



AREA 40 TRIANGLE

A Newsletter for A.A. in the State of Montana

Group Service: What's it all about?

When first arriving in Alcoholics Anonymous, our minds and hearts are consumed with achieving sobriety. This makes sense, since sobriety must come first before anything else.

As we stay sober and become more involved, we begin to hear fellow members talk about service. We may begin to ask, "What's group service all about and why is it needed?"

As *The A.A. Group: Where it all begins* pamphlet says, "When newcomers walk into our meeting rooms, we want A.A. to be there for them as it was for us—something we can do continuously only if we function as a group. But, for a group to keep going, all kinds of jobs must be done. It is through the combined efforts and ongoing commitment of group members that:

- A meeting place is provided and maintained.
- Programs are arranged for the meetings.
- Contributions are collected, and properly allocated and spent.
- A.A. Conference-approved literature is on hand.
- Grapevine literature and lists of local group meetings are available.
- Refreshments are often available.
- Alcoholics in the area learn that A.A. is available and how to find it.
- Continuing contact is sustained with the rest of A.A.—locally, through the intergroup (central office), district and area's general service committee; and nationally and internationally, through the General Service Office in New York."

We do this through all kinds of group service: greeters, coffee makers, coffee pourers, openers, closers, GSR's, Alt. GSR's, Group Committee Representatives, literature representatives, business chairs, regular meeting chairs, cup washers, supply purchasers, secretaries, treasurers.

As our Responsibility Statements says, "I am responsible...when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that I am responsible."

A.A. DEPENDS ON THE GROUPS

"The entire structure of A.A. depends upon the participation and conscience of the individual groups, and how each of these groups conducts its affairs has a ripple effect on A.A. everywhere. Thus, we are ever individually conscious of our responsibility for our own sobriety and, as a group, for carrying the A.A. message to the suffering alcoholic who reaches out to us for help.

- *The A.A. Group: Where it all begins*, p. 11

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Excerpts from A.A. Literature, materials, and Grapevine are reprinted with permission of A.A. World Services and Grapevine, Inc.

The Triangle is anonymity protected. All A.A. members are identified by first name and last initial only.

"If I were asked which of our blessings I felt was most responsible for our growth as a fellowship and most vital to our continuity, I would say, the 'Concept of Anonymity.'" Bill's last message read by Lois, 1970 Annual New York Intergroup Dinner

A.A.'S LEGACY OF SERVICE

"A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer—ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service."

- *The A.A. Service Manual*, p. S1

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THE PRINCIPLE OF ROTATION

“Traditionally, rotation keeps A.A. members from becoming frozen in office. It also ensures that group tasks, like nearly everything else in A.A., are passed around for all to share. Upon election, or vacancy of an office, many groups have alternates or assistants to each trusted servant who can step into the service positions they have been trained for, while other members fill the alternate slots just vacated.

To step out of an A.A. office you love can be hard. If you have been doing a good job, if you honestly don't see anyone else around willing, qualified, or with the time to do it, and if your friends agree, it's especially tough. But it can be a real step forward in growth—a step into the humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity.

Among other things, anonymity in the Fellowship means that we forgo personal prestige for any A.A. work we do to help alcoholics. And, in the spirit of Tradition Twelve, it ever reminds us ‘to place principles before personalities.’ Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. ‘status’ at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise—we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed.” - *The A.A. Group: Where it all begins*, p. 34

LANDED IN MY HOME GROUP - PAUL L., AREA 40 DELEGATE

I finally landed in my home group after a month of sobriety. I had been bouncing around between different groups in the valley before I finally realized that going to the A.A. meeting downtown would be fine. After all, it was explained to me, I didn't have a problem stumbling out of the bar across the street at five o'clock in the afternoon. Going to a meeting for recovery couldn't be any worse than that.

I had observed from my earlier meeting attendance that most everyone pitched in to help. Making the coffee, pouring the coffee, cleaning up afterwards, chairing the meeting, being a reader and opening the door for the meeting were all jobs that I saw people volunteer for and share. I have always been someone that pitched in to help, but I had certain fears that narrowed my opportunities. I wanted something simple that would be hard to screw up and something that didn't require a lot of exposure to others. In other words something I could do by myself, so I didn't have to chit chat or have anyone know who I was.

I finally stumbled upon what I thought would be the perfect job for me. One meeting I inadvertently arrived a little early. I observed Warren struggling with a five gallon bucket of water he was carrying up the stairs to the meeting room. I asked if I could help and he said yes. Our meeting room at that time had no running water or a drain. All of the water for the coffee had to be obtained from the shoe store directly below the meeting room and carried up the stairs. The coffee that was not consumed had to be carried down and poured into the gutter.

We chatted for a bit, one on one, and he asked if I wanted to show up a little early for the next meeting and he would show me what was involved for this job. I said yes, it was the perfect job for me, I could do it in isolation and I would be making a contribution to the group. Little did I know there was more involved to it than that. People said hi to me, thanked me, and acknowledged my presence. But by now it was too late, I had been bitten by the service bug.

THE A.A. HOME GROUP

“With membership comes the right to vote upon issues that might affect the group and might also affect A.A. as a whole—a process that forms the very cornerstone of A.A.'s service structure. *As with all group-conscience matters, each A.A. member has one vote; and this, ideally, is voiced through the home group.*

Over the years, the very essence of A.A. strength has remained with the home group, which, for many members, becomes their extended family. Once isolated by their drinking, they find in the home group a solid, continuing support system, friends and, very often, a sponsor. They also learn firsthand, through the group's workings, how to place ‘principles before personalities’ in the interest of carrying the A.A. message.

Talking about her own group, a member says: ‘Part of my commitment is to show up at my home-group meetings, greet newcomers at the door, and be available to them—not only for them but for me. My fellow group members are the people who know me, listen to me, and steer me straight when I am off in left field. They give me their experience, strength and A.A. love, enabling me to pass it on to the alcoholic who still suffers.’” - *The A.A. Group: Where it all begins*, p. 18

THE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (G.S.R)

“The general service representative has the job of linking his or her group with A.A. as a whole. The G.S.R. represents the voice of the group conscience, reporting the group's thoughts to the district committee member and to the delegate, who passes them on to the Conference. This communication is a two-way street, making the G.S.R. responsible for bringing back to the group Conference Actions that affect A.A. unity, health, and growth. Only when the G.S.R. keeps the group informed, and communicates the group conscience, can the Conference truly act for A.A. as a whole.” - *The A.A. Service Manual*, p. S24

STANDING COMMITTEES AND ALTERNATE ASSIGNMENTS

Each Area 40 Chair has a standing committee that is picked from the hat and made up of DCM's and District Representatives. These committee members attend the Area Chair's committee meetings during the Area Assemblies. Each standing committee has five committee members, which includes the standing committee chair.

The Area 40 Finance standing committee is different than the others. The Area Delegate and Area Chair are automatically assigned to sit on this committee. With three members automatically assigned, only two members are picked from the hat to add up to the five needed to complete the committee.

These standing committees discuss agenda items and make recommendations to the floor of the Area Assembly. During the assembly, the standing committees usually meet twice, unless it's an election assembly where they may only meet once due to limited time.

These standing committees also have an alternate assignment, except for Area 40 Literature. For example, the Area 40 Archives Chair has an alternate assignment of Area 40 Structure and Policy. The Area 40 Archives Chair and their standing committee will discuss agenda items in relation to archives but also agenda items that deal with structure and policy of Area 40.

Below is a list of all Area 40 standing committees along with their alternate assignments.

- Archives/Area 40 Structure & Policy
- Cooperation with the Professional Community/Trustees
- Corrections/International Conventions
- Finance/General Service Conference Finance
- Grapevine/Policy & Admissions (GSC)
- Literature (doesn't have an alternate assignment)
- Public Information/Report and Charter & Website
- Treatment Facilities/Agenda

If you're attending an Area Assembly and want to attend a standing committee meeting, you are more than welcome to, even if you are not a committee member. Attending these standing committee meetings during the Area Assembly is a great way to learn more about the background information for a particular agenda item and to participate in discussion. And, if you're lucky, you may even be asked to be secretary for the meeting and get the opportunity to learn even more by taking notes!

If you're interested in more information on Standing Committees and how Area 40 works, please check out Policy and Procedures on the Area 40 website: aa-montana.org.

2019 GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE (GSC) COMMITTEES - AGENDA ITEMS (These GSC Agenda Items Are In Addition To Area 40'S Agenda Items)

I. AGENDA

- A. Review suggestions for the theme of the 2020 GSC.
- B. Review presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2020 GSC.
- C. Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2020 GSC.
- D. Review the GSC Evaluation Form, process and 2018 Evaluation Summary.
- E. Discuss report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' committee on the GSC.

II. COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC)

- A. Discuss progress on implementation of A.A.W.S. LinkedIn page.

Tradition Two Snip-it

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

"We oldsters often construed our longer experience as a sort of vested right, even an unlimited license, to run A.A. indefinitely. Whenever we got sick, tired, or old, we naturally thought ourselves entitled to hand-pick our own successors. Who could know better than we? But with the passage of time most of us came up against some hard facts of A.A. life. We ruefully discovered that the groups, no matter how much they liked and respected us, simply did not want us to be the self-appointed managers of their service and policy affairs forever.

Harder still to accept was the now proven fact that the conscience of the group, when properly informed of the facts and issues and principles involved, was often wiser than any leader, self-appointed or not." *A.A. Comes of Age*, p. 98

Does your group hold group conscience/ business meetings and are they "properly informed?"

AAGrapevine.org has the Traditions Checklist. Take it to your group. Engage with your sponsor. Challenge a sponsee.



"Oh, oh! Here comes Simpson for the business meeting."

Pay for Your Newsletter Online!

Groups are encouraged to be self-supporting for their Triangle subscriptions, which is a cost of \$10 per year. You can pay online at aa-montana.org or you can mail in your subscription to Area 40 Triangle, P.O. Box 852, Milltown, MT 59851.

Concept Two Bite

The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

“As early as 1945 it began to be evident that the co-founders’ ultimate responsibility and authority for services should never be wholly vested in a Board of Trustees. Certainly our Trustees must be given a large share of the active and immediate responsibility. But the ultimate and final responsibility which Dr. Bob and I still possessed simply could not be transferred to a self-appointing Board which was relatively unknown among A.A.’s as a whole. But where, then would your ultimate responsibility for world services finally be lodged?”

A.A.’s history now shows where the ultimate authority finally went. At St. Louis it went from Dr. Bob and me to the A.A. groups themselves.

No matter what authority the groups had, they could not meet their new responsibilities until they had actually delegated most of the active ones. It was precisely in order to meet this need that the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous was given the vernal responsibility for the maintenance of A.A.’s world services and so became the service conscience for A.A. as a whole.” *The A.A. Service Manual, p. 10*

**Does your group have a GSR?
Is your GSR attending District and Area Assemblies?**

Get the Concept Checklist at aa.org.

A.A. REGIONAL AND LOCAL FORUMS

“Started in 1975, these weekend A.A. Forums are held four times a year—each in a region of the U.S. or Canada that has extended an invitation. Representatives of the General Service board and G.S.O. and GV staffs participate in each Forum with A.A. members living or visiting in the region. The purpose of the meetings is to provide better communication among all levels of service for the region concerned. Planning and coordination, in conjunction with regional trustees and delegates, are handled at G.S.O.”
-*Your A.A. General Service Office pamphlet*

- B. Consider request to remove text “They may help arrange hospitalization” from the pamphlet “Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community.”
- C. Review contents of CPC Kit and Workbook.

III. CORRECTIONS

- A. Consider request for a review of all corrections related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive.
- B. Consider request that the General Service Office establish and help maintain a database of Correctional Facilities in each service area in the U.S. and Canada and the status of meetings held therein.
- C. Review contents of Corrections Kit and Workbook.

IV. FINANCE

- A. Review suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference.
- B. Review the conference-approved level of \$5,000 for individual bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members.
- C. Review the Conference-approved maximum annual contribution of \$5,000 to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member.
- D. Review Self-Support Packet.

V. GRAPEVINE

- A. Consider the list of suggested AA Grapevine book topics for 2020 and later.
- B. Consider request to remove the “Alcoholism at Large” section from AA Grapevine.
- C. Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.
- D. Review AA Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey and summary.

VI. LITERATURE

- A. Review progress report on the development of the pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women in A.A.
- B. Review progress report on the development of the pamphlet on A.A.’s Three Legacies.
- C. Consider requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- D. Review progress report regarding updating the video “Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure.”
- E. Review progress report on the update regarding text on anonymity to the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship.”
- F. Consider the development of a Literature Committee Workbook.
- G. Review progress report on the update to the pamphlet “Too Young?”
- H. Review progress report on the update to the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.”
- I. Review proposed revision to A.A. World Services’ “Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials.”
- J. Consider request to revise the pamphlet “The A.A. Group.”
- K. Review progress report regarding the update to the pamphlet “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated.”
- L. Review progress report regarding language on safety and A.A. for inclusion in *Living Sober* and “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship.”
- M. Consider revising the Foreword to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.
- N. Consider suggestion to add “Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers” to the end of the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (blue) card.
- O. Consider request to update the pamphlet “The Twelve Steps Illustrated.”
- P. Review matrix of A.A. recovery literature.

VII. POLICY/ADMISSIONS

- A. Review dates for the 2022 GSC.
- B. Review report from GSO’s general manager on GSC site selection.
- C. Consider a process for how a conference committee could review, discuss and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a conference committee.
- D. Discuss the process of approving qualified representatives from other A.A. service structures to observe the U.S. and Canada GSC.
- E. Discuss a request to “develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items.”
- F. Consider revising the “Process for Polling the General Service Conference Between Annual Meetings.”

G. Reconsider the 1986 Advisory Action regarding a simple majority vote by the full Conference.

VIII. PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI)

A. Review 2018 annual reports from the trustees' PI Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org.

B. Review a report regarding the 2019 PI Comprehensive Media Plan.

C. Public Service Announcements (PSAs):

1. Review the distraction and tracking information for the video PSA "Changes."

2. Review the 2018 Report on the Relevance and Usefulness of Video Public Service Announcements.

3. Consider request that the video PSA "My World" be discontinued.

4. Consider request to approve the development of a new PSA in video format that utilizes full-face actors (not members of A.A.).

D. Review draft language addressing anonymity and safety proposed for the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity."

E. Consider request to update language in the flyer "A.A. at a Glance."

F. Review the 2018 trustees' PI Committee progress report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account.

G. Review the 2018 trustees' PI progress report on the use of Google AdWords and Google Grants to carry the A.A. message.

H. Review contents of PI Kit and Workbook.

IX. REPORT AND CHARTER

A. Discuss GSC *Final Report*.

B. *The A.A. Service Manual, 2018 - 2020* - Review progress report from A.A.W.S. Publishing Department on the redesign of *The A.A. Service Manual*.

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

X. TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

A. Consider revising the pamphlet "Bridging the Gap" to include related corrections activities.

B. Consider adding a story from an A.A. member who is deaf to the pamphlet "Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers."

C. Consider updating the pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic - Never too Late."

D. Discuss the concept of posting anonymity-protected interviews on aa.org with military professionals about their experience with A.A.

E. Review draft of proposed Remote Communities Kit.

F. Review contents of Treatment Committee Kit and Workbook.

G. Review contents of Accessibilities Kit and Workbook.

XI. TRUSTEES

A. Review resumes of candidates for: Northeast Regional Trustee, Southwest Regional Trustee, and Trustee-at-Large/Canada.

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 AA Grapevine, Inc.

E. Review draft procedures for partial or complete reorganization of the General Service Board.

XII. ARCHIVES

A. Consider request to add the 1940s home movie of the co-founders and their wives to the video "Markings of the Journey."

B. Review Archives Workbook.

XIII. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/REGIONAL FORUMS

A. Discuss an anonymity-protected photograph of the flag ceremony to be taken at the 2020 International Convention.

B. Consider a broadcast of the 2020 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony, similar to the anonymity-protected delayed Internet broadcast of the 2015 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony.

C. Discuss ways to encourage interest in Regional Forums and attract first-time attendees.

BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR THE GSC AGENDA ITEMS WILL BE AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 15TH ON THE AREA WEBSITE: [AA-MONTANA.ORG](http://aa-montana.org). PLEASE TALK TO YOUR GSR OR DCM TO GET ACCESS. DISCUSS THE AGENDA ITEMS IN YOUR HOME GROUP AND SEND YOUR GSR TO THE SPRING AREA ASSEMBLY, APRIL 5TH - 7TH, IN GREAT FALLS, MT. (AGENDA ITEMS SPECIFIC TO AREA 40 WILL BE FORTHCOMING.)



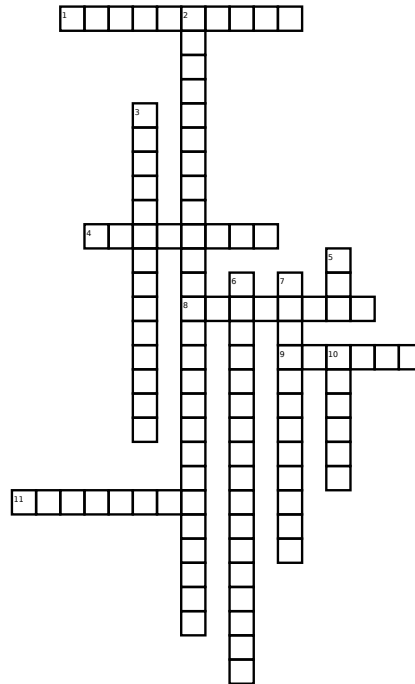
A CALL TO ACTION!



We need your experience, strength, and hope!

Please send us short articles—400 words or less—on District Service. **Please submit no later than March 9th via email to triangle@aa-montana.org.** Were you a GSR attending District? DCM? Alt. DCM? District Committee Representative? What was it like attending District meetings? What's your most prominent memory of District? Inquiring minds want to know!!

AREA 40 TRIANGLE CROSSWORD



Down:

2. What form is used when a new G.S.R. is elected?
3. What does a G.S.R. attend twice a year?
5. Who links your group with A.A. as a whole?
6. On p. S23, what is the vital importance?
7. What form needs to be submitted when starting a new group?
10. What does a G.S.R. give their group after attending a District meeting or an Area Assembly?

Across:

1. What pamphlet provides "extensive information for group(s)?"
4. What meeting does a G.S.R. attend once a month?
8. How long does a G.S.R. serve?
9. What will G.S.O. send to a new G.S.R. if notified?
11. What's the General Service Office's website?

Literature: A.A. Service Manual (2015-2016 Ed.) **Hint:** S22 - S30 — **Happy Hunting!!**

Keep a look out for the next Area 40 Triangle for the answers!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Need a flier for your group?
Check out aa-montana.org

February 2019

- February 16th ➡ Mid-Winter Social, Joliet Community Center, Joliet, MT
- February 16th ➡ Primary Purpose Speaker, Pilgrim Church, Bozeman, MT
- February 16th ➡ Flathead Valley Valentine's, Whitefish Community Center, Whitefish, MT
- February 22nd - 24th ➡ 31st Spring Men's Retreat, Abba's Haven, Lavina, MT
- February 23rd ➡ Into Action Weekend, Bohemian Hall, Whitefish, MT

March 2019

- March 1st - 3rd ➡ 32nd Annual Whitefish Sober Ski, Whitefish Mountain Resort, Whitefish, MT
- March 1st - 3rd ➡ West Central Regional AA Service Conference, Moorehead, MN
- March 9th ➡ District 11 Pre-Assembly, American Lutheran Church, Billings, MT**
- March 15th - 16th ➡ Pockets of Enthusiasm, 1st Presbyterian Church, Helena, MT
- March 16th ➡ District 72 Pre-Assembly, Boulder Hot Springs, MT**
- March 23rd ➡ District 81 Pre-Assembly, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Missoula, MT**
- March 30th ➡ MT Intergroup Founder's Day, Shrine Auditorium, Billings, MT

April 2019

- April 5th - 7th ➡ Spring Area Assembly, Holiday Inn, Great Falls, MT
- April 27th - 28th ➡ Heart to Heart III, Chico Hot Springs, Chico, MT

May 2019

- May 4th ➡ 12 Step Study - Holly D, Civic Center, Great Falls, MT
- May 17th - 19th ➡ 2019 Spring Round-Up, Red Lion Hotel, Kalispell, MT

DON'T MISS A PRE-ASSEMBLY!

- March 9th - District 11
- March 16th - District 72
- March 23rd - District 81

Send your GSR to a Pre-Assembly that is located closest to your District. Your GSR will receive information on the Spring Assembly Agenda Items and inform your group. Your GSR can then bring your group's conscience to the Spring Area Assembly. The GSRs represent the groups of the Area and in turn our Area Delegate, Paul L., represents our Area (all our groups) at the General Service Conference.

Don't miss out on participating with A.A. as a whole!

Need to contact your Area 40 Chairs?

Area 40 Delegate

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AREA 40 TRIANGLE CROSSWORD ANSWERS

January Answers

1. How many Trustees are nonalcoholic (Class A)? Seven
2. This is made up of 21 Trustees. General Service Board
3. What's the "B" stand for in Class B Trustee? Boozer
4. Groups on top and Trustees on bottom. Upside-down Organization
5. District Committee Member. DCM
6. How many Trustees are A.A. members (Class B)? Fourteen
7. Who reports back to the Area after attending the General Service Conference? Area Delegate
8. General Service Representative. GSR
9. How many times does the General Service Board meet each year? Quarterly
10. A member of A.A.'s General Service Board. Trustee
11. Groups are organized into... Districts
12. The U.S./Canada conference is divided into how many areas? Ninety-three
13. The communication process starts with the... Group



CONFIDENTIAL

Please share this newsletter with your group!

Triangle Subscription Form

Want a subscription for yourself, a friend, or a group?
Return this form to the address below or subscribe online
at aa-montana.org.

Group Name: _____
GSR/Contact: _____
Address: _____
City, St., Zip: _____
Phone No.: _____
Email: _____

SEND TO:
AREA 40 TRIANGLE
P.O. Box 852
Milltown, MT 59851

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:
Groups are encouraged to be self-supporting
for their Triangle subscription, which is a cost of \$10 per year.
“Expired” above the mailing address indicates the subscription has expired. Due
to Past Actions of the Area Assembly, all groups will receive the Triangle
regardless of subscription status.

Mail Group Contributions

Area 40, Inc.
P.O. Box 3826
Missoula, MT 59806
*Make checks payable
to Area 40, Inc.*

GSO
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Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Make checks payable to GSO