974 agenda to the Conference secretary by November 15, 1973.

“The Conference declined to approve the following:

- a. That the Agenda/Admissions Committee participate, as a committee, in the final approval of suggested agenda items and their distribution to the various committees, etc., and no longer be restricted to just making recommendations.’

b. That the Trustees study the feasibility of the Agenda/Admissions Committee hold a full committee meeting for the proper and adequate evaluation and deliberation of suggested Conference items, including selection of the Conference theme and the evaluation of the preceding Conference agenda, prior to the Conference.”

A letter from Doug Richardson, assistant secretary,, General Service Board, was read and discussed in response to a letter from John T. past delegate, panel 58, Area 63. The letter acknowledges that at August 1, 2010 meeting the General Service Board Trustee Sharing Session referred the two your (John T.) proposals (bulleted below) back to the trustees Conference Committee for further consideration and disposition.

- “That a formal relationship be developed between the Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions and the Trustee’s Conference Committee to address matters of policy relating to the Conference.”
- “That the Trustees Conference Committee meet annually with the Conference Committee on Agenda and the Conference Committee on Policy and Admission to address matters concerning the Conference Agenda and Conference Policy and that these meeting take place prior to the January General service Board meeting.”

Terry S. explained the rationale behind the item and more communication is what is needed, that amending our current process would require the delegate (if on this committee) would need to meet a couple more times a year to decide what goes on the agenda. It was suggested that video conferencing might be a viable alternative to face to face meetings. It was asked by the committee what is the downside to not acting of this agenda item. It was stated that it would be status quo, but more importantly is that agenda items should be afforded equitable representation and discussion including input from the delegates and not just left up to General Service Office staff for the placement of an item to the Conference Agenda. The committee agreed that there should be more communication and representation with respect to the selection and placement of items submitted to the annual General Service Conference. The committee recommended that the request should be pursued.

#### **Other Discussion:**

Colby D. opened discussion and asked “While General Service Conference agenda items and business is important “What would the committee like to see discussed at Area 40 Spring Assembly breakout to help you as Treatment Chair for your district.”

Reponses included: Role playing – how to make the approach to a treatment center entity, what to say and what not to say. It was noted that the workbook had helpful suggestions but members felt actually doing the exercise would be more helpful rather than just reading the information and suggestion.

Members of the committee were tasked with going back to their home districts and groups and ask members what they would like to see being done in the areas of Treatment to ensure that our message of recovery is carried and communicated to the still suffering alcoholic. Colby D. stated that he would be willing to make trips throughout Area 40 to be in attendance at district meetings to answer questions or help gain access to treatment facilities where A.A. could be needed. For contact information and questions please call 406-860-8158 cell, 406-373-8013 ofc., or email Colby D. at [jcolbydinges@aol.com](mailto:jcolbydinges@aol.com) or via the Area 40 website “Treatment Chair”.

The discussion was lively and effective. Thank you again for all your participation and input for the Treatment Facilities breakout session. The meeting concluded with “Lord’s Prayer” Area 40 Treatment Chair, Colby D.



Archives/Structure-Joe H.

Archives

**Item A: Review Workbook.**

All reviewed and looks fine.

Area 40 Structure & Policy

**A. Consider Area 40 Ad Hoc Committee's draft of "Qualifications for Area Committee members" (tabled from Fall 2010 Committee meeting)**

The Archives committee recommends that Area 40 adopt the qualifications as drafted by the ad hoc committee, using the wording "suggested" in the wording for computer connectivity and skills for general qualifications.

For 72, Against 9 **Motion Passes** with no minority opinion

**B. Consider Area 40 AdHoc Committee's proposed protocol and time line for Area 40 to conduct an inventory of itself.**

The Archives committee recommends that Area 40 implement the proposed procedure for an Area 40 Inventory, to be carried out at the Fall 2011 Area Assembly. The questions from the ad hoc committee will be used for this inventory and disseminated immediately following the Spring 2011 Assembly. For 72, Against 0 **Motion Passes**

The Archives committee recommends that an Area 40 Inventory be conducted every 4 years at the Fall Assembly, beginning with the 2011, and carried on in 2015, etc. The questions will be disseminated 5 months prior to the inventory through area communications, including the Spring Assembly minutes, Area 40 Triangle and Area 40 Website. For 81, Against 1 **Motion Passes**

**ADHOC COMMITTEE PROPOSAL**

The ad hoc committee proposes the following:

That Area 40 conducts an inventory of itself at the 2011 Area 40 Fall Assembly. The inventory will be conducted during the Saturday afternoon session of the Assembly, lasting from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The four hour time period will consist of two and one half hours of four small group discussions answering four questions each. One question from each of the following headings: (Groups/Districts, Individual /Participation/Attendance, Committees/Committee Chairs/Officers, Area Assembly) on the question list. The Area Chair will appoint a moderator for each group as well as a recorder to take notes on discussions and report to the whole assembly during the later session. We want to be mindful of the make-up of the small groups, trying to the best of our ability to make sure the small groups are as consistent as possible. (E.g. same number of GSR's, DCM's, Officers and Committee Chairs, Guests and Past Delegates, also striving to get adequate representation from all districts on each of the small groups) The last one and one half hour of the inventory will be done as a whole assembly report on the questions and allowing for additional discussion from the floor. The Area Chairperson shall appoint a non-voting member to moderate this session. All notes and reports from the small groups along with notes of any additional discussions will be given to a special secretary, appointed by the Area Chairperson, who will make a complete report and provide it to the Area Secretary to be included with the Assembly minutes as well as providing a copy of the report to the "TRIANGLE" Editor for publication and distribution to the groups. These

results will also be published on the Area 40 Web Page under the heading of "2011 Inventory Results."

The questions to be used for the Inventory will be available at the 2011 Area 40 Spring Assembly and will be distributed to the DCM's, the Area Secretary, for inclusion in the minutes, as well as a copy given to the "TRIANGLE" Editor for publication and published on the Web Page under a special heading "2011 Inventory Questions". This should allow adequate time for input and shared experience from past participants at the Area Assembly as well allowing the most preparation time for the GSR's and others who will be participating in the inventory process.

As it states in the "Big Book" an inventory is a fact finding and a fact facing process, therefore the ad-hoc committee ask that we not take any action from the inventory without careful thought, consideration and discussion and we always remember to place principles before personalities.

The Ad-Hoc committee recommends that the inventory become an on-going, regularly scheduled item on the Fall Assembly Agenda, every four years. Questions for the future inventories are to be determined by the Area Chairperson from: submittals from groups, an ad-hoc committee or from shared experience from other Areas and the General Service Conference. The request for questions needs to be made at the Fall Assembly, one year prior to the proposed inventory, so that there is adequate time for response from the groups. Once the questions are determined, no later than the Area 40 Spring Assembly prior to the proposed inventory, they will be published in the Area 40 Spring Assembly minutes, the Area 40 "Triangle" and be published under the heading of "\_\_\_\_ Area Inventory Questions" on the Area 40 Web Page. We also suggest that the Area Chairperson appoint a non-voting member as a moderator for any future inventories, to allow for complete participation, and an inventory secretary to record and report the results of any future inventories.

Respectfully submitted, Area Inventory Ad-Hoc Committee

### **AREA 40 INVENTORY QUESTIONS**

#### **GROUPS/DISTRICTS**

- **Is Area 40 represented by all districts in Area 40? If not, what is being tried to encourage participation by those groups or districts not yet represented?**
- **Are we doing a good job of aiding the flow of information to all the different entities of our service structure?**
- **Considerable expense is incurred in presenting Conference reports to the districts across Area 40 with seemingly low participation and attendance. What can we do to correct this or can our funds and efforts be spent more productively?**
- **Is the business of Area 40 being carried out just at assemblies, or is its' business being recognized by AA groups in Area 40 the year round?**

#### **INDIVIDUAL/PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE**

- **Are we attracting new people to participate in the Area 40 service structure in an enthusiastic way or are we boring them? If not, what could we do to improve this?**
- **Is the Area Assembly attracting Alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our AA community?**
- **Do we effectively integrate new people into the Area Assembly?**

- Do we as members of the Area Assembly, come to participate? What can the Area do to help us be better prepared?

#### COMMITTEES/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- What has the Area Assembly done lately to bring the AA message to the attention of professionals in the communities—the physician, clergy, court, law enforcement officials, educators and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?
- Mindful that holding an office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our area officers with care? What could we do differently?
- In recent years, we have very seldom had the Area Committee Chairs asked to put on workshops in Districts. Why is this?
- The “Triangle” is a source of considerable expense for Area 40. Is it effective in helping us to carry the message or has it outlived its usefulness. What could we do differently?

#### AREA ASSEMBLY

- Are we upholding our ‘primary purpose’, to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic? What more can the area do to carry this message?
- Are the steps, traditions, and concepts governing our decisions and actions when we conduct business at the assembly?
- Is the Area Assembly effective in communicating information between the General Service Conference and the Groups?
- **How can Area 40 more effectively conduct its' business?**

C. Consider the following additions to the Area 40 Policy and Procedures:

1. In the event that the Delegate resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Area Chair/Alternate Delegate shall become the Delegate.
2. In the event that the Area Chair/Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, or Secretary resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Area Advisor shall assume these duties until the next Area Assembly. A Third Legacy Election shall take place at the next Area Assembly to fill the vacancy. All current and past Area Committee Members are eligible to stand.
3. In the event that the Area Advisor resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Area Chair shall appoint a Past Delegate to complete the rotation.

The Archives committee recommends that Area 40 add the following three items to the policy and procedures manual.

**In the event that the delegate resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Area Chair/alternate Delegate shall become the Delegate. In the event that the Area Chair/ Alternate delegate becomes unable to serve, the Area Secretary shall become the Area Chair/alternate delegate. In the event that the Treasurer or Secretary resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Area Advisor shall assume those duties until the next Area Assembly. A Third legacy election shall take place at the next Area Assembly to fill the vacancy.**

Discussion was varied, it was noted that a past delegate cannot serve again as delegate. Linda commented that she wouldn't have stood for the secretary position had she known that it meant being committed to be AreaChair/Alt. Delegate or Delegate if something happened to those people and they had to step down. Joe commented that while this might not be a perfect situation, it puts a policy in place where there isn't one. Maybe it is time to split the Area Chair/ Alt. Delegate into two positions. For 82, Against 12 **Motion Passes**

Corrections/Intrn'l-Regional Forums-Terry H.

Secretary Brandon M.-DCM 11 9 members were present

**A) Review progress report from trustees' Committee on Corrections on revising the pamphlet " it sure beats sitting in cell."**

-We reviewed the progress report. We would ask that the committee be inclusive of young people in Corrections Facilities-perhaps including stories from young people in correctional facilities.

**B) Consider adding references to the Big Book in the pamphlet "AA Correctional Facilities", including a proposed section describing Big Book Studies as a possible meeting format.**

Background included an email from a member suggesting more references to the Big Book and pointed out that the step meeting referred to studying the 12 and 12 not our basic text, and there was no mention of a Big Book Study as a possible meeting format in Correctional Facilities.

The committee agreed that there should be more references to the Big Book in the pamphlet and that Big Book Studies should be included as a meeting format.

**C) Review contents of Corrections Kit and Workbook.**

-we reviewed the contents and found them acceptable

International Conventions/Regional Forums/Local

**A. Discuss report on the 2010 International Convention in San Antonio, Texas.  
Financial results:**

Income: \$5,212,650 Expenses: \$4,362,227 Profit: \$850,453.

**B. Discuss ways to encourage interest in Forums and how areas communicate about upcoming Forums in their region.**

Local Forum- Scott W. asked the committee for input regarding the local Forum. Jim M., who serves at the GSO corrections committee Desk and is presenting at the Local Forum, has asked for some specific direction regarding information about GSO that might be helpful to share at the forum.

Here are some of the topics discussed:

- 1) Information regarding the translation of literature into different languages.
- 2) Shared experience about individuals with a criminal background being allowed into correctional facilities.
- 3) If we send an email to GSO, what is the process for getting the email answered?

Finance- Lori F.

The Finance Committee was represented by Terry S., Area 40 Delegate, Sharon S., Area 40 Chair/Alt. Delegate, Sandy A., DCM-12 and Rebecca S., DR-61. I would like to thank Rebecca S. for helping me take notes. We also had five additional members sit in on and participate in our meeting. The meeting was opened with the Serenity Prayer, followed by discussion of the agenda. Because there were no Area 40 items on which to vote, Lori decided to include all ten people in attendance in taking a “sense of the meeting” rather than a “sense of the committee.”

**A. Review update from the trustees’ Finance Committee on gathering personal stories drawn from the Fellowship that humanize the impact of Seventh Tradition monies for the purpose of communicating with the Fellowship about self-support.**

- This item resulted from an action passed at the 2010 General Service Conference.
- To date, five stories and sharing from Area 48 have been submitted.
- There is no specific information in the background indicating how or where this material would be used.
- No strong opinions regarding this material were expressed. It was observed that a few of the stories and comments did not seem to address the subject matter.
- More will be revealed.
- 

**B. Consider two alternative suggestions of ways to revise the pamphlet F-3 “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” forwarded from the trustees’ Finance Committee.**

- The first alternative was on the agenda in 2010, and was recommitted to the 2011 Conference Committee on Finance for consideration.
- The second alternative is a request from Area 29 – Maryland.
- The main reason behind these requests seems to be that most don’t treat the included pie charts for splits as suggestions but as “the way it is supposed to be done.”

We discussed both alternatives, and most thought that changing the pamphlet would have little to no effect on the way groups decided to do splits. The sense of the meeting was unanimously opposed to changing the pamphlet. The sense of the area was to make no changes.

**C. Consider a request “that the trustees’ Finance Committee develop a Finance Workbook, a draft of which is to be made available for the 2012 General Service Conference, to assist group, intergroup/central offices, district and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition.”**

- This request was received from Area 29 – Maryland.
- Because this item seemed to be related to agenda item D, we discussed these two items at the same time.
-

**D. Consider a request “that the trustees’ Finance Committee convert Self-Support packet F-19 to a comprehensive Finance Kit.”**

- Item was also proposed by Area 29 – Maryland.
- A list of items suggested to be included in both the workbook and the kit, as well as a list of items available for use in Finance Service work was included.

Many in the meeting were supportive of these items, saying that they would be particularly helpful to new groups, and that everyone could benefit from advice on setting up bank accounts, getting a TIN and dealing with non-profit issues. It was also seen as a benefit to have this information consolidated in a kit. Others thought that it seemed like this was just envy of other committees that had kits and workbooks, and also that all the material suggested to be included in these items was readily available to anyone who wanted it. It didn’t seem like a prudent use of funds to those opposed. Surprisingly, the sense of the meeting differed for the two items: 6-4 in favor of developing a workbook, and 8-2 in favor of developing a kit. The conscience of the area was that there was a pretty equal split about the two items.

**E. Discuss the list forwarded from the 2010 Conference Finance Committee for additional ways to communicate about self-support:**

1. **Birthday Plan**
2. **Seventh Tradition Pamphlet**
3. **Box 4-5-9 or Grapevine Articles**
4. **Finance Workbook/Tool Kit**
5. **Report Costs of Services to Members**
6. **Discuss Effects of Inflation**
7. **Add Additional Financial Information to the Web Site**

We talked in depth about the birthday plan, not only at the GSO level but at the Area, District and Group levels as well. We also discussed the current information available on the AA website and found it to be useful. At service functions, we are often “preaching to the choir,” but we all realize that it is our responsibility to communicate this information to all in the fellowship.

We talked about making groups aware of the costs of services, and that all groups are not able to contribute enough to be self-supporting at all levels, particularly new groups. We discussed trying not to rely on literature sales to support services as we move further into a digital age. Individuals are reminded that they can contribute to all service entities – spread the word. Funds earmarked for specific services, such as the Pink Can and our Area Archivist’s account, may be due for some consideration – agenda items, anyone? Last, but not least, it was stressed that we need to financially support the services we request.

Respectfully submitted, Lori F.

Grapevine-Policy & Admissions-Carol B.

Area 40 Grapevine Committee

Carole B., Acting Committee Chair

Anne B., DCM, District 61

Duane C., DCM, District 42

Andrew M., District Representative, District 72

Guests: Brian (note taker extraordinaire), Daniel M., Lee T., Victor and Earl F.

Grapevine

**Item A. Consider that AA Grapevine Inc. be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies such as but not limited to smart phones, tablets, e-reader, applications, and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books, and products.**

Discussed the issue in regards to financial (revenue generation), distribution, and adhering to our Primary Purpose and 12 Traditions. This item has been proposed since 1993. The committee was concerned about the appearance of affiliation with the commissionable.

The Committee was unanimously opposed to this consideration. The sense of the area is that more are against this.

**Item B. Consider permitting AA Grapevine Inc to accept contributions limited to the same General Service Board contribution policy, to be used for operation expenses with excess funds continuing to be forwarded to the Reserve Fund.**

The Grapevine currently generates financial support through Grapevine subscriptions and Grapevine literature sales and does not accept contributions. We discussed many ways of increasing subscriptions and the recent survey that many people stated they love the Grapevine but do not subscribe. Is the current subscription price at the level that the Grapevine is solvent? Is this earmarking contributions or are we exercising the power of the purse?

The Committee was split on this issue. Discussion: Where does the deficient come out of? Carol stated that funds come out of the reserve fund. Is there ways of making contributions directly to Grapevine Inc? No, it is through the Grapevine magazine and related materials for sale.

**Item C. Review request for a discussion on how to best support the Grapevine magazine. Throughout the committee meeting we discussed how to best support the Grapevine. A few were: buying subscriptions for the group to sell, for jails, doctor's offices, or newcomers.**

**Item D. Consider collections of Grapevine stories for possible publication in the year 2012 or later. Three new Grapevine books were proposed – Working the Program; Happy, Joyous and Free; and Young and New to AA. There was a large amount of profit generated with the book, "Came to Believe".**

The Committee was unanimously in favor of this item. The sense of the area is that we are in favor of these publications.

**Item E. Review and discuss the results of the survey conducted per the 2010 Advisory Action.**

An advisory action of 60<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, asked the Delegates to survey their areas with four questions: What is the value of the Grapevine magazine?; How do you see the Grapevine magazine?; what would you like to change about the Grapevine magazine?; and what do you think the purpose of the Grapevine magazine should be?

With the electronic age, right or wrong the delegates communicate much more than before in between conferences. As a result of this communication, the four approved conference questions morphed into two pages. Much work was put into collecting the data and developing the report.

The Area 40 Grapevine Committee questioned the validity of survey. Specifically, is the survey statistically valid? Interesting points throughout the survey was that those who spoke highly of the Grapevine were not subscribers.

This was a review item and we did not vote.

**Item F. Review revisions to “The A.A., Grapevine and La Vina: Our Meetings in Print” pamphlet.**

Gary said at the Pre-Assembly these were housekeeping items and all were good.

**Item G. Review contents of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook**

No one had a Grapevine workbook so we didn't review it.

Policy and Admissions

- A. Approve admission to the 2011 General Service Conference of Ron Foor, alternate delegate, Area 22, Northern Indiana, in place of Donald Sheets, the Panel 61 Delegate for Area 22**
- B. Approve request for two members from the General Service Structure of Peru to attend the 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference as observers.**
- C. Approve request for two members from the General Service Structure of Great Britain to attend the 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference.**

Item A, B, and C

These are housekeeping issues for the Conference.

**Item D. Discuss request to change the deadline for the submission of Conference agenda items.**

Discussed the agenda process and GSO staffers compiling background information for distribution to the delegates. Some items are considered sensitive and will only be provided to the GSC Committee Members such as new pamphlets etc. More time may be beneficial but we felt the process in Area 40 worked well.

We did not take a vote on this item.

**Item E. Consider the comprehensive plan and estimated cost from the Conference Inventory Planning Committee for the General Service Conference to conduct a thorough inventory of itself.**

An advisory action of the 60<sup>th</sup> GSC, established a planning committee to outline a process for consideration by the 61<sup>st</sup> GSC. The 17 member committee outlined a plan which addressed the logistics, participation, reporting, finance, and listed inventory questions. The plan is very comprehensive and proposes that the inventory be conducted at the GSC in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The inventory will take the place as workshop topics.

The committee felt that those who have attended the GSC would be better equipped to decide when and how to plan the GSC's inventory.

**Item F. Review dates for the 2014 General Service Conference**

The date proposed for the 2014 GSC is either April 27 – May 3 or May 4 – May 10.



The committee felt living in today was better than planning something 3 years from now. One day at a time. A question was asked whether or not the Charter specified that the Conference be held in April. Upon further investigation, the Charter only specifies that the Conference shall be held yearly. Other places in the Service Manual that are not binding, discuss the Conference being held in April.

**Item G. Discuss request that a formal relationship be developed between the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions and the trustees' Conference Committee to address matters of policy relating to the Conference.**

We spent time looking at the background information trying to find the need for this item. We came up with that it sounds like there needs to be more communication.

**Item H. Consider suggestions that the Conference Committee on Archives meet outside of the time allotted for their joint committee meeting with the trustees' Committee on Archives.**

Currently, the Archives Committee is currently a secondary committee assignment. They meet jointly with the trustees committee on Archives and not as a conference committee. The proposal is to make Archives a Conference Committee.

Much restructuring would be needed to make this happen. Each current conference committee would have fewer delegates on each committee.

The Committee felt that it those who served on the Archives committee are more familiar with the workload. The agenda item was submitted by the current Archives Committee Chair

**Item I. Review report from the General Service Board regarding Concept V Appeal to the General Service Conference.**

A floor action at the 60<sup>th</sup> GSC recommitted the request for development of procedures for the submission of Concept V minority appeals to the GSC taking into account considerations expressed at the 60<sup>th</sup> GSC and a report be forwarded to the 61<sup>st</sup> Conference Committee.

The report was very thorough and the process outlined was easy to follow.

Literature-Mary M.

The Literature committee present: Jim B DR 51, Joe L DR 42, Bob T DR 61, Jay T DCM 93, we also had six other AA's participated in the meeting. Thank you Bill H from District 91 for taking notes.

**Agenda Item A:**

**Review the revised draft pamphlet "The AA Member—Medication and other Drugs"**

Mailed only to the Conference Literature Committee to review, nothing to review.

Background Information:

- Came from Area 20 Northern Illinois in 2006 to bring up to current members experiences [copyright 1984, 27 years old]
- Became an Advisory Action [a Conference Advisory Action is recommendations from the Conference committees, or floor actions, that have been approved by the Conference body as a whole with substantial unanimity] in 2007 and the committee agreed that the Publications Department would begin the revision.
- Sent back to committee several times for revision to reflect the suggestions provided by the General Service Conference and TLC will be looking at a final draft at the 2011 Conference

Review of Literature Committee Report dated February 3, 2011:

- a subcommittee was assigned to review and define the intent and scope of the pamphlet
- carefully considered the usefulness, diversity, and voice of the pamphlet
- suggest a change in order of stories, medications first and other drugs effect on AA members sobriety
- suggest a new introduction to the pamphlet
- subcommittee agreed a helpful tool for professionals and suggested a couple paragraphs could be added 'Note to Professionals' to explain AA members relationship with medical professionals and medications
- subcommittee agreed information in pamphlet not available in other AA literature and is a helpful tool for AA members with questions about medications and information for professionals
- it was agreed that the pamphlet provides information on AA experience on the following three basic points:
  1. Acceptance of the use of prescribed medication when necessary
  2. Caution against misuse or abuse of medications
  3. Caution on the effects of other drugs on AA members sobriety

#### **Agenda Item B:**

**Review progress report from the trustees Literature committee on the development of literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.** [This topic has been ongoing for some 20 years.]

2010 Conference recommendation was recommitted to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature and moved they develop Conference-approved literature that focuses on spirituality and includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous and bring a draft or progress report to the 2011 Conference Committee on Literature.

Progress Report Notes:

A subcommittee was appointed in July 2010 to plan how to proceed. They agreed that a pamphlet was a likely option. The target audience for the pamphlet would be the alcoholic newcomer who struggles with the spiritual aspect of the program. In addition, it could be used as a resource for professionals with questions about the subject.

A solicitation for stories was mailed to all Conference members and published in the Holiday 2010 issue of *Box 459*. The announcement asked for stories that reflect the wide range of spiritual experiences of A.A. members and how members with any belief or non-belief have found a solution to the concept of spirituality and sobriety in A.A. for the literature under development. Deadline for stories was February 15, 2011

From Julio, secretary for the Conference Literature committee: By the February 15 deadline, we received 198 stories.

The committee agreed that we reviewed the progress report.

**Agenda Item C:**

**Review progress report from the trustees' Literature Committee on the revision of the pamphlet "AA and the Armed Services.** [first print 1974, updated 2003]

Came from Area 75 Southern Wisconsin September 2009 wanting a pamphlet that includes Veterans not just active duty military.

The 2010 Conference Advisory Action recommended that the trustees Literature Committee update the pamphlet *AA and the Armed Services* to include recent experiences from members on active duty and a section which focuses on Veterans of the armed services and that a new title reflects this.

Progress Report:

A subcommittee was appointed in July 2010. They agreed that new stories would reflect more recent experiences related to AA members in the Armed Services who got sober during or after active duty.

- Solicitation for new stories was mailed to all Conference members and published in the Holiday 2010 Box 459. Recent Stories from the Grapevine will be considered also. [Deadline was February 2011 and SO FAR 15 stories were submitted as of March 2011 and the committee agreed to extend the story solicitations deadline to July 15, 2011 to encourage more submissions]
- New title recommendation

1. "We don't leave anybody behind" Active Duty and Veterans-AA Stories

2. Active Duty and Veterans-AA Stories "We don't leave anybody behind"

- They will decide which existing stories stay.
- Question & Answer section be updated and question should be forwarded to all members who submitted their stories.

Notes: **Deadline Extension for Story Solicitation-A.A. and the Armed Services** pamphlets:

In December of 2010, a call went out for new stories to update the pamphlet *A.A. and the Armed Services*, with a deadline of February 2011. **The deadline has now been extended to July 15, 2011.** This request for stories was in response to the 2010 General Service recommendation "the trustees' Committee on Literature to update the pamphlet *A.A. and the Armed Services* to include recent experiences from members in active duty and a section which focuses on veterans of the armed service....", the trustees' Literature Committee is seeking stories from AA members.

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double-spaced. On a separate sheet of paper, please include your name, address, telephone number, and email address, as well as the project you are submitting your story for.

The committee did not care for the recommended titles. We felt like "We don't leave anybody behind" was too much; sounds like a marine slogan.

**Agenda Item D:**

## Review draft revisions to the *Living Sober* booklet [1975]

Came from a group that has been meeting for 20 years called Wednesday Night Living Sober Group of AA in San Francisco, December 2009.

Not available to us for review. Sent to the trustees' Literature Committee only.

Background notes

The trustees Literature Committee suggested some updating in 1997 but it never became an advisory action. In 1998 they did add an appendix containing sections from the pamphlet *The AA Member—Medications and Other Drugs*. In January 2010, the committee agreed to forward to the Conference Committee on Literature a request to review the booklet *Living Sober*. It was then recommended that the publications department review and focus on outdated language or practices and present a draft in October 2010. A few changes were suggested and in January 2011, the committee agreed to forward the final draft to the 2011 Conference.

From managing editor to the trustees' Literature Committee September 2010

**From:** Eleanor Widdoes, managing editor

**Re:** *Living Sober*, review and update

---

In rereading *Living Sober* for review I was again struck by the kind and gentle approach – almost a folksy style. There is a real sense of one alcoholic talking to another.

In order to preserve this style, changes and suggestions were minimal.

- Outdated terms and usage were changed, e.g. names of some drinks were changed; pulmonologist replaced "chest doctor;" eye-opener was changed to "morning drink" (as it was in a pamphlet awhile back).
- A few awkward (or sometimes preachy) phrases were modified.
- Serenity Prayer updated to our style.
- Updated book titles to our style-italics, not quotation marks.
- Certain material was updated to reflect current usage, e.g. e-mail, online meetings, drugs etc. This was done by one of our writers, who rewrote several sentences and/or paragraphs.

### **Queries for committee consideration:**

As we all know, the Appendix is from "The A.A. Member-Medications and Other Drugs," which is also being reviewed.

The Twelve Steps do not appear in this booklet, although they are referred to on page 83. Since this material is addressed to beginners it might be important to print the Steps on the last page.

Agenda Item E:

Consider suggestion to replace the text under "When you're a G.S.R." in the pamphlet "*G.S.R. General Service Representative.*"

From Area 12, Delaware dated January 2010

**Proposal:** "To revise the current GSR pamphlet to more accurately reflect historical references to this service position."

**Under the opening paragraph:** *When you are a G.S.R.* that presently reads: "You are linking your home group with the whole of AA. Back in 1953, when the "group contact" was suggested as a new type of trusted servant, the job was seen simply as a good means of exchanging up-to-date information....."

The reference to the year is incorrect

The publications department worked with the archives department at GSO to research the history and it has been proposed to replace that portion of the paragraph with:

"You are linking your home group with the whole of AA. In 1950, a new trusted servant, "group representative," was suggested to help in the selection of delegates to the newly-formed General Service Conference. By 1953, the job of "group representative" was also seen as a good means of exchanging up-to-date information..."

This suggested revised text corrects reference to trusted servant position title "group contact" and adds historically accurate information that the position of "group representative" had been discussed prior to 1953 which Frank Z., Area 12 Delegate has seen and agrees with the changes.

Our committee agrees this should be changed to reflect correct historical information in the pamphlet.

#### **Agenda Item F:**

**Consider a request to develop an item similar to the Self-Support or "green card" to help promote the use of our literature as a Twelfth Step tool**

From Area 79 in British Columbia/Yukon Area Literature Committee

This Area feels passionate about getting our Literature out there and is suggesting ways to help that.

Background Notes:

A DCM from Area 79 tried reading a form of announcement that has been developed in their Area and stated that sales of books and pamphlets have gone up. This is a suggestion only and they respect each group's autonomy.

Suggested wording:

- **This Group stocks Big Books and other AA books for sale at cost.**
- **We have free pamphlets containing the collective experience of AA members on a wide variety of topics, including sponsorship, the role of money in AA, the way Groups operate, and how AA interacts with outside groups.**
- **Pamphlets are a great resource for the newcomer, the sponsor and to all AA members carrying the AA message.**

\* Suggested by Area 79, Panel 59 Literature Committee.

The Conference Coordinator agreed to pass this request on to the trustees' Literature Committee for discussion.

The committee was not in favor of this item. People in service positions should be promoting our literature, Literature chairs, GSRs, etc. Some groups hand out literature to new comers. Keep it Simple. Terry asked for a sense of the area; they were not in favor of this, keep it simple.

#### **Agenda Item G:**

**Consider a request to reconsider the 2010 Conference Advisory Action that "the trustees' Literature Committee develops literature which focuses on spirituality that includes stories form atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous."**

This came from the Mount Rainer AA Group in Area 29 Maryland Dated 11/22/2010 and a letter from Area 62, South Carolina.

They researched and share a lot of detail about what they believe is already available in our literature [see below] They present rebuttals to background documents that the Literature Committee cited. They quote Concept 5, Right of Appeal, Minority Opinion and Tradition 3.

They believe the pamphlet would be misleading because practicing the steps "enables alcoholics to develop faith in a Higher Power [or God of one's understanding] that is sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism."

The trustees' Literature Committee agreed to forward this to the 2011 Conference Committee on Literature for consideration. The committee did not support its intent and encouraged the Conference Committee on Literature to give careful attention to the progress report on the development of this literature before any decision is made.

They present two examples of General Service Conference past reconsiderations:

-In 1970 "the proposal regarding a 75-mile [from New York City] limitation on trustees-at-large candidates be rescinded on the basis that it is discriminatory; by-laws were amended.

-In 2008 "the Advisory Action of the Conference Committee on Report and Charter, recommended that the statement: "This Directory is not to be used as a mailing list or for any form of solicitation or commercial venture" that appears on the cover of AA Directories be made significantly more prominent, like borders, larger type face etc. be rescinded. (Floor Action)

**Notes:** Atheist is the position that no gods exist

Agnostic believes that the existence of gods is unknown or inherently unknowable

About AA, newsletter has many articles on Spirituality. For instance:

-AA & The Clergy

-The AA Program-Spiritual but Never Religious

-We Tread Innumerable Paths: Spirituality in AA

-Bill talks about it in This Dilemma of Faith about how it is not a requirement to believe in God to join AA.

-‘This is AA’ pamphlet changed a sentence that stated ‘There are even a few self proclaim atheist and agnostics’ to ‘There are also atheist and agnostics among us’ And so much more

The committee agreed that Concept V is at work and is in favor of this agenda item 4 / 1. That the Right of Appeal ought to prevail, assuring Minority Opinion be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered. Our opposing committee member felt that maybe a newcomer could use this literature and they are already developing it, so let it go forward. One non-committee member was very passionate about this item does not want this literature to move forward. AA is a Spiritual program.

Discussion from the floor of the assembly:

Don't let non-spiritual principles into our spiritual program. There are too many pamphlets that divide us; this issue is already covered in our literature. Are we considered a religious organization? What is the intent of publishing a pamphlet on agnostics or atheists? What about the person coming in for their first meeting? Don't exclude anyone; newcomers come in needing something to relate to. We need to protect our tradition that states we are not a religious organization. How did we get here? Is it a coincidence that it is Item G?. The minority will be heard with due diligence. Page 45, Lack of power is our dilemma. We can use substitution for God mentioned in the 12 x 12. This doesn't mean that we exclude agnostics or atheists. This is a democratic process where our fellowship is self correcting. We can undo things that may take us down a slippery slope. Remember that tolerance is the power that keeps alcoholics sober. We can promote our diversity by reading the personal experiences in the Grapevine magazine.

It is the sense of Area 40 that they are in favor of the request to reconsider this advisor action.

#### **Agenda Item H:**

**Consider a request to include the AA Preamble in the front inside pages of the Big Book.**

From Area 43 New Hampshire voted on at their Area Assembly.

Background notes:

Their reasoning is the now that the Traditions and Concepts are in the Big Book, it is becoming closer to becoming a complete manual for AA. They would like to see the Preamble on the third page of the fourth addition under where the words ‘Alcoholics Anonymous’ is currently the only words on this page.

One other reason they would like to see this change is they have heard that some people would like to write their own groups preamble to replace the AA Preamble and maybe this request would help offset this.

The Conference Coordinator agreed to pass this request on to the trustees' Literature Committee for discussion.

The Committee opinions were swayed by minority opinion with this Agenda item. Discussion started out that the Preamble is available in enough literature. A non-committee member brought up that it could be helpful to people in isolated areas, where the Big Book may be the only literature they have. It could also be helpful to those incarcerated. The committee members are for this agenda item.

Discussion: The preamble is in the forward to the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of our Big Book. If we put this in the Big Book, do we have to have permission from Grapevine Inc? The assembly was split on being in favor of this request.

### **Agenda Item I:**

#### **Consider a request to develop a publication about the General Service Office**

From Area 46, New Mexico

Background notes:

Area 46 New Mexico developed a booklet called *'This Is Your General Service Office, A Guided Pictorial,'* and has asked that this become Conference Approved Literature.

A copy of the sample booklet was mailed to committee members only.

If the 2011 Conference Literature Committee and General Service Conference accept the concept of this project, the Publications Department would prepare a draft manuscript as close as possible to the original proposed booklet and have it ready for presentation at the 2012 Conference Literature Committee

The trustees' Literature Committee agreed to forward to the 2011 Conference Committee on Literature the concept of developing the publication, "This is Your General Service Office," or a similar publication, for consideration.

Notes if approved:

Estimated printing costs: 1,000 at \$3.80 ea 5,000 at \$.92 ea 10,000 \$.56 ea; would become a regular inventory item. A complimentary copy would go out to visitors to GSO and consider adding to AA.org Website. The committee would gather sharing from GSO staff and GV regarding accuracy of the GSO staff assignments, Archives, and GV information.

The Publication Department would research copyright challenges. The Managing editor would edit all proposed text. [There is a pamphlet call *Your AA General Service Office, one includes GV*].

The committee felt we did not have enough information because the sample copy not available to review. We thought a digital format on AA.org may be considered to see what response there was before a booklet is put to print.



Discussion: We have enough pamphlets already. Do it the old fashioned way, by sponsorship and one drunk talking to another. Possibly have DVD or digital media on the aa.org website as a preview and track what the demand for this is. The sense of the area is that they are not in favor of this request.

From the 2008 Spring Assembly

**Literature Committee recommends considering forwarding to the General Service Conference Secretary a proposal to publish a hardbound edition of the Daily Reflections. This motion was made, seconded, voted on and it was passed.**

What has happened to this agenda item??? I **did not ask this and will pass on to the Fall Assembly.**

If cost question come up, useful information. I **will also pass on to the Fall Assembly.**

#### **COST COMMENT FROM JULIO GSO**

Hi Mary, Warm greetings from your GSO.

Mary, the development of the revision of the pamphlet "The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs" did not include a 'call for stories.' The new stories being submitted were collected through the efforts and resources of the Publications Department and trustees' Literature Committee. The background notes indicate that in 2009 the trustees' asked that the pamphlet be reviewed by A.A. members who are also physicians. The revision presented at the 2010 Conference included the text as revised by these professionals.

You additionally asked if there are any costs associated with agenda items. In most cases the changes or work would be done in-house and would not represent an increase in expenditure beyond the use of salaried resources. In cases when the recommendation may include a substantial expenditure of money, the costs would be included in the background. Estimate costs have been included for a proposed booklet such as "This is Your General Service Office."

I hope this helps. Your Area delegate may also be a resource for Conference background inquiries, but feel free to call if you have further questions.

In fellowship, Julio, GSO (212) 870-3019

CPC/Trustees-Libbie L.

Committee Report to the Spring Assembly 2011 61<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference

Cooperation with the Professional Community-Libbie L.

#### **A. Discuss the concept of a compilation DVD of CPC literature.**

**Currently send print material to professionals who request information from GSO. This would allow information to be sent on a DVD to these professionals instead of the pamphlets and DVD that they now send. Estimated cost is \$1350.00**

Consensus of the committee is that this may be redundant as all are already available on-line through aa.org. We like the concept as it is not always easy to navigate a web site. The digital media would consolidate information in one location. It is also easily distributed. All pamphlets are still available as is the website. It would be a good

addition to our toolbox for information sharing. The sense of the area is that they are not in favor of this item. What good is our literature if we don't deliver them personally ourselves. We need to do the footwork.

**B. Discuss a draft sample letter to professionals on how they might use the AA Grapevine, La Vina and La Vigne in CPC endeavors.**

**Sample letter is included** which contains a summary of sharing from non-alcoholic professionals and AA members regarding their use. Enclosures to the letter are a copy of the appropriate magazine and how to subscribe with price list, (including the digital subscription).

Consensus of the committee is that this would be a useful tool for CPC representatives. The letter was simple and succinct with good examples of magazine use. There was some concern about the price list "pushing" our product and the fact that La Vigne is not conference approved literature at this time. We did feel it is important to inform people obtain the product we are recommending. The La Vigne may need to be excluded unless the conference approval status is changed.

Discussion: The sense of the assembly is opposed to this. It smacks of self promotion of Grapevine subscriptions; it is a marketing tool by Grapevine Inc. LaVigne is outside of the two AA corporations and should not be referenced.

**C. Review a draft service piece regarding use of the AA Grapevine, La Vina, and La Vigne in CPC endeavors.**

Includes suggestions for using these magazines as a tool and examples of how professionals have used them in the past. This is a one page document that would be included in the CPC Kit/Workbook.

Consensus of the committee is that it would be an appropriate addition to the CPC kit. It suggests simple ways to use our magazines as a tool for CPC representatives.

**D. Review contents of the CPC Kit and Workbook**

1. Review Contents

The committee had a lengthy review of the CPC Kit and Workbook. We reminded everyone that the kit is available through your literature representative or directly from GSO for \$12. We also used this time to discuss ideas and possibilities for Area 40 CPC activities and workshops.

2. Add a list of goals and project suggestions for CPC committees

3. Like in other workbooks and guidelines. (PI, Treat, Correct.)

- Remember open meetings
- Send letters
- Subscribe to Grapevine, About AA

Consensus of the committee was that it would be an effective addition to the current CPC guideline sheet. Succinct, practical information is always helpful. It would not duplicate the currently available literature.

Sharing on formats for one-on-one contact with professionals.

a) samples of ideas/portfolios/presentations/skits

Consensus of the committee was that it would be an effective addition to the current CPC Kit/Workbook. Succinct, practical information is always helpful. It would not duplicate anything currently available.

4. Sample guide letter for healthcare professional school administrators.

a) sample form letter with suggested enclosures

Consensus of the committee was that it would be an effective addition the current CPC Kit/Workbook. It would not duplicate any of the current sample letters currently available. We would recommend some changes in wording, but agree with the general concept.

#### Trustee Agenda

**A. Review resumes of candidates for:**

- 1. Northeast Regional Trustee**
- 2. Southwest Regional Trustee**
- 3. Trustee-at-Large/Canada**

Names of trustee candidates and those voting are given. Resumes of candidates are only given to the committee members.

**B. Review slates of trustees and officers of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.**

**C. Review slate of directors of AA World Services, Inc.**

**D. Review slate of directors of AA Grapevine, Inc.**

Review of slates of trustees and directors are for disapproval if any.  
Again, resumes are only given to the committee.

#### Roundup Reports:

Fall 2010 Butte- Hi, my name is Rick and I am an alcoholic. The 2010 Fall Round-up was held in Butte, MT, October 1-3 at the Copper King Hotel and Convention Center. The theme of this year's round-up was "Gratitude is an Action Word". This year's round-up consisted of 32 committee members and 14 sub-committees. We had a total of 375 registrations for the weekend. Some of the highlights included an ice cream social, 2 game shows, prime rib banquet dinner and a 50/50 raffle. Our guest speakers were some of the finest AA has to offer. The 2010 Fall Round-up was able to send \$1500 seed money to the 2011 Spring Round-up in Great Falls and also dispersed money to the District 71 AA and District 9 Alanon. We received many complements on how well the round-up was organized and how good the food tasted. The Copper King staff and management went above and beyond the call of duty and their efforts were well received. We thank all who attended and supported the event. Yours in Service ,Rick P., 2010 Fall Round-up Chairman

Spring 2011 Great Falls- "Together We Can, Together We Grow"

The roundup will be held at the Best Western Heritage Inn in Great Falls on May 13-15, 2011. There will be AA, Alanon, Alateen, and AA young people's speakers. There is a dance with live music by the 49<sup>th</sup> St Blues Project Band. Just a reminder, early registration before April 15<sup>th</sup>. Save a stamp and ensure your registration by signing up today with the District 41 members or roundup committee members. Lee T.

Fall 2011 Helena- "Commitment to Recovery- Service and Growth"

The roundup will be held at the Red Lion Colonial Inn in Helena on October 14-16, 2011. Registration only is \$15 or with the meal is \$35. Contact: AA-Karla I (406)438-1051 Al Anon –Connie W. (406)933-5579. The flyer can be found on Area 40 website at [aa-montana.org](http://aa-montana.org)

### Intergroup Report

Flathead Valley Intergroup Greetings from the Flathead Valley Intergroup. The Flathead Valley Intergroups represents the AA groups throughout District 91. Our monthly newsletter and business meeting minutes are sent to groups from Elmo to Eureka and any others who request it. Each group in the valley is entitled to have one representative for Intergroup. Following the monthly business meeting, we hold a valley wide birthday celebration where any member may receive a sobriety medallion, usually presented by the sponsor. We generally have 10-120 birthdays with anything from 24 hours to 30+ years being received.

We continue to provide the answering service and meetings list to help carry the message and let people know where AA meetings are and why we're here. The answering service continues to field 50-100 calls per month, either providing meeting information or connecting the caller with a recovering alcoholic. Fortunately, we're still able to effectively make direct contact between the alcoholic in need and one in recovery. Our hotline chair is doing a wonderful job of insuring that the call lists are up to date so that the call center is able to efficiently direct each call to a sober alcoholic. Our PI chair is continually updating our meeting schedules every three months to accommodate any changes or to include newly established meeting times and locations. Our website continues to generate over 150 hits per month and continues to provide information about upcoming events and up to date meeting changes.

Our annual Intergroup campout is scheduled for August 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> at the Emery Bay Campground group site on the East shore of the Hungry Horse Reservoir. There will be speaker meetings, discussion meetings and potluck meals, as well lots of summer fun. There are scholarships available for those who cannot afford the campground fees as to include everyone who would like to attend. As usual there are many other campouts planned for this season in our district. Information regarding those will be posted at [aa-kalispell.org](http://aa-kalispell.org)

In addition to summer campouts, Flathead Valley Intergroup also puts on an incredible Thanksgiving potluck and birthday meeting on the last Saturday of November. It is held at the Stillwater Grange in Kalispell starting with a business meeting at 5 PM, dinner at 6PM and the birthday meeting starting at 8 PM.

Our entertainment chair, Sonya G., and her committee are doing a wonderful job putting together many events such as bowling, spring BBQ's, speaker meetings potlucks, and a Halloween party and costume contest. The great food and fun always seems to bring in lots of folks.

We would encourage any of you to come join us at any of our events. We have an outstanding attendance at both our potlucks and campouts here in the Flathead, thanks to a whole lot of great people who have changed their whole attitude and outlook on life. We insist on enjoying life and our Flathead Valley Intergroup is dedicated to helping with that. Thank you, In service, Todd M. Flathead Valley Intergroup Chair

South Central MT Intergroup

The Intergroup office completed its move to into its new location in October of 2010. There have been continual changes to the setup of the meeting space, book store and facilities. Painting and sprucing up were completed by members and the space is very functional for us. We are glad the move is over and we are finally settled.

The SCI continues to sponsor events as part of our carrying the message. The Holiday party was a huge success in December and shows we have outgrown the space we have used to host such events. This prompted us to move to another location for the upcoming Founders Day event we will be holding on April 16<sup>th</sup> at the Shrine in Billings. The event is themed "The Trail of Recovery" with an emphasis on the newcomer and how to get on and stay on the trail of recovery. If you can join us in Billings the event kicks off at 1pm with workshops until 5, potluck at 6:30pm speakers starting at 7:30pm and a dance from 10-midnight.

We continue to work on our financial situation and with the support of our groups we continue to make progress in this area. The bookstore continues to be self-supporting. Group participation continues to be an area we need to improve. Average Intergroup meeting attendance is 6-10 groups with 39 groups on the schedule in the area served by the office. Upcoming will be Cooney Camp Out in July. Respectfully submitted, Don Metters, South Central Intergroup Chairman

WCRAASC 2011 Nisswa, MN

It was my first time attending a WCRAASC we were greeted at the airport with a friendly greeting committee .

General session one. Alcoholics Anonymous in a digital age: Practicing our traditions in a digital age. A digital age makes A.A. easier to access for the newcomer. But is it breaking anonymity at the social level people were referring to Facebook. We met the delegates they seemed well informed on what was going on in the fellowship in there areas.G.S.C.

1. Agenda item E seemed to get the most discussion.
2. C.P.C Kit and workbook: Items A and C got most discussion.
3. Corrections: No discussion was made.
- 3.Finance: Items C and D. got the most discussion.
4. Grapevine: This was a hot topic a lot was discussed Items A and B was what most of the discussion was about.

General Session 2. An Informed Group Conscience: The voice of A.A: Humility – Accepting the group conscience. What I got from the presenters is the group should here both sides of the story minority opinion is important. A group conscience leaves ego and personal opinions out of decisions. And that everyone has a voice.

G.S.C. Agenda Items 2.

Literature: Items A,B,and C got most discussion.

Policy/Admissions: items D and E were discussed.

Public Information: Item C was a hot topic a lot of discussion took place.

## Break Out Sessions 1.

News letter: A news letter keeps your area informed of what is going on and to attract people into service by reaching out personally. It promotes unity throughout the area. Find ways to better distribute your areas newsletter.

### Treatment:

1. Coordinate with treatment centers> maintain contact with the facility, Rotating chair persons, and remembering singleness of purpose. 2.State run treatment centers> Blue can for book and literature by choice of your district. 3. Big book study in treatment centers> Keep it simple for the newcomers it might be to much for a first meeting. Letting them know there is a place to go after treatment. A speaker meeting might be more affective. 4. Meeting formats in treatment centers> personal experience, display page 58 of the big book at treatment center, and meeting must be chaired by A.A. members.

### DCM:

1. In a large district how do you encourage groups to participate> by visiting groups and putting on district sponsored events and workshops. 2. How do you develop financial guidelines to help groups understand and financially support district> through literature, ask for financial support, and send fliers out of what district does and what it costs. 3. How do you deal with anonymity breaks> though works shops, and how anonymous do we want to be. 4. How to get GSC agenda items to groups> pre assemblies, decide which items have the most impact for them to discuss.

### CPC/PI

1. Anyone interested in the position can serve.
2. PI/CPC should contact local clergy, physicians, and law enforcement and see if it is possible to attend their business meetings and explain what we can do to help.

GSR: The more informed the GSR is at the area, regional, and district events the more better their group is informed on what is going on in the fellowship and a better group conscience can be made.

### Grapevine:

How do groups handle and purchases for the grapevine and keep it easy to access . Make La Vingna more reader friendly and sensitive to unique Hispanic traditions in the many Spanish speaking countries.

General Session 3. General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process- Diversity in AA.-Never Exclusive. Make A.A inclusive for all as far as new comers and people with special needs and how to carry and share the message and an opened mind and willingness to believe and make it more attractive to the newcomer.

### Agenda Items 3.

Report and Charter: nothing was discussed

Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities: Item C was the topic of discussion

We got the privilege to meet the trustee at large U.S Don Massey and listen to his story enjoyed it very much. There was an ASK IT Basket session most questions were on agenda items. We heard from the Regional trustee Ken Brueggemann he was very informed on what is going on in the fellowship.

G.S.C agenda Items 4.

Trustees: Nothing was discussed.

Archives: Nothing was discussed.

International Conventions/Regional Forums: Nothing was discussed

General Session 4: Sponsorship: Recovery, Unity, and Service- how important it is to have a sponsor and the benefits of service work.

I attended the meeting after the meeting and left the conference with a lot of gratitude it was amazing how many people showed up to express their thought about the fellowship. Yours in service Brian S. GSR Flathead Valley Serenity Group

### Local Forum

At the Spring Assembly in 2008, the Area 40 Corrections Committee had an idea to have a Local Forum in Montana. The idea was discussed at that Assembly and the following Assembly. That idea went through the committee process and was approved at the Spring Assembly in 2009.

One consistent question that came forth during the discussions was “what is a Local Forum”? Due to the large number of new servants at this Assembly, I would like to take a moment to share a bit on the difference of Regional and Local Forums.

Regional Forums take place in the West Central Region on a rotating basis. Regional Forums are generally three day events with participation by the Delegates in the West Central Region and participants from the General Service Office, Class A & Class B Trustees, members of the Grapevine & AAWS Boards to name a few. There are variant presentations by the attendees with concentration on services available from GSO, financial presentations on our Fellowship, Grapevine & AAWS discussions and lots of sharing from the Trustees in attendance. Simply, a great way to find out about Alcoholics Anonymous outside of our Home Groups and local Districts. The next Regional Forum in Montana will take place in 2021, ten years from now.

Local Forums are not intended to replace or be a substitute for service workshops. Local Forums are A.A. events put on by A.A.s for A.A.s about A.A. A Local Forum is coordinated by a Local Forum Committee and supported by the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous to provide a Forum experience. Forum presentations and sharing sessions are made to meet population needs within local A.A. communities who for any reason are unable to attend regular Regional Forums.

Due to the length of time before the next Regional Forum will be in Area 40 – Montana and the challenges of attending Regional Forums in the West Central Region, be they distance, time or lack of resources – the idea of a Local Forum took hold and as mentioned earlier was put into motion in the Spring of 2009.

In an attempt to be of service to the new rotation of servants present this weekend, here is a quick synopsis of the actions and time line that brings us to today; Recommendation voted in the affirmative by the Spring 2009 Assembly to have a Local Forum in 2011

- 1) Recommendation voted in the affirmative by the Fall 2009 Assembly to have a two day, two location Local Forum: Great Falls and Miles City
- 2) Local Forum request form submitted to the International Conferences/Regional Forums desk at the General Service Office in March of 2010
- 3) Local Forum request was assigned to the agenda of the Trustee's committee on International Conferences/Regional Forums at their July 2010 Board meeting
- 4) Notification in August of 2010 from GSO indicating our Local Forum request had been approved
- 5) Invitation for participation at the Local Forum extended & accepted by Ken B, West Central Regional Trustee and Jim M, GSO Staff currently serving on the Corrections desk
- 6) Progress report to the Fall 2010 Assembly indicating the dates of the Local Forum: June 18 in Great Falls and June 19 in Miles City

That is the short version of the background on the upcoming Local Forum. Additional activities have taken place at District Meetings in Great Falls, Miles City and Colstrip. Follow up committee meetings prior to the event will be taking place. Volunteers to assist at both locations would be welcome

The agenda for the event will be the same both days. Ken B, West Central Regional Trustee and Jim M, GSO Staff will be the presenters. The topics they have been asked to discuss are: AAWS – Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, the financial status of GSO, services available from GSO, Grapevine, and shared experience by Jim M from his time on the Corrections desk at the General Service Office.

Fliers are on the back table and also available on the Area 40 website. Registration starts at 8am both days. A lot of work has gone into preparation for this event and your participation would be appreciated. Simply, if you have any questions about the General Service Office, Grapevine, AAWS, the General Service Board or anything else about AA – this will be your opportunity to ask those questions. I look forward to seeing you there. Respectfully submitted, Local Forum Co Chairs Scott W. & Jewel Lea G.

#### WCRAASC-2012

Hello my name is Don and I am an Alcoholic. I would like to thank Terry for asking me to Chair this event.

The Conference is going to be held at the Holiday Inn in Billings on March 2, 3, and 4 2012. Thanks to Scott W. for securing the facility. There is a block of rooms for \$84 a night. We are holding Committee meetings on the third Saturday of the Month at the Intergroup Office, 2931 Colton BLVD, at 10 AM. We are still looking for people to work on the Committee. It is Area 40 responsibility to have a literature, grapevine, and archives displays at the event. I have contacted the Chair persons and let them know to keep the dates open so they can attend. We will not have Literature or Grapevine Materials for Sale, just display only. The committee in Minnesota said not much materials selling so we will have order blanks if people want to order something. Paul W is going to tape the event. I brought some preliminary flyers for the event. Once we have information for the agenda, we will get the registration forms printed and distributed. We are still waiting for the 2011 committee to send seed money so we can get a Bank Account and P.O. Box. You can contact me if interested in serving on the committee or just show up at the meeting. Don B.- email [dandblackbirds@yahoo.com](mailto:dandblackbirds@yahoo.com), Home (406) 656-0727, Cell (406) 672-3076, work (406) 861-7644. Thank you for this time.

Yours in service, Don B.



## National Archives Convention Report

Good morning, my name is Gerry and I'm an alcoholic. I also have the privilege of serving as your Archivist as well as Chair for the 15<sup>th</sup> National AA Archives Workshop.

In true AA fashion, we must claim workshop progress, rather than workshop perfection; however, we think you'll appreciate what we've accomplished thus far.

As the program reads, right now we have, among others, confirmations of presentations by; GSO Archivist, Michelle Mirza, the Executive Director of Stepping Stones, Anna Perth, Past Akron Archivist and current Historian, Gail L., a Co-Editor of the internet site - Silkworth.net, Mike G., along with a past West Central Regional Trustee, Carl B. We will also have many of the most dedicated and knowledgeable AA archivists and historians from around the U.S. and Canada on hand, for attendees to rub elbows with and ask questions. Many of these archivists will also be presenting in breakouts on various topics throughout the weekend.

In addition, we will have traveling archive displays from GSO and Stepping Stones, and also have confirmations of displays from Area 92, Eastern Washington, Area 18 Idaho, Area 76, Wyoming, Area 35 Northern Minnesota, and Area 78, Alberta Canada. Yes folks, we've gone international. We are still waiting on confirmation from other Area's including, hopefully, a couple more from Canada. Also, seeing as Al Anon had a presence at the beginning of AA, we feel it is only right that they also have a presence at this workshop. Al Anon will have both an Archives display and breakout at the workshop. Most people don't know that Montana has the only non-rotating Al-Anon Archivist in the nation. That is Jeanne H.

Local flavor that will be included in the program are presentations by past Area 40 Archivist Tom W. Past District 61 Archives Chair Laurie C. and current Area Archives Chair Joe H.

We received \$1,500.00 in seed money from the previous host, Macon Georgia, and have put that money to work already. We have confirmed a block of fifty rooms at the Wingate Inn in Helena with the ability to expand that number if needed. We have also reserved meeting rooms for those portions of the event that will be held there. We have reserved The Gateway Convention Center, where the bulk of the event will take place, along with confirmation of our caterer for the Friday luncheon and Saturday evening Banquet. We will be utilizing a shuttle service between the hotel and convention center, and have confirmed those arrangements as well.

Alex M. the Area 40 Webmaster has been moonlighting as the Workshop Webmaster and has done a fantastic job. Many of the past workshop chairs have written me just to gush about what a great job he's done and how good the site looks. The website address, get your pencils ready, is - **aanationalarchivesworkshop.com**. I invite you all to check it out. You can download a registration flyer there, as well as check out the program for the event.

I do need to note one disappointment that we've experienced in the program. We originally were told that we would be able to present a play on Saturday night, called Bill and Lois: In Their Own Words. This play was developed by Stepping Stones and is composed primarily of the reading of actual letters written between Bill and Lois over the years. I've been informed recently that due to production issues and proprietary requirements, we will need to present a video of the play instead of having an actual production of it. This was a real disappointment for us, especially since we had a troupe of actors headed by John A. from Missoula ready to take on the production. I and the committee both would like to thank John and the others for being willing to help, and regret not being able to proceed with this as we would have liked. We do hope that John, his friends, and anyone else who is interested in helping out with the workshop please don't hesitate step up. There remain many places where we could use your help.

That said, the workshop remains a truly unique event that has never been held in our area, or region for that matter. It promises to be an educational, entertaining and thought provoking weekend for all who attend. We have flyers for the event on the back table and really hope that we can get some early registrations. We know that, on average, we can expect about 80 to 90 people from outside the state to attend. That number may be a bit higher based on personal discussions with people. What we don't know is how well the Area 40 Fellowship will support the event. So, please, if you are planning on attending, get your registration in early to help us get some gauge of what we can expect. It is truly the level of the Area 40's support that will determine the success of this event.

Thank you for allowing me to serve. Gerry R., Area 40 Archivist, XV NAAAW Chair

### Past Delegate Sharing

There was great sharing from Bob H. and Loren B. Bob talked about God opening the doors so we can be of maximum service to God and the people about us. Our service structure enables us to do this vital work. Loren talked about no committee system when he started as delegate from 2000-2002, how, we are fortunate now with the committee system in place, the 4<sup>th</sup> edition Big Book was approved during his tenure as Delegate in 2001. His stories about how the fellowship didn't want Pg. 449 (Acceptance is the answer...) changed. There were a few resentments over this, but then, Loren remarked, "Acceptance is the answer."

### GSR Breakout-Loren B.

1. Why is the original AA Manuscript (now available) not considered conference approved material?

The first General Service Conference was in 1951, well after 1939 publication date of the original manuscript.

2. Any chance of having one of the assemblies in the "near" west-Helena? AIAnon voted to have their spring assembly in Helena and the fall assembly in Lewistown.

An AdHoc committee reviewed this a few years ago. Lewistown is the middle of the state and because of the low cost of the facility.

3. Why is there so much money in the Pink Can balance: Is it a reserve account?

Current balance in Pink Can is approximately \$6500. Jail literature is very beneficial. Pin Can contributions are for literature for correctional facilities. Some facilities do not furnish books so Pink Can literature is positive. It is a separate account, not an area reserve account. Earmarking funds for the Pink Can has caused some groups to discontinue donating funds. There needs to be clarity with funding: Is it for corrections only or can funds be given to treatment facilities? There seems to be too much money in the account, but it has great intent. The need for literature has decreased in specific districts. If state facility and taxpayer supported, why is AA buying the books?

4. Is it at federal, state, or county level where people can no longer be sentenced to AA because it is considered "religious"? How can we change this

The 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals in New York ruled AA as a religion. Some judges are exercising levity. As a result, there are dramatic numbers of court card in AA meetings. One solution is that groups stick to conference approved prayers and stop allowing the "Lord's Prayer" in meetings.

5. We are having problems with younger couples getting to cuddly during meetings. There have been sponsors talking with them, it has been discussed at business meetings, and we have a group inventory planned soon where it will be discussed. What can we do about this problem? It is offensive and distracting. The young ones have been confronted. They don't listen and say, "You aren't my Mom & Dad". Help!

Start a Red Can Fund.....a bucket of Cold water, Suggest they not attend meetings, the groups' strength is compromised-be respectful, women take the girl, men take the boy, have another talk; share the inappropriateness and this is a life and death matter for attendees at the meeting. The Group is more important than one person/individual. Procedure is available regarding temporarily removing disruptive members. Take charge and ask them to leave. Tell them to get a room-it is a distraction from our primary purpose.

6. Is it possible for a GSR to be a representative for more than one group?

the GSR only gets one vote, were groups are very small and lack funds, they utilize one GSR to speak and vote collectively for them, Darby has 2 groups with only one meeting each so they have the same GSR for both groups. Montana is a remote community- we do what we need to. Read the GSR pamphlet

#### DCM Breakout- Bob H.

1. Who can vote in a District meeting?

Just let GSR's vote. Let GSR's and committee chairs vote. Let all who attend the district meeting vote.

2. How do you handle financial issues?

Vote at district meeting to fund services. Discuss alternate ways of budgeting, such as carpooling, sharing rooms, etc.

3. Who goes to Area Assembly?

Send committee chairs and GSR's along with DCM's. District could possible fund GSR's that can't fund their representatives to go to the Area Assembly.

4. How do DCM's handle district chairs that may not be showing up or not doing their job?

Three strikes and you're out..when you don't show up for three consecutive district meetings and have nothing for reports..ask them to resign. If they are fulfilling their job, ask them to step down. Contact them and find out why they have not been doing their elected position.

5. Can district meetings be held in different locations?

It can be beneficial holding district meetings in a central location in larger districts. It is easier for more groups to participate. Moving locations around gives other groups a chance to be of service, and at different locations you may have others attend that wouldn't normally attend.

6. How do you deal with phantom groups?

Some groups never register with the General Service structure. A newly formed group may be around for a while and have a service number but may disintegrate with no notice. Some groups go underground because they are overwhelmed with referrals from courts

#### Floor Action

Anne B. DCM-District 61 presented this motion. **I would like to move that Are 40 allow the Area Archives Repository to be moved from its present location at 324 Fuller Ave, Helena MT to 534 North Last Chance Gulch, Helena MT.**

Background: The current repository location, 324 Fuller, was leased after arrangements for another site fell through. The location has 400 square feet of space and our monthly lease is \$350. The space has little room for future expansion. It has inadequate temperature control, and becomes very hot in the summer and requires use of a space heater in the winter. It has large windows on the west and north was.

**The proposed site, 534 North Last Chance Gulch, has 723 square feet, which allows for expansion, and can be leased for \$4.25 per square foot, for a lease price of \$256.06 per month, plus utilities. The exact expenses on utilities aren't available at this time, they will be pro-rated with other tenants and are assured to be quite reasonable. This site has no windows and in addition to adequate temperature control, it also has a control for humidity. It is in the basement, but has no water overhead, and has only one short flight of stairs to negotiate. The landlord considers us an ideal tenant due to our low parking requirements, and is willing to allow us a short term lease of one year. After some discussion, Motion Passes unanimously.**

#### General Sharing and Closing

There was some general sharing after the business of Area Assembly was completed. It was moved and seconded to close. All present were in agreement and we closed with the Responsibility Statement at 12 noon, Sunday, April 10, 2011. Respectfully submitted, Linda B, Secretary

