

Service: Rotating On...

BEFORE I COULD ROTATE ON...

Before I could rotate “out or on” from a service position in AA I first had to be allowed to rotate into the job and for me the journey in AA has been about learning “tolerance” by being “tolerated” . My fellow members have been very kind to me along the way when many times I gave them no reason to be so kind.

I sobered up in September 1979 from a bottom brought on by my drinking and 13 years later I would hit a bottom just as painful only this time the bottom I hit was brought on by my “thinking” not my drinking. In February 1993 two men came into my life, one of them was the messenger telling me it was not necessary to live a rotten way of life sober, the other man was my guide showing me by his constant compassion and only occasional abrupt approach in teaching me.

Along the way through the steps my sponsor started to talk about the concept of becoming a “giver rather than a taker”, much of the time I did not understand what he was saying but it felt good hearing such a message of depth and weight.

As he guided me through the amends I owed to the people in my life the conversation turned to the amend I owed AA. I was a lousy DCM – pushy, short tempered and intolerant. Somehow I needed to set it right with AA as a whole.

He told me to go back to the Assembly and stand for any service position my job would permit me to serve. He said if you are elected, serve the fellowship not yourself and listen to your fellows.

I was elected Area Treasurer on the first ballot. Right after the ballots were counted and the announcement was made one of the people who remembered me from the past stood in my face and looked me right in the eye and asked “ Are you going to quit this job too?” Years before I had been elected Grapevine Chair and before the ink was dry on Monday following the Assembly I just called and said I quit. No explanation or consideration.

You can be sure I did not quit the Area Treasurer job. The directions from my sponsor were clear. Serve the fellowship not your self, it was the most fun I had in a service position. There was a bit of controversy in the term but I was not the cause. I had to listen to the members and provide suggestions and experience. It was the beginning of learning what it meant to become a leader.

Because of the man who guided me, I was allowed to serve with a glad heart and rotate “out or on” as some say. It was an experience of taking the unconditional love from my fellows and serving them.

Bryan S.

Last Chance Recovery Group, Helena, MT

THANK YOU

About six years ago I walked into my first District meeting and less than an hour later I was the new District Grapevine Rep. This led to my first trip to Area, followed by a term as District 81 DCM, and then a term as your Area 40 Triangle Editor. As my term as Triangle Editor comes to a close, I am reflecting on what I have learned through general service in AA.

First, every service position I've ever held has felt confusing and overwhelming. Fortunately, there are numerous AAs who are willing to help me learn as I go. The Triangle truly is your newsletter. Area 40 AA members write the articles, submit the reports and even proofread my work before it goes to the printer. Without your contributions, the newsletter would not exist. I would like to sincerely thank Sharon S. for her service to the Triangle. Her Triangle Transition materials have held the newsletter together since 2010, allowing for every new Triangle Editor to setup our own production systems. And, thank you to Carleen L. for somehow finding time to edit and proofread each issue before it goes to print, even when it seems like you have a whirlwind schedule filled with dozens of commitments. Thank you to Alex M. for helping me through multiple computer crashes. Thank you to the Area 40 Committee Chairs for your enthusiasm and articles. Whenever I felt overwhelmed by the position a warm smile and a helping hand (with an article in it) always appeared.

Second, I reaffirmed the fact that I do best when I am rooted in AA with a service position that challenges me and regularly keeps me in contact with my fellows. Certainly, the District Grapevine position, DCM and Triangle Editor positions have done this for me. As I rotate on to serve as my homegroup's secretary, I am reminded about why we do what we do in AA. I show up to write a newsletter so that I don't have to drink. But, it's more than just not drinking. AA has given me a life that I didn't know was possible. I didn't know that I could be happy and healthy, useful to my fellows and feel peaceful on the inside. But, since I'm an alcoholic who likes to push my boundaries, I need roots, like a service position, to keep me in AA.

There was a change in the lineup. Welcome to Tim M. of Helena as your new Triangle Editor!

Yours In Service,

Erin G., Triangle Editor, Missoula Group

Corrections Update

Montana State Prison hosted the first AA mini-conference in about 10 years on Saturday, November 8th. Twenty outside AAs and about 10-15 inmates, as well as two MSP staff, were treated to 1 inmate and 2 outside speakers, a panel presentation on the AA program, the 12 Steps and sponsorship and a call-up meeting. The attendees also shared dinner and fellowship throughout the afternoon. With this successful event, the hope is that this will be the first of many such events at MSP. Thanks to everyone who attended.

Pink Can Fund

Since the Fall Area Assembly the Pink Can Fund has received \$750 in donations from Districts 72 and 91 and the Traditions Group in Anaconda. \$1353.65 in literature was purchased before the literature prices went up. So we have an inventory of Big Books, Twelve & Twelves, Daily Reflections as well as several relevant AA DVDs and packet of pamphlets. If any correctional facility needs AA literature, please con-

Why AA in Prison?

See for yourself. . .come to one of our meetings some time!

THERE has been many an AA group instituted throughout the Midwest in prisons and at the same time a very burning question raised; "Why start a group in a penitentiary? Those people do not have an alcoholic problem in there!"

Perhaps these persons who are skeptical have a point but, brother, there are a great many more points on the other side of the ledger. Too, we have often wondered if the persons raising these complaints are as good AA's as they profess? Have they actually studied the Twelfth Step?

Having had the opportunity to see both sides, free world and prison life, we can truthfully say that of all the rehabilitation programs, which is the hue and cry of everyone, both inside and out, only one has been outstanding in aiding an inmate of an institution in bettering himself for a desirable life upon his release to society. That program is Alcoholics Anonymous.

To get back to the point of alcohol in prison, it is true that there is a very minute chance of an alcoholic being able to follow his chosen profession and we do not use the words, chosen profession, lightly, because we know that one must choose this way of life because there is one so much better he could have for the asking. However, "tater mash," "alky," "shellack" and other "lifters" have been known to be used by incarcerated persons.

As editor of the country's largest prison paper, in point of circulation, we have watched the Ohio Penitentiary Group, sponsored by the Central Ohio Fellowship, grow from a mere 60 interested parties at the first session less than a year ago to nearly 300 members whose hearts and souls are in AA work. We have attended each meeting and never leave one without a lump in our throat due to the earnestness in which these men partake of the meetings. It is heart rending to watch these men sit with openmouthed wonder as a speaker drives home a point that touches them.

Every one of the nearly 300 men can trace his being taken away from society because of the use of alcohol. Many of them did not know what to do to stop drinking. They felt they were "hooked."

At first they are skeptical as to why someone, a person out in the "free world" would be interested in them. It takes some longer than others to grasp the meaning of the 12 Steps, to actually see that AA can and will return them to a sane and happy life. Every convict, and many folks "outside," is suspicious of someone who wants to do something for him. He believes that there is an angle being shot. Just what does this guy want that is trying to help me, so he says?

Is it not true that the hardest part in AA is getting a "drunk" sobered up and kept sober until the AA program sinks in? In prison that is all eliminated. The prospect is stone sober in a penitentiary, believe me. He can fully grasp the meaning of a wonderful life more thoroughly because his freedom has been taken away. He has had time to make a decision if he wished to straighten up and fly right. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, a penitentiary or reformatory is the place to start. A man either wants to live right or he doesn't. He is as low as he can get, he cannot sink lower but with the grace of God and AA he *can* be returned to society a man with a good, clean mind and enjoy the fruits of freedom.

If you are one of those persons who cannot see the good of a group in a penitentiary, and are in the vicinity of Columbus, Ohio, on the first or third Sunday of any month, contact the AA office, and we are certain you will be permitted to attend this closed (because of security measures) meeting and see for yourself just what AA is doing in the third largest prison in the nation.

Reprinted from the AA Grapevine Story Archives

D.T.

Columbus, Ohio

Posted from <<http://da.agrapevine.org/article.php?id=86736&tb=1ZD0x>>

Thank You For The Opportunity To Serve

Greetings, friends! My name is Sharon and I am currently serving as your Area 40 Delegate. We don't have very many days left in this rotation and I hope we all have had opportunities for spiritual growth in these past two years and are looking forward to more in the next two!

These two years have flown by for me and serving as your delegate has been a wonderful experience. It isn't an experience I ever expected to have and, for most of my sobriety, was not particularly interested in having! I didn't ever say "I'll never do that", because I think I've learned where those words often lead me. I did say I'll think and pray about it and ask my sponsor; and, in the end, decided to let God decide. I didn't know my love of Alcoholics Anonymous could grow any stronger. Well, it could and it did! Love is an action!

I have some experience and thoughts to pass on, I hope they will be useful:

Our principles as we find them in the Steps, Traditions and Concepts. — I am grateful for my sponsor who encourages me to be current in the Steps and I am grateful for the many opportunities I have had to use the steps when disturbed, and to consider how the Traditions and/or the Concepts may guide us in the decisions we make. I wish this for all A.A. members.

Communication — There is so much to communication:

Am I afraid ?

Am I a good listener?

Am I honest?

Do I promptly return phone calls , emails or texts?

Do I do what I say I will do, when I said I would do it?

Am I willing to be open-minded in order to hear what our members are thinking, what their concerns are and act accordingly, in the best interest of A.A. as a whole?

Once decisions are made and actions taken, we also have a responsibility to share that information with our groups and districts. I arrived in A.A. full of fear. Through the years, I have had numerous opportunities to see how this defect affects my relationships with others and my ability to communicate effectively. I am grateful for the opportunity A.A. gives me to grow and change. The opportunity is there for all of us and I wish each of you well on your journey.

This has been a hard article for me to write. I am sad that my opportunity to serve in this position is over, and feel like I am saying good-bye. But, that is not true, I am not saying good-bye, but thank you for trusting me to serve and thank God and our founding members for the principles of rotation and progress (not perfection!). I will rotate on to serve as the Area Advisor and will do my best to be sure the coffee and water urns are full of good, hot beverage!

Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve you! You have enhanced my life!

Yours in loving service,

Sharon S., Area 40 Delegate, Panel 63

Standing for & Rotating on

Yet another service rotation in Area 40 has come to its predictable end. Every two years, at this time, recovering alcoholics around Montana are preparing to either begin, or bring to a conclusion, their time in a particular service position. Each time we go through it I am reminded of a couple very valuable lessons that were shared with me by those ahead of me.

Whenever I stand for a service position, after praying about it, talking to my sponsor and reviewing the guidelines of the position, I stand WITH whoever else is nominated for the position. It is a very common misconception that when I stand for a position that I am running AGAINST whoever else is nominated. This may sound like an exercise in semantics but, when you think about it, our purpose for serving is to serve AA as a whole, not to beat someone else who wants the job. So, I stand WITH that other person, both of us are willing to serve, both are also willing to accept whomever the group conscience decides as their trusted servant. We both want what's best for AA and neither of us are going against the other, we just both want to do our part.

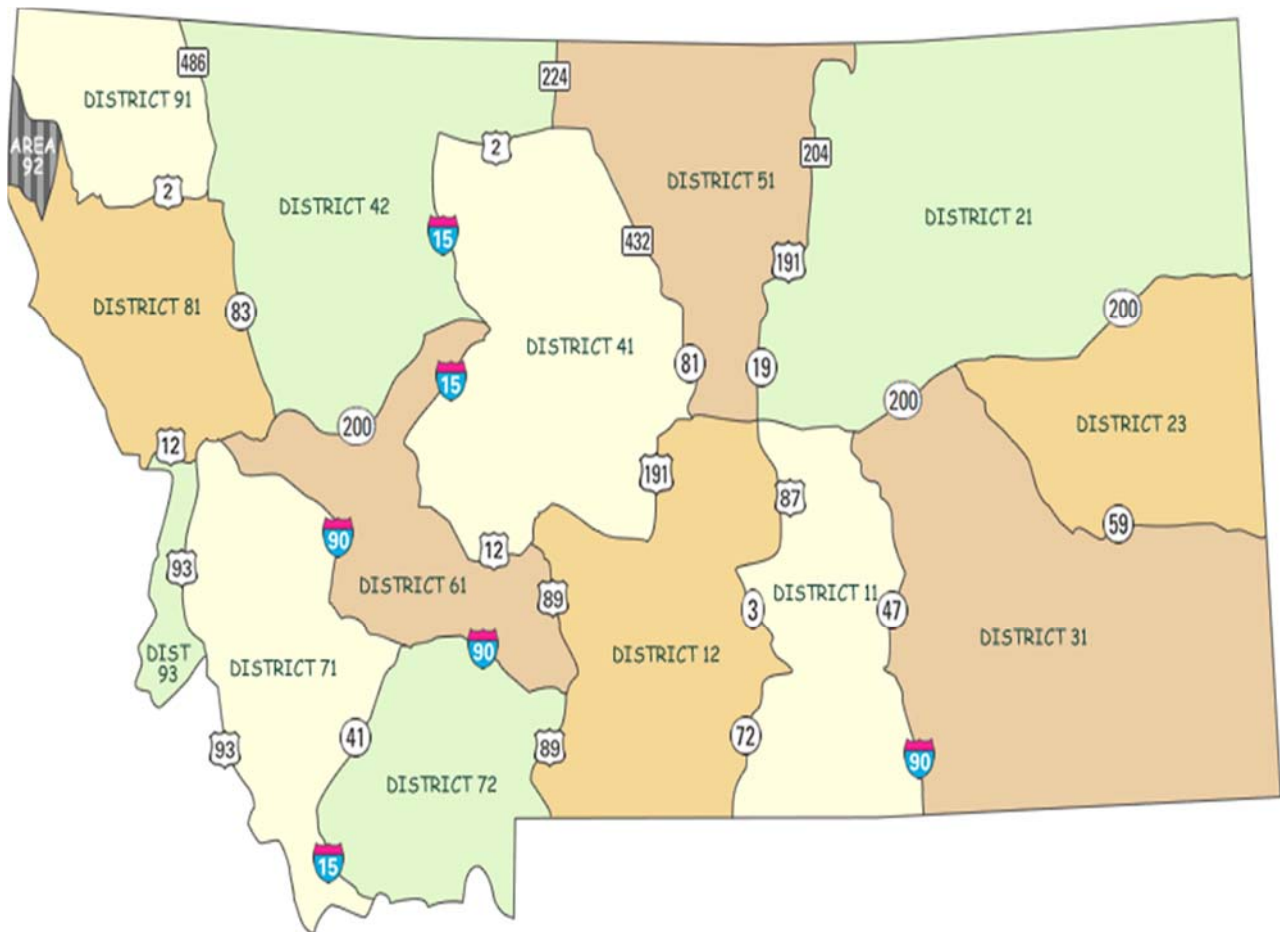
When I finish a rotation, regardless of what position I served in, I rotate ON to wherever my Higher Power shows me is the next right place to be. That may be another formal position in the AA service structure with established guidelines and qualifications, or something less formal that simply needs attention from a concerned alcoholic. I never rotate OUT of service, because by doing so I would be cutting off one of the three vital legs of my recovery. I have found that I need Recovery, Unity AND Service, if I am to have any hope of holding on to the wonderful life that I have discovered here.

Thank you all for the many wonderful lessons and for allowing me to be of service. I look forward to standing and serving with all of you again soon.

Gerry R.
Outgoing Area Chair/Alternate Delegate
Incoming ???

AREA 40 FINANCIAL INFORMATION, Libbie L. Treasurer

	Expense	Income	Budget
2014 YTD			
11/22/14	27922.18	29079.16	30940.00
2013	30197.41	29174.37	32650.00
2012	28067.16	32048.42	33530.00
2011	35345.72	24215.69	36359.94



Your trusted servants are rotating! After two year rotations, it's time to welcome in a new slate of trusted servants at the Area level. It is likely that your District officers are rotating on, too.

Thank you to everyone who served. And, welcome aboard to those of you who are rotating in to a new position for the next two years, especially those of you who are new to the Area Committee.

POSITION	NAME				EMAIL
Delegate	Sharon .S				delegate@aa-montana.org
Area Chair/Alt Delegate	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
Literature	Nick D.				literature@aa-montana.org
Public Information	Luke S.				pi@aa-montana.org
Treatment	Brandon M.				treatment@aa-montana.org
Triangle Editor	Erin G.				triangle@aa-montana.org

NOTE: There will be NEW trusted servants on the Area Board as of January 1st, 2015. The people listed on this contact list will hold their current positions until December 31st, 2014.

Regardless of who holds the position, you can still reach the trusted servant by using their Area 40 email address, which is listed next to each position.

Example: Public Info Chair = pi@aa-montana.org.

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	Kathy B.				dcm31@aa-montana.org
District 41	Chris W.				Dcm41@aa-montana.org
District 42	Brynn M.				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	Mike M..				dcm93@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

AREA 40 INC
PO BOX 1266
MISSOULA MT 59806

Return service requested

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 569
MISSOULA, MT

CONFIDENTIAL

Triangle Subscription Form

If you would like a subscription for yourself, a friend or your group, please return this form. The cost of the Triangle is \$10 per year. Make checks payable to Area 40.

SEND TO:

AREA 40 TRIANGLE
PO BOX 6433
Helena MT 59604

Group Name _____

GSR/Contact Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

WHERE TO MAIL

GROUP

CONTRIBUTIONS:

Area 40, Inc.

PO Box 9931

Kalispell, MT 59904

*If sending to Area
please address check to
Area 40 Inc*

Subscription Information:

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

Individuals: If your subscription has expired, this will be your last issue of the Triangle.

GSO

PO Box 459

Grand Central Station

NEW YORK, NY 10163