

The Triangle

Area 40 Newsletter

Volume 17, Issue 3

March-April 2009

West Central Region AA Service Conference

Our Commitment to Carry AA's Message - Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action

The 2009 West Central Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Conference (WCRAASC) was held in Casper Wyoming February 27 – March 1. The Conference Guidelines state, “the purpose of the WCRAASC is to develop greater unity among members, groups, and areas of the West Central Region (WCR)...”. The WCR is comprised of eight Areas: Area 24 (Iowa), Area 35 (northern Minnesota), Area

40 (Montana), Area 63 (South Dakota), Area 36 (southern Minnesota), Area 41 (Nebraska), and Area 76 (Wyoming).

Every spring, past and present Delegates, committee members, GSR's, Trustees and other mem-

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Humility & Sacrifice

My name is Libbie, District 91 DCM, and I'm an alcoholic. This is my 2nd regional service conference. The first was in Bozeman when I was just shy of my 1st sobriety birthday 8 years ago. I don't remember what agenda items or conference issues were being discussed, but I remember how it felt to be a part of AA, and a part of life at last.

When our delegate, Carole B., asked me to be a presenter for this conference, I quickly said yes, thinking it couldn't be so bad. Then I asked her what a presenter did. Little did I know that I had committed to speaking in front of the conference on the topic of humility and sacrifice-changing our perceptions.

So how do I talk about humility? The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions defines the “basic ingredient of all humility as the desire to seek and do God's will”. My first thoughts about humility brought me to the 7th step and the 7th step prayer; “Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings”, “...grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding”. I apply this to my life when I address one of my big defects/shortcomings. I used to think this defect was a fear of looking bad, it evolved into the fear of not looking good. But my final opinion is that I really want to look better than. In other words, my defect is pride. When I'm full of pride, I have no humility and I'm

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Changing Our Perceptions

Good evening. My name is Colby D., I am an alcoholic. My sobriety date is July 13, 1993. Thank God and A.A for this blessing. It is an honor and privilege to serve in Alcoholics Anonymous. I would like to thank Carole B. for asking me to participate in this year's service conference.

Serving others was as foreign to me as the admission of personal powerlessness over alcohol and the awareness that my life had become unmanageable. The idea of asking, and receiving, help from someone else was a complete mystery. I was filled

with the desire to get “mine” at any cost.

So, how, after one admits defeat does the quality of humility and service to others come about? The answer, in my experience, is to get involved. How? I showed up to my first AA meeting alone, frightened, filled with doubt. I heard someone tell part of my story; my mind raced. Then the sharer mentioned that they were talking about themselves and not me. What a relief.

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Area 40 Highlights

Area 40 covers most of the state of Montana and consists of 14 districts and 268 registered groups. The Hot Springs Book Study and the Plentywood Group are over 800 highway miles apart. The size of the districts varies from District 23 with 3 groups to District 81 with 40 groups.

Each year the Area holds two assemblies – in April and September. Our assemblies are 1-1/2 days – an all day event on Saturday and until noon on Sunday. We discuss the GSC agenda items at the spring assembly and conduct Area business in the fall. Several districts work together to conduct pre-assembly

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From Your Editor

Hi Everybody! The focus of this issue of the Triangle is the General Service Conference and the Area Assembly. Area 40 was well represented at the WCRAASC in Casper February 27-March 1 as attendees got their first chance to discuss the General Service Office agenda items. Articles about that conference and the presentations by Area 40 are included for those who couldn't be there. Carole presented the “Area 40 Highlights” as a “warmup” for the General Service Conference in April.

Our delegate encourages us to ask ourselves “how does this affect AA as a whole” when considering the Area and General Service Conference agenda items.

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Yogo Inn
Lewistown, Montana
April 18 & 19, 2009

Friday, April 17- Sapphire Rooms

AA meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. (This meeting is separate from the Assembly and is self-supporting).

SATURDAY SESSION – April 18

7:30/8:00 GSR's and visitors sign in with their District's DCM. (*DCM's please give the sign in sheets to the Area Secretary no later than 10:00 a.m.*)

8:00/9:45 **Welcome** – Serenity Prayer, Traditions, and Concepts
Roll Call – by Area Secretary, April A.
Orientation to the Assembly – Area Delegate, Carole B.
Reports from the Area Committee Members
Area Chair*
Area Secretary*
Area Treasurer*
Triangle Editor*
Area Service Chairs*
DCM's*
Standing, nonvoting service positions*

9:45/10:00 **Coffee Break**

10:00/12:00 **Standing Committee Meetings:**
Archives/Structure.....Kendall Room
Corrections/Intn'l-Regional Forums..... Terrace Room
CPC/Trustees Employee Lounge
Finance Gypsum Room
Grapevine/Policy & Admissions Sales Office
Literature..... Snowy
Public Information/Report Judith
Treatment/Agenda Moccasin

WHEN YOUR COMMITTEE FINISHES ITS BUSINESS, PLEASE NOTIFY THE AREA CHAIR OR SECRETARY

Workshop for those not attending committee meetings

Led by past delegate Mark S. – “Our Commitment to Carry AA’s Message—Gratitude in Action”

12:00/1:30 **Recess for Lunch**

1:30/2:30 **Workshop for those not attending committee meetings**

Led by past delegate Bob H. – “Our Commitment to Carry AA’s Message—Enthusiasm in Action”

Standing Committee Meetings (continued) SAME LOCATIONS AS 10:00/12:00

2:30/3:15 **Delegate’s Report** – Carole B. (questions and answers)

3:15/3:30 **Coffee Break**

3:30/5:00 **Floor Assembly – Committee Reports/Motions and Discussion**

Archives/Structure ** - Tim H.
Corrections/International Conventions-Regional Forums ** - Mary S.
CPC/Trustees ** - Virginia R.
Finance ** - Linda B.
Grapevine/Policy & Admissions ** - Rich K.
Literature ** - Lori F.
Public Information/Report & Charter ** - Tim M.
Treatment/Agenda ** - Paula H.

- *Reports: 5-minute time limit with two written copies given to the Area Secretary*
- *Floor comments are requested to take no longer than 3 minutes*

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5:00/7:00 Recess for Dinner
 7:00/8:15 Floor Assembly / Committee Reports-Motions and Discussion (Cont.)
 8:15/8:30 Coffee Break
 8:30/10:00 GSR Breakout – Led by Past Delegate Bob H.: Ask-it-basket and sharing
 DCM Breakout – Led by Past Delegate Mark S.: Ask-it-basket and sharing

SUNDAY SESSION – April 13

8:00/8:45 *Roundup Reports: Fall 2008 Kalispell; Spring 2009 Missoula; Fall 2009 Bozeman
 *Intergroup Reports
 *Report from the West Central Regional Alcoholics Anonymous
 Service Conference (WCRAASC) in Casper, WY – BilliJo D.
 8:45/9:15 Past Delegate Sharing – Mark S.
 9:15/9:45 Past Delegate Sharing – Bob H.
 9:45/10:00 Coffee Break
 10:00/12:00 Continue Floor Assembly / Committee Reports – Recommendations – Discussion, General Sharing

ADJOURN / DRIVE SAFELY!!!

* *Reports: 5-minute time limit with two written copies given to the Area Secretary.*
 ** *Floor comments are requested to take no longer than 3 minutes*
The rooms this Assembly meets in are designated smoke free by past action. The Yogo Inn graciously places ashtrays/receptacles just outside the outside doors, and asks that smoking be limited to the outside smoking area and the bar. Please do not smoke in the meeting rooms, hallways or lobby area. Our thoughtful compliance and courtesies are appreciated.

COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

The following contains our agenda items and the Area Committees addressing them. Most items come from the General Service Conference and will be fully addressed at the General Service Conference later this month. There are four Area 40 agenda items—two items (related) in Archives (that Committee’s secondary assignment includes Area 40 Structure and Policies and the two items involve both assignments), one in Corrections (that Committee’s secondary assignment includes forums) and one in Public Information.

Each Area Committee Chair was sent the committee’s agenda items with available background information in February, to share with other members of the committee for research, review and discussion, for a well-informed committee *conscience/decision*.

If your Group has any comments, questions, and concerns or would like copies of any background information please contact the appropriate Area Committee Chair.

Your DCM has the names, phone numbers and addresses of the Area Committee or you can email them through the Area’s website www.aamontana.org should you need them. (NOTE: the process by which items are submitted, dispersed, considered and brought to the Assembly is detailed in the *Area 40 Committee System Policies & Procedures* manual which is available through your DCM and on the Area website).

The General Service Conference items on our agenda will not come to the floor of the Assembly as *recommendations (as motions made and seconded)*. Instead each committee will report an informed sense of the committee to the Assembly, and we will seek *an informed sense of the Area on the Assembly floor by discussion and a show of hands*, to provide our Delegate with a sense of Area 40’s informed group conscience, to assist her in preparing for and participating in the General Service Conference.

A review of Concepts I, II, III, X, XII and Tradition 2 can help us have a clearer understanding of our process.

The following Committees/Committee agenda items are listed in order of presentation.

Archives/Area 40 Structure and Policies – Tim H.

Archives

- A. Review contents of Archives Workbook.
- B. Discuss ideas to make A.A.’s archives and history more readily available to the Fellowship.

Area 40 Agenda Items for Structure and Policies

- 1. Consider a request that Area 40 submit a Proposal at the 2009 National AA Archives Workshop to host the 2011 National AA Archives Workshop

IF AND ONLY IF RECOMMENDING SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL, THE COMMITTEE WILL ALSO ADDRESS ITEM 2:

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2. Consider a request that Area 40 fund the Area Archivist to attend the 2009 National AA Archives Workshop in Woodland Hills, CA., to present an Area 40 Proposal to host the 2011 National AA Archives Workshop (funding not to exceed \$1,500).

Corrections/International Conventions-Regional Forums – Mary S.

Corrections

- A. Review contents of Corrections Kit and Workbook.
- B. Consider alternatives to biennial mailing to corrections professionals, focusing on those that may be more effective and fiscally prudent.
- C. Consider updating the pamphlet "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell."
- D. Discuss issues that may be involved in A.A. members' complying with the rules of correctional facilities, such as signing "sponsorship agreements" or legally binding documents.

International Conventions-Regional Forums

- A. Discuss an anonymity-protected photograph of the flag ceremony to be taken at the 2010 International Convention.
- B. Consider a broadcast of the 2010 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony similar to the encrypted, anonymity-protected, delayed extranet broadcast of the 2005 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony.
- C. Discuss ways to encourage interest in Regional and Local Forums.

Area 40 Agenda Item for International Conventions-Regional Forums

- A. Discuss a recommendation from the 2008 Area 40 Corrections Committee that Area 40 request a local forum from the General Service Office.

CPC/Trustees – Virginia R.

CPC

- A. Review the draft Video Segments Directed to Professionals in the Employment/Human Relations Field.
- B. Review contents of Kit and Workbook.
- C. Discuss specific possible uses of the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña in C.P.C. endeavors.

Trustees

- A. Review résumés of candidates for:
 - 1. East Central regional trustee
 - 2. Southeast regional trustee
 - 3. Trustee-at-Large/U.S.
- B. Review slates of trustees and officers of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.
- C. Review slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc.
- D. Review slate of directors of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.
- E. Discuss report from the trustees' Committee on Nominating pertaining to the 2008 Additional Committee Consideration regarding Class B regional trustee and trustee-at-large successor terms in the event of an unexpected vacancy.
- F. Discuss suggested revision to procedure for distribution of trustee election résumés at the General Service Conference.

Finance – Linda B.

- A. Review material submitted from the Fellowship concerning the 2008 Conference Advisory Action "the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee gather input from the Fellowship on the benefits and liabilities, both spiritual and practical of fully funding G.S.O. Services to the Fellowship (G.S.O. functional expenses) by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members and groups."
- B. Discuss request to produce a Seventh Tradition Poster.
- C. Discuss other aspects of self-support

Grapevine/Policy & Admissions – Rich K.

Grapevine

- A. Review contents of A.A. Grapevine and La Viña Workbook.
- B. Consider request that the 2007 Conference Advisory Action recommending that "the Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer" be rescinded.
- C. Consider request that the 2004 Conference Advisory Action be rescinded:

"To allow the widest distribution of the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña to all purchasers, while guarding against affiliations with any outside enterprise, a) subscriptions to the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña magazines be issued only by A.A. Grapevine, Inc., or by A.A. trusted servants directly; and b) the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., adopt standardized sales practices and pricing structures for all purchasers. NOTE: This recommendation is to clarify the 1993 Advisory Action stating that the Grapevine Corporate Board not actively pursue the placement of Grapevine materials for resale in commercial (non-A.A.) outlets."

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Policy & Admissions

- A. Approve invitations for one observer from the General Service Board of Brazil, S.A. and two observers--One from the General Service Board and one from the General Service Office of Colombia, S.A.
- B. Review dates for the 2012 General Service Conference.
- C. Review "General Service Board Summary of Responses to Inventory Questions Pertaining to Regional Composition and Structure".
- D. Consider a request to formulate a procedure for filing a minority appeal directly with the General Service Conference, as described in Bill W.'s commentary on Concept V.
- E. Discuss proposal requesting a General Service Conference inventory.

Literature – Lori F.

- A. Review the revised draft pamphlet "The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs."
- B. Review the revised draft pamphlet "A.A. for the Native North American."
- C. Consider request that the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" be reviewed toward eliminating or revising outmoded ethnic, cultural and vocational references.
- D. Consider request to develop a new Special Needs recovery pamphlet for newcomers or prospective A.A. members.
- E. Consider request to add a sentence to the pamphlet "A Newcomer Asks" that encourages newcomers to obtain and study the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- F. Consider request to change the title of the pamphlet "44 Questions" to "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A."
- G. Discuss whether there is a need to develop Conference-approved literature that focuses on the topics of spirituality, and agnostics or atheists/nonbelievers in A.A.
- H. Consider request to publish a book of stories from members in remote communities.
- I. Consider request to develop a second volume of *Daily Reflections*.
- J. Consider request to develop a video on the General Service Representative (G.S.R.).

Public Information/Report & Charter – Tim M.

Public Information

- A. Consider 2008 annual report from the trustees' Committee on Public Information regarding GSO's A.A. Web site.
- B. Consider a request to add the text "Provide initial motivation" to the section "What A.A. does NOT do" in the pamphlet "A.A. at a Glance."
- C. Review updated text and graphics of the pamphlet "A Message to Teenagers..." which utilizes selected text and graphics from the current "Too Young?" pamphlet.
- D. Consider draft wall poster for young people with information about Alcoholics Anonymous.
- E. Consider request "to develop a generic A.A. poster or posters for places such as hospitals, places of employment, doctors' offices, etc."Public Service Announcements (P.S.A.s):
 - 1. Review current television P.S.A.s for relevance and usefulness.
 - 2. Assess the need for a new television P.S.A.
 - 3. Review report on centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the 2008 television P.S.A., "I Thought."
 - 4. Review revised draft script of "Combination Radio P.S.A.s on CD," and consider recording revised script at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.
- G. Consider draft of the "A.A. Videos for Young People Project."
- H. Consider draft 2010 Alcoholics Anonymous Membership Survey Questionnaire.
- I. Consider the need to clarify the importance of not breaking anonymity of living A.A. members in memorial announcements when one of our Fellowship dies.
- J. Discuss suggestion that Public Information committees "explore the use of the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña in their endeavors."
- K. Review contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook.

Area 40 Agenda Item for PI

- 1. Review and report the status of the Area 40 866 number.

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Report & Charter

- A. *The A.A. Service Manual*, 2009 – 2010 Edition:
1. Consider adding the term of non-trustee directors to the section describing how non-trustee directors are selected, on page S75.
 2. Consider suggestion to add a locally developed G.S.R. Preamble to *The A.A. Service Manual*.
 3. Consider proposal that every change to *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* be approved by the General Service Conference.
 4. Consider suggestion to change the title "Conference Language" on page S19 to "Glossary of Conference Terms."
 5. Consider suggestion to add text regarding the desirability of business or professional background for regional and at-large trustees to the section of *The A.A. Service Manual* on "Qualifications of an Effective Trustee" on page S63.
 6. Review suggested revisions to Chapters 10 and 12 regarding the A.A. Grapevine.
 7. Consider revised suggestion regarding the term of service of Appointed Committee Members on page S70.
 8. Consider request to clarify language on page S65 regarding nominating a regional trustee candidate in the same year when nominating a trustee-at-large candidate.
 9. Review letter requesting an "inventory" of various items related to the General Service Conference Charter.
 10. Consider suggestion to insert the page reference "(see page S63)" in the section on Regional Trustees found on page S65.
 11. Consider suggestion to add cross-references to area numbers and area names.
 12. Review list of suggested additional changes.
- B. A.A. Directories (Canada, Western U.S., and Eastern U.S.): review list of suggested changes.
- C. Discuss General Service Conference Final Report.

Treatment/Agenda – Paula H.Treatment

- A. Review revised video, *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- B. Discuss a proposal that Treatment Facilities literature include information that would assist Treatment Facilities committees with their effort to inform treatment professionals about A.A. and to carry the A.A. message to patients in out-patient treatment programs.
- C. Discuss request that the Conference Committee on Treatment Committees expand its scope to include services to Special Needs Committees and that the name of the committee be changed to the "Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs."
- D. Discuss specific possible uses of the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña in Treatment endeavors.
- E. Review contents of T.F. Kit and Workbook.

Agenda

- A. Review suggestions for the theme of the 2010 General Service Conference.
- B. Discuss presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2010 General Service Conference.
- C. Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2010 General Service Conference.
- D. Review the General Service Conference Evaluation Form.

Fall Assembly – September 19 & 20, 2009

Concepts Checklist

The Concepts Checklist is service material from the General Service Office for home groups, districts areas. Some of these discussion points were originally developed by an A.A. group and further developed by the trustees' Literature Committee to be distributed by the General Service Office.

Concept III: To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. —the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."

- Do we understand what is meant by the "Right of Decision"? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we "instruct"?
- Do we trust our trusted servants — G.S.R., D.C.M., area dele-

gate, the Conference itself?

Concept IV: At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

- Do we understand the spiritual principles underlying the "Right of Participation"?
- What does "in reasonable proportion" mean? Do we understand when it is appropriate for A.A. paid staff to have a vote at the General Service Conference or in our local service structure?
- Do we expect that, because we are A.A. members, we should be allowed to vote at any group, even if we are not active members of that group?

(WCRAASC continued from page 1)

bers of Alcoholics Anonymous gather to discuss what will be on the upcoming General Service Conference.

Regional Trustee, Ken B. stated Friday evening "(we are) here to be as informed as possible. We are here to educate, to participate, and to prepare those who will take this information back to their committees (Areas, districts, and groups)."

At first glance, the six page agenda for thirteen committees did not look daunting. However, when Ken said that there were over two reams of background material and he asked that the very large, thick, three-ring binder containing the background information be shown, the enormity of the task before the conference was realized.

Friday evening the first three committee agenda items were discussed. This took until after 11:00 p.m. There were ten more committees and many agenda items yet to cover. Terry S. (Area 40 Chair) asked, "How can we (best) help our delegates?" John T. (Area 63 dele-

gate) answered: "first, read (or familiarize yourself with) the background materials on each agenda item; secondly, have discussions at the group level and at your district".

If individual AA members are as informed as possible, when we send our delegate to the General Service Conference, their votes will lead the fellowship in the direction that the overall membership deems our ultimate authority, God, has expressed Himself in our group conscience, the inverted triangle of the service structure of AA at work.

As our Area 40 servants return to Montana with an understanding of the agenda items, avail yourself of the pre-assemblies, ask the committee chairs questions, and learn what will be discussed and decided at our Area Assembly in April. Then when we send our delegate Carole to the General Service Conference, she will know how God expressed Himself in our groups and she can carry that informed sense of the Area to New York. BilliJo D., District 51 DCM

(Humility continued from page 1)

blocking myself from God. I have to change my prayers to ask God to show me how to be the person he would have me be, not to be the best at everything or always better than everyone else. This pride sometimes motivates me to do a good job at things or to not be a slacker, but my true motives are what bring me closer to or farther from God. I must admit that my ego wants me to be the best presenter that the WCRAASC has ever heard, but my God wants me to carry the message of hope so that my experience can help another alcoholic. I should listen to my God not my ego.

Next is the topic of Sacrifice. The dictionary defines sacrifice as the foregoing of some valued thing for the sake of something of greater value or having a more pressing claim.

In my AA way of life, sacrifice brings to mind Step 12 and Tradition 12. In Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, Bill W. says, "we realize

that the sacrificial spirit, well symbolized by anonymity, is the foundation of these Traditions." Carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic, giving all the credit to God, is the primary purpose of our program and the essence of sacrifice and anonymity. If I'm busy helping you, I'm not stuck worrying about me. I can never take credit for the results no matter the outcome, good or bad. I derive great pleasure seeing people come alive in AA. So even if I have to give up some time, sleep, or leisure, what I get in return has far greater value and has a more pressing claim.

So I must thank Carole for asking me to be a part of Area 40's contribution to the WCRAASC. I still think it's a good idea to say yes to AA requests. I look forward to remembering the issues discussed this time, but I know in the long run it's that feeling I get from being a part of AA and life itself that keeps me coming back. Thanks for allowing me to serve. Libbie L., District 91 DCM

First Ever Pre-Assembly Teleconference

Save travel time and expense! Be Informed! Enjoy a pre-assembly from the comfort of your home! Gather Friends for an afternoon around the speaker phone! Enjoy pot-luck snacks and smoke breaks whenever YOU want!

Please register for the teleconference prior to March 16 by providing BilliJo D., District 51 DCM, your name and the telephone number you will be using to join the teleconference. BilliJo's contact information is on page 9 (District 51 DCM). There is a limited number of call-ins available and a chance that sites or people who are not registered will not be able to participate.

The teleconference will be held from 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm, March 21, 2009.

Instructions for joining:

- Register before March 16 (see above)
- If there is the "call-waiting" feature, turn it off
- Put the phone on speaker and on mute
- Dial toll-free 1-866-740-1260
- When prompted enter code # 2656743
- You will then be connected to the teleconference
- Pass the hat for the 7th Tradition

You can access (or leave) the teleconference at any time. The schedule of speakers is as follows:

- 1:00 – 1:03 Welcome; BilliJo D. DCM District 51
- 1:03 – 1:18 Delegate; Carole B.
- 1:18 – 1:38 Archives; Tim H.
- 1:38 – 1:58 CPC; Virginia R.
- 1:58 – 2:18 Corrections; Mary S.
- 2:18 – 2:38 Finance; Linda B.
- 2:38 – 2:58 Grapevine, Rich K.
- 2:58 – 3:18 Literature; Lori F.
- 3:18 – 3:38 PI; Tim M.
- 3:38 – 3:58 Treatment; Paula H.
- 3:58 – 4:00 Wrap up; BilliJo D.

Each Committee Chair will have about fifteen (15) minutes to share the issues facing their committee and five (5) minutes to answer questions.

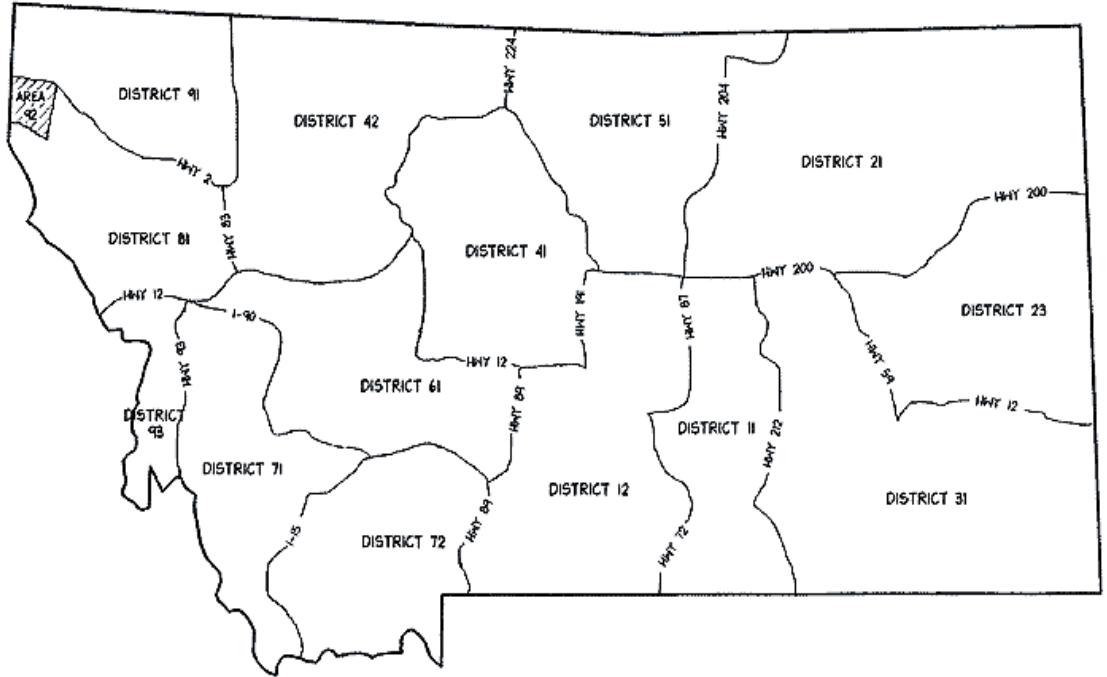
District 51 will get charged for every call-in. The cost is approximately 8 cents per minute, or about \$15 for the whole teleconference. Please be self-supporting by contacting the District 51 DCM, BilliJo D. at dcm51@aa-montana.org.



AREA OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS, AND DCMS 2009-10 Volume 17, Issue 3

POSITION	NAME	CITY	EMAIL	COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Delegate	Carole B.	Billings	delegate@aa-montana.org	
Area Chair/Alt Delegate	Terry S.	Helena	chair@aa-montana.org	
Secretary	April A.	Kalispell	secretary@aa-montana.org	
Treasurer	Linda B.	Billings	treasurer@aa-montana.org	Del, Alt, DCM 72, DR 11
Archives	Tim H.	Kalispell	archives@aa-montana.org	DCMs 11, 71; DRs 23, 91
CPC	Virginia R.	Shepherd	cpc@aa-montana.org	DCMs 21, 51; DRs 42,81
Corrections	Mary S.	Great Falls	corrections@aa-montana.org	DCMs 41,42; DRs 31,72
Grapevine	Richard K.	Billings	grapevine@aa-montana.org	DCMs 81,91; DRs 61,71
Literature	Lori F.	Ennis	literature@aa-montana.org	DCMs 12,31; DRs 91,93
Public Information	Tim M.	Helena	pi@aa-montana.org	DCMs 23,93; DRs 12,51
Treatment	Paula H.	Missoula	treatment@aa-montana.org	DCMs 61; DRs 21,41,71
Triangle Editor	Sharon S.	Bozeman	triangle@aa-montana.org	
DCM				
11	Colby D.	Billings	dcm11@aa-montana.org	Archives, DR Finance
12	Nick D.	Roberts	dcm12@aa-montana.org	Literature, DR Public Information
21	Rob P.	Malta	dcm21@aa-montana.org	CPC, DR Treatment
23	Mike M.	Sidney	dcm23@aa-montana.org	Public Information, DR Archives
31	Jim G.	Miles City	dcm31@aa-montana.org	Literature, DR Corrections
41	Lee T.	Great Falls	dcm41@aa-montana.org	Corrections, DR Treatment
42	Gerry L.	Shelby	dcm42@aa-montana.org	Corrections, DR CPC
51	BilliJo D.	Havre	dcm51@aa-montana.org	CPC, DR Public Information
61	Tom D.	Helena	dcm61@aa-montana.org	Treatment, DR Grapevine
71	Kevin .	Anaconda	dcm71@aa-montana.org	Archives, DR Grapevine , Treatment
72	Jennifer W.	Bozeman	dcm72@aa-montana.org	Finance, DR Corrections
81	Dan K.	Missoula	dcm81@aa-montana.org	Grapevine, DR CPC
91	Libbie L.	Kalispell	dcm91@aa-montana.org	Grapevine, DR Archives, Literature
93	Eric D.	Lolo	dcm93@aa-montana.org	Public Information, DR Literature
NON-VOTING MEMBERS				
Advisor	Andrew W.	Missoula	advisor@aa-montana.org	
Archivist	Gerry R.	Clancy	archivist@aa-montana.org	
Webmaster	Alex M.	Helena	webmaster@aa-montana.org	

- District 11—Billings
- District 12—Laurel
- District 21—Wolf Point, Glasgow
- District 23—Glendive
- District 31—Miles City
- District 41—Great Falls
- District 42—Cut Bank, Chouteau, Shelby
- District 51—Havre
- District 61—Helena
- District 71—Butte
- District 72—Bozeman
- District 81—Missoula
- District 91—Kalispell, Whitefish, Eureka
- District 93—Bitterroot Valley



Standing Committee Membership

Each DCM is a voting member of a standing committee. Districts also have a non-DCM voting member on these committees. The voting membership of the standing committees for the 2009-10 rotation is identified below.

Finance Committee: Chair—Linda B., Voting DCM—Jennifer W. (D. 72), Other Voting Members—Delegate, Area Chair, representative from District 11

Archives: Chair—Tim H., Voting DCMs—Colby D. (D. 11), Kevin M. (D. 71), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 23 and District 91

CPC: Chair—Virginia R., Voting DCMs—Rob P. (D. 21), BilliJo D. (D. 51), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 42 and District 81

Corrections: Chair—Mary S., Voting DCMs—Lee T. (D. 41), Gerry L. (D. 42), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 31 and District 72

Grapevine: Chair—Richard K., Voting DCMs—Dan K. (D. 81), Libbie L. (D. 91), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 61 and District 71

Literature: Chair—Lori F., Voting DCMs—Nick D. (D. 12), Jim G. (D. 31), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 91 and District 93

PI: Chair—Tim M., Voting DCMs—Mike M. (D. 23), Eric D. (D. 93), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 12 and District 51

Treatment: Chair—Paula H., Voting DCM—Tom D. (D. 61), Other Voting Members—representatives from District 21, District 41 and District 71

(Highlights continued from page 1)

events to discuss the GSC agenda prior to the spring assembly. This allows members of the Fellowship who will not attend the assembly to participate in discussion.

At the Spring Assembly of 2007, the Area embarked upon a project to implement and maintain a statewide toll free hotline. Callers can use this number to find a meeting or speak to another alcoholic. Calls are received by a professional organization that asks the caller his location. This question then tags the call to a district and the district is then billed for the call. By persistently working together, we feel most of the kinks have been worked out. Also at the Spring 2007 Assembly, the Area requested that AAWS produce a hardbound edition of the Daily Reflection.

We have accomplished much by working together. In unity, we can do what alone we cannot. Thank you, Area 40, for allowing me to serve. Carole B., Panel 59 Delegate

(Change continued from page 1)

Still, how do we gain this quality to serve? You showed me through "sponsorship". You suggested, "if you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it", would be as good a place to start as any. I remained skeptical and sobriety was difficult at best. I attended your meetings, often showing up just in time to get a seat, always on the back row next to the door.

Then I was approached by a man who stated that I did not ever have to take another drink again and he would show me how. This was not an exciting outlook because what I heard was "he would tell me how". How true for us that our perceptions were as twisted as we were. That day my journey began, I was willing to follow.

My sponsor spoke often about getting involved; he assigned me things to do at my home group, often without my permission. When I challenged the direction he would simply remind me of my commitment "to go to any length for victory over alcohol". Begrudgingly, I would take the action. Little did I know what was happening! I was being re-arranged, with my own participation. So with each new job in my home group, at the district, working each of our 12 steps, asking questions about the real meaning of the traditions and finally learning to see the value in a life of service to others, my life was transforming from what was, to something I had never imagined. When I would claim my sponsor tricked me into doing service work, he would laugh and say that I still had an "ego" problem.

I was sponsored, was sponsoring others, went to meetings on a regular basis, helped form other meetings and groups. At first, these activities seemed to be filling that spiritual void; life had taken on new meaning. I saw and delighted as others around me recovered from that seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. Then, when I was 11 years sober, I began to realize that going to more meetings was not the answer. I failed to grasp and understand the greater lessons of service. I had taken over my life again and began to blame others for my misery. I had taken no stock in my sobriety. My life became a living nightmare. What had I become?

The answer came when I began to re-work the steps, all of them with guidance. I had forgotten the lessons that the steps and service had shown me. Each, in its design deflates the ego and allows the grace of God to come in and make those rearrangements. My job was to continue working the A.A. program.

I had not completely worked all the steps. I had not made direct amends to my son, whom I had not seen since he was 4. I asked for help, did not take the prescribed action, and my life got worse. Then out of desperation I surrendered. I began to write my son letters. My sponsor insisted that he read them prior to mailing and often had me rewrite them, omitting the self pity, selfishness, self centeredness, ego and fear. I worked with others, tried to be consistent and follow the directions; I prayed, meditated, passed our message to the still suffering alcoholic, recognized that my ego separates me from you and me from God.

The forward to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions states "A.A.'s Twelve steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole" and "A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the fellowship itself. They outline the means by which AA maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows." Our 12th tradition tell us that "we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all." I still must do and take the actions, trust the process and leave the

results up to God.

The actions made the seemingly impossible happen in my life. This past January I was able to make my direct amends to my son. It was most painful to be reminded of what I was like prior to my coming to A.A. In the midst of the amends what I saw, what I felt, what I believed, without question drastically changed my life – (my perception) and that of my son's forever. I knew and was humbled by the power of God's grace as he had entered our hearts and minds and had made all things anew. This experience was not a new one; it was like being sober my first year. I was in the middle of AA doing what was asked. Today, I am in the middle once more and my life has taken on a new dimension and new outlook. The experience with my son has not left me. Each time I think about it, I am taken back to the moment when, in the calmness, there was forgiveness, understanding and love. I was and he was what HE had intended us to be.

The next morning I met with my son again and he gave me a ball cap with the following inscription on its brim: "January 16, 2009, the day we met, the day my life feels whole". You see, by the actions and admissions that I learned by service to others, by doing what you did, by sharing freely and honestly, not only had my son's life become whole but mine had as well. I had purpose, I had peace of mind, "I had become part of." A most powerful and moving experience, one filled with gratitude. When I extend my hand to you in service, what I am really doing is what God wants me to do.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself", in other words do for others and the spiritual law will be fulfilled as each of us in turn offers service to our fellow man. It all makes sense today, my job is to be of service to you and my fellows, to give freely of what I find.

My sponsor has shown me what I "must" do and I just followed the directions, although at times I thought it was all for nothing. Today I only need to remember the experience of watching the new man's eye's open, listen for their joy and laughter, watch him continue the process. I am still reeling from the experience with my son and the profound spiritual impact on my life. I know this experience is not uncommon, ask anyone whose life has been rebuilt as the result of these steps and continues to demonstrate the principles in all their affairs, but to me this experience was profound. My perceptions and my actions have undergone a drastic change. I no longer just believe, I know what I have found; what you all have shared with me. It is your example of consistency "to do what you say you are going to do and be where you say you are going to be" that enables a guy like me to be a part of. A small part of a larger whole.

Here this weekend we are going to discuss many subjects, make new friends and touch each others lives in ways that will never happen again. As we share in the process, I hope each in turn will see the greater value of service through self sacrifice so that we can preserve our fellowship, through recovery, unity and service. We are of service to each other. We do this through the process of surrender, by taking actions that we do not believe in. What began as our differences and indifferences turns out to be our similarities, love and service to others. I find this to be synonymous with humility, service and a change in perception. In this process of humility and service I am and we are brought into the presence of a loving God.

I would like to share a quote from one of our members, Tom I. He states, "when preparation, meets opportunity, God will make the introduction". I hope your home group is a haven for the suffering and not a showcase for the contented. Thank you for allowing me to share.

Colby D., District 11 DCM



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