

The Triangle

Area 40 Corrections and Treatment

Keeping Your Group In The Loop

February 2013

Hello Area 40! I am really looking forward to serving Area 40 during this rotation. It's that time of year where the Area Secretary, also known as the Area Registrar, is busy updating all the group and district changes to include the new rotation of trusted servants. Some of you have already sent your group and district information changes directly to GSO. Part of my job as Area Registrar consists in updating your changes in a database called Fellowship New Vision (FNV). GSO prefers that the registrar (me) do the updating when possible, even though at the bottom of the forms it only gives ways to send the form to GSO. You can email me at: secretary@aa-montana.org, find my contact information in this issue or find it on the Area 40 Website at aa-montana.org (under the Area Committee tab).

I will email the group information forms to all DCMs and will also mail a hard copy for you to make copies and have on hand at your District meetings. The forms are also available on our website (aa-montana.org). I can help you with registering new groups, which include groups in correctional institutions.

DCMs role in the updating process is to get as much updated group information as possible. This update is very important. The group information may include:

- What groups have new GSRs not yet reported to GSO or the Registrar?
- Has a GSR or Primary contact changed any personal information?
- What groups have disbanded or moved?
- Does a group have a new name?
- Has a group changed districts?
- Correction meetings can be registered, also.

Why register or update information? The data is entered into the Fellowship New Vision (FNV), from the records department at GSO. As the Area Registrar, I can provide information that was only available from the GSO records department for our Area. 'Active' groups are put into the Regional Directories as long as there is a willing GSR, Alt. GSR or contact person for that group to be available for as a phone contact. Additionally, the database is how chair positions receive their welcome kits for their new position. Did you know that there are 300 +/- 'inactive' groups dating back from 1949 in our area alone? These are groups that the records department has received and verified information that a group has disbanded or is not currently meeting. Right now there are 290 +/- active groups in our Area. The record for these groups indicates that they are active when they have a primary mail contact and meeting information.

I am here to help us all work together to get Area 40 updated at GSO the best we can.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve,

Mary M.

Group Change Form: <http://aa-montana.org/pdf/area/GroupInformationForm.pdf>

New Group Form: <http://aa-montana.org/pdf/area/NewGroupInformationForm.pdf>

Volume 21, Issue 2

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An Update From Our Area Corrections Chair

I'm still getting my feet under me as your new Area Corrections Chair but I want to thank the fellowship for this opportunity to serve. It is truly an honor and a privilege. I also want to thank Terry H. for her great service as our Area 40 Corrections Chair through this past rotation.

The topic I have gotten the most questions about so far is the status of meetings at Montana State Prison (MSP). I am very pleased to inform the fellowship that meetings finally resumed at the facility December 1st after a long hiatus. Meetings are being held every Saturday evening on both the Low Security Side and at the Work Dorm. Meetings rotate weekly between Districts 61/71, 72, 81 and 93. We currently have 38 carded sponsors from 7 different districts eligible to support these meetings. Six more AAs attended the most recent orientation. So, there is a lot of excitement and commitment from the AA community. Thanks to everyone for your patience and to the staff at MSP for their support and cooperation through this process.

The Corrections standing committee for this rotation consists of the District Committee Members from Districts 61 and 71 as well as the District representatives from Districts 23 and 72. I look forward to working with this team of dedicated AA members. I'm still collecting contact information for the district corrections chairs. If DCMs have not sent me your corrections chair contact information, please forward it on to me so I can get them on my mailing list. Also if your district or AA event would like to conduct a Corrections workshop, please don't hesitate to contact me. You can reach me at corrections@aa-montana.org.

As I start to learn more about all the correctional facilities in Area 40, I am reminded how important this work is for all of us. We serve men and women who can't just call the hotline and find out where the nearest meeting is. Most facilities require outside AA volunteers to show up to allow a meeting. But even more important is what Bill Wilson found out 78 years ago, that strenuous work with another alcoholic is vital for our own permanent recovery. Attending meetings in correctional facilities, whether they are held at MSP, the local jail, WATCH East or West have always given me the most profound sense of usefulness. And this from a guy who never went to prison while drinking, never went to jail, never got a DUI, never got into a bar fight. So please don't limit yourself; get involved. We need your help.

Lee G., Area 40 Corrections Chair

DCMs	NAME				EMAIL
District 11	Mike D.				dcm11@aa-montana.org
District 12	Daniel M.				dcm12@aa-montana.org
District 21	Joe G.				dcm21@aa-montana.org
District 23	Mary M.				dcm23@aa-montana.org
District 31	Martin D.				dcm31@aa-montana.org
District 41	Chris W.				dcm41@aa-montana.org
District 42	Beth Z.				dcm42@aa-montana.org
District 51	Dan F.				dcm51@aa-montana.org
District 61	Karla B.				dcm61@aa-montana.org
District 71	Betty P.				dcm71@aa-montana.org
District 72	Ray M.				dcm72@aa-montana.org
District 81	Sherry C.				dcm81@aa-montana.org
District 91	Paul L.				dcm91@aa-montana.org
District 93	Kevin C.				dcm93@aa-montana.org

An Update From Our Area Treatment Chair

Greetings to my fellow AA members in Area 40. First off, I want to thank the members in Area 40 for allowing me the opportunity to serve you as the new Treatment chair. As has been my experience throughout my brief time in general service, these first few months in a new position are filled with bewilderment - I sit here wondering what exactly I am supposed to be doing?

The General Service Office (GSO) was kind enough to send me materials relating to the treatment position. Over the last couple of weeks I have started browsing through the materials (quite a bit of it), along with the Service Manual, reading up on exactly what I am supposed to be doing - or at least what is suggested.

So, what I have been doing? Late last year, shortly after the Fall Assembly, I got a chance to speak briefly with Colby D., the outgoing Treatment chair from the last rotation. He and I made tentative plans to get together after the first of year and 'pass the torch'. My apologies to Colby D as I have yet to take him up on the offer. That is my goal for February - to sit down with Colby and inundate him with questions. After all, who better to ask than the person rotating out? Along with trying to get with Colby next month, I will also be reaching out to the DCMs in Area 40 with regards to their treatment committees. My hope is to compile a list of all treatment committee members in each district, to contact those members directly and help answer any questions they may have.

In March I plan to attend the WSCRSC in Rapid City, SD. I have not yet seen the agenda for the General Service Conference, but I cannot think of a better place outside of our own assemblies to learn more about what is going to take place at the conference this year.

That is about it so far for the first couple of months. As always, if your group or district has any questions, or would like a visit, please let me know. You can reach me at treatment@aa-montana.org.

Here's to another exciting 2 years, and once again, thank you for allowing me to serve as your Treatment Chair.

In Service, Brandon M., Area 40 Treatment Chair

Corrections Correspondence

Another way to be of service in the corrections system is through the Corrections Correspondence program. This can be done on your schedule and does not require showing up somewhere or blocking out a specific increment of time.

When anyone—anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there—for that I am responsible.

GSO coordinates a program that connects AAs on the outside (not incarcerated) with AAs on the inside (who are incarcerated). The incarcerated person and their outside AA contact communicate through letters. The letters help the person on the inside feel connected to AA. It is also a great way to help the person on the inside become acquainted with the AA program including information about literature, meetings and sponsorship. AAs are connected based upon their geographic location which allows the possibility for a local contact when the incarcerated individual is released from confinement.

AA is frequently in need of more volunteers for this program. If you would like to share your experience, strength and hope with someone on the inside you can fill out and return the form on the Corrections Correspondence pamphlet or call: (212) 870-3085. You may also email corrections@aa.org.



Jail Meetings As Service Work

Hello, my friends. I was asked to share a bit about my experience taking meetings into corrections facilities. I've been attending those meetings for around ten years now. Some of the employees at these facilities call us AA counselors and AA sponsors. We are neither; we are simply AA members attending AA meetings in a correctional facility. The inmates are not allowed to have meetings on their own without our presence. We don't make the rules, we just follow them. The meetings I attend are no different than any other AA meeting "on the outs" as they say in jail. There is a chairperson and a format, a topic, discussion, and even the closing prayer.

When I first started going inside I was a bit fearful and didn't know what to expect. I went with another member who had been doing it for years. He taught me how to keep the meetings on track in a gentle but firm way, how to discourage cross talk, and how to use my own experience to encourage others to open up and share. If you are new at these meetings, I suggest that you go with someone who has experience and learn from what they do until you are ready to develop your own style and have the confidence to go in on your own.

I had some common misconceptions when I first started going in, primarily that the inmates were somehow different than me. I'm happy to say that I was wrong about that. There have been far more similarities than differences. Most of the men that I have met in jail or prison meetings have had prior AA or NA experiences and have struggled with relapse. Many of them have had multiple experiences with some form of treatment and it just didn't take. They weren't ready to quit yet. Sound familiar? Quite often I hear them say that they are grateful that they got caught or they probably would have continued until they were dead.

My experience in corrections has been richly rewarding. I'll give you some examples. One particular inmate I met at the Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center (MASC) was at the Area 40 Assembly some years ago. When I ran into him there, he had a district service position. He is still attending the assembly and is holding a new position. Another fellow was complaining that he wasn't done drinking yet and was angry at the system for catching him and locking him up. Within a matter of weeks he was singing a different tune and saying he was enjoying sobriety and was going to give AA a try. I could go on much longer, but I think you get the picture.

The most rewarding piece of all this is that I get to share my experience, strength and hope with men who just might appreciate the fact that they can count on me to show up. So many of them have been let down by people in their lives, abandonment, broken promises, etc. I've been told by many how they appreciate someone showing up for them on a consistent basis. I've made many friends inside those walls, a gift that to me is priceless.

If you have been considering getting involved in corrections service I strongly encourage you to do so. It has been one of the most profoundly enriching and rewarding experiences in my life. I believe it would be for you too.

Yours in service, Dan K. District 81

How AA On The Inside Connected A Man To Sobriety

Early sobriety was tough. I think that it should be tough, though. I don't ever want to go through it again. I was locked up for the first 2 years of my sobriety. I had never been in jail before then. The first 3 days were spent crawling around on my hands and knees detoxing and calling to God. I had one saving grace which was this idea that came into my head that maybe this time I could get it. I had been sober before and was even one of the AAs who was considered to be "doing the deal". Before I went to jail I was living my life waiting for something bad to happen. As it turns out, the bad thing I was dreading developed into the greatest thing that happened in my life. Jail became my catalyst for a sober life. My sobriety has been based upon simple willingness from the very beginning.

While I was incarcerated, there were some things that helped me as I was "doing my time." First, and most important, was the willingness to seek and start working with a sponsor immediately. I began working with a sponsor while in jail and continue to work with him today. Then, there was the AA literature that I found on book carts in the jail. The most useful books that I was able to procure were the set of books known as The Best of The Grapevine. Since the Grapevine magazines were not allowed in the county jail at the time, the stories contained in those books were my saving grace. They were short and full of hope. I really needed them to be short as I had the attention span of a gnat in those first days of sobriety. Since that time, the Grapevine literature has proved to be a great cure for having too much time on my hands.

Sam B., Area 40 Grapevine Chair

Bridging The Gap Update

As each of us assumes our new or renewed service opportunities I would like to share with you the exciting news within Area 40 regarding “Bridging the Gap” (BTG). As my rotation as Area 40 Treatment Chair, ended there is still more work to be done. I hope and trust each of you will pursue with vigor and enthusiasm the spirit of service in Area 40 that I experienced and continue the expansion of our statewide BTG contact database.

Looking back when our BTG was done by mail or word of mouth we saw the returns quickly flourish and then diminish as our society grew and changed. Oftentimes, the facilities are located across the state so it took a lot longer to connect people. With internet access available in virtually every community, cell phones, smart phones, HD TV and radio, why wouldn't we in Area 40 access these benefits of technology to help the sufferer?

Area 40 has overwhelmingly embraced this new technology and implemented a system that speeds up connecting those leaving a treatment or correctional facility with sober members of AA in the communities where they will reside.

In short the process looks like this: When someone is leaving a treatment center or correctional facility they can request a BTG contact for when they are released. On the Area 40 side, a database of contacts is kept securely on our Area 40 website. The database will allow specific district level trusted servants instant access to those names and numbers so we can get the contact process started quicker than if we weren't able to utilize technology. BTG provides a wonderful opportunity to be of service. We can help! Area 40 has been undergoing a spirit of growth and participation like none that I have seen in the five years that I have called Montana home. Currently we have someone in place to receive and enter the volunteer contact information in Districts 12, 23, 31, 41, 61, 71, 72, 81, and 91. As of January 2013 there were 68 volunteers listed in the following cities: Anaconda, Belgrade, Bozeman, Butte, Lame Deer, Miles City, and Missoula. This is a great start, but we have a ways to go! To be a part of the solution please speak with your GSR, DCM or Area 40 Treatment Chair and ask them how you can be a part of this process. We need volunteers, lots of volunteers, committed, sober and living this design for living that really works!

As we all began our journey, we moved away from hopelessness towards hopefulness and the fruits of labor have brought us into abundance. Bridging The Gap has evolved as an effective way to provide that life-giving gift! The members of your home groups and districts around the state are the vital links for making this happen. I look forward to seeing and hearing your stories “as we trudge the Road of Happy Destiny”.

In loving service, Colby D. Past Treatment Chairman, Area 40

How The Districts Upgrade Bridging The Gap Contacts

1. A BTG representative from each District can log in to the BTG system on the Area 40 website and enter volunteers from their district. The information is collected on sheets that are passed around at meetings.
2. There is a separate page with a secure login that shows the volunteers' information. Only the representative from each district can log in to this page. It is secure and confidential. The BTG district representatives can log in to update and retrieve information.
3. The information is well-organized and stored on the website. Since we rotate service positions every two years (or sometimes sooner to fill a vacancy) it is good to have this information stored in a place where BTG work can pick up immediately. Plus, it saves time since a rep can log on to the website within a minute.

POSITION	NAME	EMAIL
Delegate	Sharon S.	delegate@aa-montana.org
Area Chair/Alt Dele-	Gerry R.	chair@aa-montana.org
Secretary	Mary M.	secretary@aa-montana.org
Treasurer	Libbie L.	treasurer@aa-montana.org
Archives	Kira A.	archives@aa-montana.org
CPC	Serena R.	cpc@aa-montana.org
Corrections	Lee G.	corrections@aa-montana.org
Grapevine	Sam B.	grapevine@aa-montana.org
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Treatment	Brandon M.	treatment@aa-montana.org
Triangle Editor	Erin G.	triangle@aa-montana.org

NON-VOTING	Name	EMAIL
Advisor	Terry S.	advisor@aa-montana.org
Archivist	Earl F.	archivist@aa-montana.org
Webmaster	Alex M.	webmaster@aa-montana.org

From Inpatient To In Sobriety

I was introduced to Alcoholics Anonymous in a treatment center when I was sixteen. I immediately disliked it. I thought it was boring, and I was also convinced that I was much different than the people I met in meetings. I knew I was an alcoholic, but I was sure that I was a different (worse) kind of alcoholic than the smiling, grateful people I heard share. In addition, the steps seemed completely unrelated to my problems, and I had little interest in working them. Luckily, the treatment center I was in took us to an outside meeting every day. And, most of the staff members were sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Being in a meeting every day, and listening to the staff talking about their sobriety, led me to suspect that there might be a solution for me in Alcoholics Anonymous. I began to relate to people. At first, I could only relate to how people drank, but I began relating to the way they felt.

While this was a beginning, it would not have been enough to keep me sober and coming back to Alcoholics Anonymous when I got out. I believe that one of the reasons I am sober today is that the treatment center I was in required that we get sponsors from the meetings we attended, and, that we met with them once a week. As a direct result of working with that sponsor I became convinced that Alcoholics Anonymous would work for me. In going through the first few steps, I got some relief from my head, and developed a fledgling relationship with a higher power. My experience working with a sponsor is why I continued going to meetings and working the steps when I left treatment.

Kelly B., Bozeman Young Peoples' Group

The Pink Can Fund

During the 2011-2012 rotation \$8,048 worth of literature was distributed from the Pink Can Fund. Very loosely translated, that means 1,059 people have Big Books who would not have had them without the contributions made to the Pink Can Fund.

AA books and literature carry the message to those who are confined. The literature costs money—lots of money. Those who are confined don't have money, so how do they get the written message that is so valuable to our sobriety? The money comes from the Pink Cans we see at some meetings. There are a lot of misconceptions about the Pink Cans. Most institutions only have one meeting a week or none at all. This means that the literature supplied through the Pink Can funds may be the only contact inmates have with our program of recovery.

The spare pennies, nickels, and quarters AA members contribute to this type of 12th step work goes a long way, and it does work. More than one inmate has stated that the literature received from funds from the Pink Can saved their lives.

You can get your Pink Can cover from your Area Corrections Chair (corrections@aa-montana.org). Contributions to the Pink Can should not replace our 7th tradition contributions. We need to make sure the newcomer has a place to come while at the same time providing literature to those who could not get it otherwise.

My service must continue, my activity must never cease in my responsibility to the suffering alcoholic who is looking for a way out. May the sunlight of the spirit replace the darkness of alcoholism. In love and service, Terry H. Past Area Corrections Chair



Quote Corner

"I could hardly lower my standards fast enough to keep up with the new bottoms I was hitting."

"All of my sobriety dates have corresponding arrest dates."

"For years I thought honesty meant saying, 'I plead guilty, your honor'."

"The solution to a problem with alcohol has nothing to do with the problems of a drinker."

"Freedom is the by-product of the willingness to take the spiritual actions suggested by the AA program."

Quotes are compiled by Tom W. of The Missoula Group

AA On The Plains

Like all districts, we face our own set of unique challenges. Among them are: large geographic distances between groups, impacts from the farming and ranching seasons, the winter weather, not enough people to fill service positions, few available members to sponsor the newcomer, and low 7th tradition contributions. We are, for the most part, a culturally diverse population of ranchers and farmers. In order to be successful, each farm or ranch requires large expanses of land, thus making communication extremely difficult. Our group participation waxes and wanes, depending on the calving, planting and harvesting seasons. Many people do not have email or internet access; I had to find ways to pass on information from the Area and GSO to the groups and to direct members to those webpages. Weather creates its own challenges. At times, our rural members have to wait hours or even days for the highways to be plowed. For some, it takes hours to get to a meeting. These factors sometimes make for low attendance at business meetings (with or without food—believe me, we’ve tried!).

When I was elected to serve as DCM, our district had not participated in Area business for many years. I was surprised to learn, however, that our district was among the first districts to register with Area. At some point, the old “old guys” of the ‘50s were no longer present to transition in the new “old guys”, resulting in a loss of momentum. Our groups became isolated, thus making attempts to revive our district seemingly impossible. However, despite our challenges, we have seen our district come alive.

Service to my district has taught me many things about myself, and I have been enriched in ways I had never imagined possible. I have remained sober. Serving as DCM, in my wind blown corner of the state, may well have saved my life.

In addition to our struggles to stay unified, we also experienced a number of successes as we trudged the Road of Happy Destiny. Here are some methods that worked towards increasing the communication and contact within our district. I printed the information I received from Area and GSO and snail mailed them to our GSRs. I put together a newsletter so that even when people couldn’t make it to the meetings they could still get the information. We started an annual celebration—The Wild West Soberfest and sent out notices to the Triangle, the Area web page, the Grapevine, and DCMs. We even brought fliers to assembly so GSRs could take them back to their groups. We invited our delegate to give us the delegate’s report in our District. We asked our Area chairs to join us and provide workshops. We invited GSRs from remote or non-participating groups to speak and participate. Additionally, I provided information about the upside down triangle and encouraged GSRs to participate in the service structure. I relied on other DCMs to provide examples of ways we could reach our groups. Together we were able to increase our participation in general service.

Laura S., Past DCM District 21

Prison Meeting Orientation

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held in the state prison. They are conducted by volunteers from AA with the commitment rotating between several districts. To be eligible to take meetings into the prison an AA member must complete a volunteer application and attend an orientation. The next orientation dates are May 25th and September 21st. Applications must be returned six weeks in advance of the orientation date to allow for the prison to conduct a background check.

The Department of Corrections will not allow people in to the prison if they have had a felony conviction in the past five years. Also, they will not accept individuals who have had a misdemeanor conviction for violent, disorderly, domestic or drug-related charges in the past three years. Additionally, volunteer applicants should have no verifiable questionable criminal/administrative activity or associated information with regard to their character which causes concerns for facility security and staff and inmate safety.

If you would like to participate in this please see your District Corrections Chair, your DCM or contact the Area Corrections Chair. You can reach the Area Corrections Chair at corrections@aa-montana.org.

The Delegate's Message

Hello fellow A.A. members. Happy Valentine's Day and I hope this month provides us all with bundles of opportunity for love and service in A.A. and that the Corrections/Treatment stories and information in this issue inspires us to help carry the message in one of the many ways available and coordinated through our districts and area.

Carrying the message of A.A. to people in correctional and treatment facilities is dear to my heart. Although I did not spend time in an institution, I have been blessed to be able to participate in meetings in the women's prison, our local jail and Montana Chemical Dependency Center (MCDC); this is part of my sober life and I am convinced that this work has contributed to the quality of my life and the sobriety I have today. I need a lot of opportunities to get out of myself, plus I learned to make and keep commitments, go when I didn't want to, be consistent, and reach out even when I am afraid; there were fears that were removed and unexpected opportunities for amends and forgiveness. Now, I am more concerned about the message I carry than myself and I want the hand of A.A. always to be there!

On to delegate business — I am getting welcomed and initiated! I got to participate in a District 11 service workshop. There was a great turnout and we had a lot of fun sharing about the traditions and carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic; plus considering what might be done to expand and improve what is already working well.

I've received all my information for the General Service Conference (GSC) and am in the process of responding to the General Service Office's (GSO) requests for information. I will be serving on the Agenda Committee, which is chaired by a former District 11 A.A. member and DCM, Lynda R., who now lives in Louisville, Kentucky.

The Area Committee had our first conference call. We are getting acquainted and regular conference calls provide an opportunity to work together as a team to best carry out our primary purpose in Area 40. You will receive the agenda for the Spring Assembly this month through your DCM and next month in the Triangle. It will include the agenda items for the GSC. The background information will be available this month, too. There is a huge volume of background material and it is for A.A. only, and is not anonymity protected. For this reason (and a request from the GSO), distribution of the material will be via CD or USB drive (no paper by request). It will not be available on the Area web site or anywhere on the internet. The West Central Region AA Service Conference (WCRSC) is March 1-3 in Rapid City, South Dakota. I hope to see some of you there. Districts will be discussing hosting and/or attending pre-assembly meetings sometime in March to discuss Area and GSC agenda items; I look forward to participating in those discussions with you and then hearing the informed sense of the Area at our Spring Assembly April 5-7 in Lewistown.

I appreciate being able to serve you. You are the voice and ultimate authority of A.A. I will be 'concentrating on my spiritual condition' in order to honor and respect that trust and do my best to hear what you have to say.

Sharon S., Area 40 Delegate Panel 63

Triangle Subscription Dates

Hello Area 40 Friends:

Thank you for sending your subscription forms and payments for the Triangle. You can mail them to PO Box 1266 Missoula, MT 59806. At the end of every month I send the payments to our Treasurer and she deposits them into the Area 40 account. (If you send a check at the beginning of a month it will be deposited near the end of the month.)

Due to some technical difficulties there appears to be a bit of confusion as to when some Triangle subscriptions expired.

Simply put—the subscription and expiration information is not available. Therefore, all renewals or new subscriptions will begin when they are received. For example, if you sent your \$10 in January 2013 then your Triangle subscription will be active from February 2013 until February 2014. During this time you will receive 8 issues of the Triangle.

If you do know the date your Triangle subscription expired you are welcome to send that information along with your renewal form and payment. However, the above method of assigning a subscription date appears to be the fairest way to proceed. It insures that groups that paid their subscription fee get the issues they paid for.

Erin G., Triangle Editor

Area 40 Events Calendar

Into Action Weekend: February 15th, 16th at the Creston Grange Hall in Creston (near Kalispell)

Mid-Winter Social: February 16th at Joliet Community Center in Joliet

Men's Retreat: February 22nd-24th at Abba's Haven in Lavina

West Central Regional AA Service Conference: March 1st-3rd in Rapid City, South Dakota

Sober Ski: March 1st-3rd at Whitefish Mountain Resort in Whitefish

Banff Roundup: March 8th-10th in Banff, Alberta, Canada

NW Pockets of Enthusiasm: March 8th-10th in Spokane, Washington

Northern Rockies Pockets of Enthusiasm: March 15th-16th at the First Presbyterian Church in Helena

Area 40 Spring Assembly: April 5th-7th at the Yogo Inn in Lewistown

Area 40 Spring Round Up: April 12th-14th at the GranTree and Holiday Inn in Bozeman

Beartooth Mountain Conference: June 28th-30th located South of Big Timber

West Central Regional Forum: September 2nd, 3rd in Bloomington, Minnesota

Area 40 Fall Assembly: September 20th-22nd at the Yogo Inn in Lewistown

Area 40 Fall Round Up: October 11th-13th at the Crowne Plaza in Billings

Fliers can be found at aa-montana.org/calendar. We welcome you to submit your events to calendar@aa-montana.org.



From The Area Archivist

Hello Area 40,

Welcome to the Panel 63 rotation of Area 40. I am Earl Fink the new Area 40 Archivist. This letter is to introduce myself and let you know that I am available to bring a display to any Area or District function that you are hosting throughout the year. I am also asking for your help. Please include me in your mailing or email lists for any information that you are distributing to your Districts or Committees. For example: District Minutes, Round-up committee meeting minutes, District activities, anything that might be a contribution to the history of your District or that of Area 40. The archives are a living, growing, ever-changing collection of historical and current documents, correspondence, recordings and items of significance to Area 40 and AA, and your contributions to the collection will be greatly appreciated. One reminder that I would like to make is: when we have any printed materials: letters, flyers, emails, etc., please make sure that the information is dated, including the year.

It is an honor to serve AA and Area 40 once again. If I can be of any assistance to any of you, please don't hesitate to ask, and I am looking forward to working with each of you throughout the rotation. If you have a District Archivist or Archives Chair, please let them know that I would like to have their contact information also.

In Service, Earl F. Area 40 Archivist

A Great Next Step

A few 24 hours ago, I was provided the uncomfortable opportunity of spending time in an alcoholism treatment program, and, on another occasion, a correctional facility. While in these institutions, I had the benefit of having the hand of AA extended to me. I realize today that not everyone is as lucky.

Because of this experience, I understand how it feels to have that seed of hope planted in what seems like a hopeless situation, and how hope can be sown with nothing more than the example of another person's changed life. I know for a fact that the work of AA in these institutions is both critical and appreciated.

I have had the chance to go back through those doors, as a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous, carrying the same message of hope that was once carried to me. I must say that, while it was gratitude for my sobriety that prompted me to go back to these institutions, the gratitude I felt when I left was like nothing I had ever felt before in my life. I had watched hope sprout roots, yet again, as it grew in those with whom I spent time. I understood, much better than I ever had up to that time, how this program really works.

Service work in Area 40 is loaded with opportunities for all of us to enjoy similar experiences. Take a meeting into the jail, speak at a treatment facility, sponsor someone in prison, participate in the Bridging the Gap Program. These experiences, and many more like them, are available for you to participate in and are all guaranteed to take your recovery to another level.

Contact your district's Corrections or Treatment Chairperson or, contact information for the Area 40 Corrections Chair and the Area 40 Treatment Chair, can be found in another part of this Triangle. A call to any of them can help you take the next life-changing step in your recovery. What are you waiting for?

Gerry R., Area 40 Alternate Delegate

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