

# Area 69 News & Notes

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## Learning to speak the language of the heart

Doug suggested a topic for me for this newsletter a couple of months ago, but like so many things in the past few months, I lost it. Actually, I lost it, found it, and lost it again! I think gremlins have moved into all of my electronics! Anyway, I was thinking about the current Conference Theme of "Communication and Participation ...", my brain stuck on communication and my first spouse came into my mind. This was a woman who was just getting out of treatment, I was about a year sober and up to Step 8 or 9. She was also from La Verkin; she was on a 2<sup>nd</sup> trip through this facility and they weren't going to release her without a sponsor. A guy from my home group was attending meetings at that center at the time and asked me if I would go meet with her and hopefully sponsor her. My sponsor thought it was a great idea, so I agreed.

I have to tell you, as best as I could see, we had NOTHING in common. While she was an alcoholic, her drug of choice after her last relapse was meth. Drugs were never more than incidental in my history, with my drug use the last several years of my drinking comprising of smoking a joint about once a year. I didn't know anything about

meth at the time. She was older than me; she was very loud, swore a LOT and was totally hyper. I've never considered myself particularly loud, my mouth stays pretty clean unless my spirituality is in the toilet, I think I'm pretty mellow, and certainly was compared to her. I didn't know how to take someone through the Steps, and my primary functions as her sponsor seemed to be to talk her down when she called me, regularly, about to explode about something, and to take her to meetings. Sometimes I would be shaking by the time I hung up the phone with her because it was so hard for me to not get wound up to her level, and due to some of my past history, I have a hard time, especially back then, being around loud people. For me, someone yelling or even talking very loud to me used to mean I was going to take a beating, and I was several years sober before I could talk with someone who was loud without my body going into fight or flight. But she kept calling, I kept taking her to meetings and giving her the suggestions that had been given to me – to say "help" in the morning, "thank you" at night, read the Big Book, call me, etc., which she did.

After a few months of this, I was going to Salt Lake for something. She asked if she could come with me because she wanted to visit her mother. I was horrified at the thought of spending 8 hours in the car together, but I couldn't say no ... she didn't have a drivers license or vehicle, and she was asking to see her mother. I said yes. Well, that trip changed a lot for me. We talked at a whole different level, and I was able, finally, to see our similarities instead of just our differences, and I don't know about her, but that was a lesson I carried with me. It's easy to hear the words "look for the similarities", but until I have the experience, they're just words. That trip took the words in my head and turned them into a knowing in my heart.

I have no idea what the point of writing this was, but after two days of staring at it, wanting to write something else, and having nothing come up, I decided there must be a reason and I quit resisting. It may not have anything to do with communication as it relates to the conference topic, but maybe it has a little to do with what we do best in Alcoholics Anonymous, learn to speak the language of the heart. Julie S.

## Literature Committee Report

My name is Pete and I am an alcoholic. I have the privilege to serve you as the Standing Chair for Literature. Well, it's official, as of April 12 I am now living in District 7. My new contact information is listed below.

At the Pre-Conference Assembly, there was an amazing 130.00 dollars of Literature purchased. The majority was service-oriented. I have a new supply of Service Manuals available in addition to many pamphlets that have the new cover design. For those Districts that have literature racks in shelters or treatment facilities, I am giving away the pamphlets with the older cover designs as I replace them with the newer cover designs. Please ask me if your District or group can use these 'older' pamphlets, as they are still very useful tools for carrying the message.

Julie mentioned that the booklet 'Inmate to Inmate' was being updated and that the older version of this booklet was available for six dollars a case. Area 69 purchased 12 cases of this booklet, with many

Districts and groups asking for help in taking advantage of this offer. I have a few cases from this shipment that are still available, so contact me if you can use this booklet. As of this writing, GSO still has cases available for distribution at this price – which is only the cost of shipping. Please let me know if we can use more of these booklets.

In April, I took the Literature display to a event in Richfield. Area 69 was well represented with three standing chairs attending along with the DCM from District 6, District 7 Treasurer and our Delegate. Many members of District 6 stopped by the display and many other interested people also stopped by to get information about the program. I was gratified to see many parents picking up pamphlets in the hopes that their children would know about AA. There were even a few visitors to the display seeking Spanish 12 X 12's and other Spanish literature.

On that note, please stop by to check out the Spanish literature. In March, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the

Spanish Big Book came out and I am grateful to have some of those on hand for this event. If groups or individuals want to order the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Spanish Big Book, please sign up at the literature display and I will make sure you get your copy or case as promptly as possible. That offer, of course goes for any Spanish literature or English literature – for that matter.

The 2008 catalog is available and contains a complete list of our pamphlets with the new cover design.

I want to thank District 1 for inviting the standing chairs to participate in the workshop discussions on Friday and for their willingness to host this event. I look forward to serving you and helping you to acquire the literature that you need to carry the message of sobriety. Thank you for the opportunity to be of service.

Pete G.  
Area 69 Literature Standing Chair.

## Corrections Committee Report

Dear Fellowship;

The past few months have been increasingly busy as we've reviewed and discussed the agenda items

on Corrections for this year's General Service Conference held in April in New York City. Area 69 Alcoholics Anonymous was invited to attend and present displays and literature for the Seviere Val-

ley Substance Abuse Conference held in Richfield, Utah (District 6) on March 19, 2008. I also had an opportunity to visit Fillmore, Utah (District 4) for a barbeque and speaker meeting on March 18, 2008.

The Fillmore County Jail has several meetings per week and has good attendance as well as great support from Correctional professionals within the facility. The volunteers there, as is the case for most volunteers who carry out this kind 12<sup>th</sup> Step work, are so committed to carrying the message of hope and recovery to the inside member thus increasing their possibility for sustained sobriety once they are released.

District 8 (Great Basin area; North Eastern Utah) has been actively planning the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Area 69 Bridging the Gap (BTG) workshop being hosted in Vernal June 21, 2008. This is a one day event and is a great opportunity to share and gather information and experience on 12<sup>th</sup> Step work when an AA member is being released or transitioned from a correctional facility or treatment institution into the outside community. It has been documented that

when a newly released member attends an AA meeting within the first 24-48 hours of their release, their opportunity to stay sober is increased by 100% versus a substantial decrease of his/her chance of sobriety after this crucial time period. The BTG program has been developed to have outside AA members help these newly released members make a smooth transition into the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in their communities throughout the US and Canada, and anywhere around the world where AA is available. Please mark this date on your calendar to learn more about how you can be involved and/or bring information to your District.

There is a National Bridging the Gap website you may visit to learn about the History and background of how and why and where it all began at [www.BTGWW.org](http://www.BTGWW.org). The National Bridging the

Gap Workshop Weekend will be held in Kansas City, MO September 5-7, 2008.

I'm looking forward to these upcoming events and working with others involved in Corrections service work. I am always pleased to talk with anyone who wants to learn more about Area 69 correctional activities. My phone number is listed in the Area 69 Directory or I can be contacted through e-mail at [www.area69corrections@utahaa.org](mailto:www.area69corrections@utahaa.org).

Respectfully,

Renaë H.  
Area 69 Corrections Standing Chair

## Communications Committee Report

I want to share some website statistics with you. Life to date there have been 66,512 hits. It has cost the Area a total of \$794.10. Which makes each hit less than 1.2 cents, a pretty good value if I have to say so myself! The average visit is three and a half minutes, viewing on average 4 different pages. We have had hundreds of newcomers request a temporary contact, I would like to thank Renaë for handling most of those. The web hosting and the domain name registration for [utahaa.org](http://utahaa.org) have been paid until March 16, 2010. The website guidelines suggest that we keep everything paid two years in advance. That way it is less likely to lose the [utahaa.org](http://utahaa.org) domain.

The Communications Committee is still looking for an Alternate Webservant. We need someone that can be groomed to become Panel 58's Communications Committee Chair! Please bring this back to your groups. If there's anyone even remotely interested or qualified please have them contact me.

The area's newsletter has been published, these are available here today as well as on line at [utahaa.org/publication.php](http://utahaa.org/publication.php).

The Area's business documents have been translated into Spanish, sent to District 12 via e-mail and posted to the Spanish version of the Area's website.

I would like to invite everyone to a presentation that I will be giving this evening, right before the Speaker's meeting. It covers everything that the Communications Committee does. Please plan on attending.

Thank you for allowing me to serve this incredible Fellowship!

Doug R.  
Communications Committee

## Area Archives Report

Good morning everyone!

Not a lot has happened in the past six weeks.

I have been in correspondence via email with a new area archivist from Canada, Frances L.

Julie forwarded her email to me. It has been fun sharing information with a new archivist.

We will be voting the Archive Ad Hoc committee motions this afternoon; I am looking forward to see how you feel and the result of the voting.

There is a display set up in the Cyprus B room, please stop by to view, read and enjoy. There are a few new items on display today, plus a section for district 12.

I have a display board for the Ogden Club if someone could pick that up tomorrow.

Thank you for letting me be of service to you,

Janet

## Grapevine Committee Report

Greetings Fellow Servants and Friends of Area 69!

Have I told you lately how much I LOVE the Grapevine? Well, I do, and the love I have for "Our Meeting in Print" has definitely grown and deepened since I was given the privilege of serving as Area 69 Grapevine Chair. I've gotten to see first-hand the magic our little publication can work in people's lives. People have started to associate me with the Grapevine and they want to share how much the magazine has helped them.

If you haven't seen the May 2008 issue yet, I'd strongly suggest you get one! The theme of the issue is "The Beginning of the End of Isolation." WOW!! Who can't relate to that topic? The stories are powerful reminders that we, as sober members of AA, are no longer alone with the loneliness and despair our disease once caused in our lives and those of our loved ones.

The Grapevine has extended the deadline for submissions for the "AA Videos for Young People" project until September 1, 2008. The goal of this project is to prepare a 20-25 minute DVD compilation designed to carry the AA message of hope and recovery to young people in high school and college settings. Young people in AA (and those who got sober young but maybe aren't so young anymore!) are especially encouraged to create, edit and submit videos. There are copies of more detailed submission information on the Grapevine table. Please come by and pick up the information and consider sending in your story or encouraging someone you know to participate. Wouldn't it be great to have some of Area 69's young AA members' stories included on this DVD?

I wanted to give the Area an update on our Grapevine-toting friend, Tony, who hails from Kenilworth, Utah, population 50! Tony celebrated his

20th AA anniversary on May 5th. He talks of his love of the Grapevine and how much the magazine has helped in his sobriety. Tony carries back issues with him to give to ranchers, "mountain people" and members of the fellowship who live in remote parts of our state who rarely, if ever, get to a meeting. Tony said he really appreciates the back issues people have donated. Let's keep 'em coming folks!

Thank you again, my fellow servants, for allowing me the opportunity to serve Area 69 in this capacity.

Gratefully,

Sheryl T.  
Area 69 Grapevine Chair