

News & Notes

Area 69 Service Committee Preamble

Helping to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous shall be the primary purpose of the Utah Area Service Structure. In all its proceedings the Utah Area Service Assembly shall observe the spirit of the AA Traditions, taking great care that the Assembly never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power, that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Assembly members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Assembly action ever be personally punitive or an incident to public controversy; that though the Assembly may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Utah Area, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Assembly itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Service Structure Guidelines
Revised September 27, 2003

Welcome to General Service!!!

I was really pretty baffled about what kind of article I should write for the newsletter, so I called a friend who is pretty new to general service and asked what she thought. Basically, it was along the lines of letting you know that it's okay to be confused, pretty normal in fact, and that you can still do your job and have some fun along the way!

I've always felt kind of bad for people whose first general service function was Pre-Conference Assembly, or an Election Assembly, as for me, those were the weirdest and most confusing when I first got here. Of course, even before I got to an Assembly, I was baffled by the whole alphabet soup language that I heard people speaking. For myself, I didn't know anything at all about general service when I offered myself as an alternate GSR for my home group. All I knew was that we had a GSR, and whatever it was that GSRs are supposed to do, ours wasn't doing it. So, in a small fit of ego, I offered to be the alternate, then spoke to the GSR a month or so later, we switched places, and there I was, GSR, maybe the most important job in A.A. Wow!!

But what was I supposed to do? What was a GSR? Why was it maybe the most important job in A.A.? And soon I had more questions, like what is a DCM? A DCMC? 12 Concepts? A Delegate? A Stand-

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ing Chair? A Standing Committee? A Trustee – Class A or Class B? PRAASA – Regional Forums – Special Forums – it was all entirely Greek, or perhaps more accurately, gobbledygook, to me.

One of the very few assets I came into A.A. with was an ability to keep a commitment. Also, my months of "trying" to get sober were in a way a gift for me, because they absolutely convinced me that my way didn't work. I was a very humble, very open-minded and willing drunk when I walked into the meeting on what I hope was my last first day sober. I remember hearing that sobriety was like a three legged stool, with the legs being re-

covery, unity and service. Recovery was my working the 12 Steps; unity was being involved with other alcoholics i.e. in a group, while applying the 12 Traditions; and service was doing anything to be of service to my group, another alcoholic, or in the case of general service, to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. I was also told that I needed to be equally involved with each of those legs in order to have a balanced recovery. I believed what I was told, even when I didn't want to. I'd like to say that I have always had those three aspects of my recovery nicely balanced. That, however, would be a lie. Thank goodness for the "progress, not perfection" I can enjoy in Alcoholics Anonymous, even though for the first few years, I was quite sure that I would be able to hit that perfection target. I hope that none of you are like me in that regard, because it primarily just led to great frustration and lots of stuff to beat myself up about. I think that it is a worthy target and hope to move more or less steadily in that direction, but I think that like life, it's all about the journey and not the destination!!

So, when I got into recovery, one of the first things I got was a Big Book, followed a few months later by a sponsor. I wouldn't recommend that lag time to anyone else, but at least in the meantime, I was going to lots of meetings and talking to an alcoholic everyday. Similarly, when I first got into service, I was given a packet of literature including a GSR Survival Guide, and the A.A. Service Manual. I know that the Survival Guide was a great resource for me initially, and the A.A. Service Manual was, and still is, a good tool. Unfortunately, I heard a few references to the Service Manual as being a great sleep aid and basically deadly dull. Because of that, I practiced contempt prior to investigation, and only looked at the Service Manual when I needed a particular reference. I hope that you won't make the same mistake!! When I actually decided perhaps I really should read the whole thing, I found it to be much more interesting and educational than I had been led to believe. Think of the Service Manual as being your "Big Book" of general service!

Another thing I would strongly recommend would be to get a service sponsor. Yeah, I know, you already have a sponsor ... why should you get another one? Well, if your sponsor is also involved in general service and has done what you are doing, great! Maybe they can fill both roles nicely. However, if your sponsor isn't in general service, I would highly recommend

looking around the rooms at your District or at the Area meetings, finding someone who has what you want, for example, someone who appears to be enjoying general service, who has already served in the position you currently have, and asking them to be your service sponsor. If someone hasn't been where you are, and hasn't gone where you want to go, how can they help you get from here to there? My current service sponsor has served in all but one of the positions I have held, has been a Delegate, currently serves as a Trustee, and has been actively and passionately involved in general service since before we met about 12 years ago.

Don't forget that everyone in these rooms has been where you are. You'll often hear in general service that as soon as you know what you are doing, it's time to rotate to a new position. Believe me, every time I have moved to a new position, I felt just about as dumb and/or inadequate as I did when I started my last position. As the years have gone by, I have learned a lot more about how and why general service works, but it has been a slow process for me. I don't believe I have ever felt more fear and inadequacy than I have in starting my current position as your Delegate. One of the things that made it easier for me was at the February Area Committee Meeting seeing how nervous other people were when they were giving their reports in their new positions. In recovery I have often looked around and compared my insides to "their" outsides, and I generally come up short when I do that. The same thing applies in general service ... a lot of us can look pretty good on the outside while on the inside we may be baffled and confused.

If you have questions, ask ... ask someone you know, someone you don't know, the first person you can grab!! We are all here to be helpful, and hey, it makes us feel special to be able to answer your questions, and just as importantly, keeps us humble when we can't, but we do know where to look or who else to ask ... Most of all, remember to have fun and remember that no mistake you can possibly make while in your service position is going to make or break Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole!!!

Yours in love and service,
Julie S., Delegate, Panel 57, Area 69, Utah

Pre-Conference Assembly

What Is It? Why Is It Held?

I remember well the first time I attended a Pre-Conference Assembly in Utah. I had recently moved to Utah from California, and volunteered to be of service in District 3. District 3 was the host district for the Pre-Conference Assembly that year, so guess who got roped into being on the host committee?

I had been involved in various roundups and conventions in California through the years and thought I knew what was needed. A comfortable facility, lots of coffee, a great speaker (service oriented, of course), and lots of friendly folks making the attendees feel welcome. Also of great importance was the flyer – it had to be attractive, easy to use for pre-registration, and most importantly it had to be widely distributed in the fellowship.

All of these things were in place, as well as a schedule for round tables, panel discussions and “fun” stuff like a dinner on Sat-

urday night and a sobriety countdown.

Yes, I knew how to put on an event! But I had no clue why the event was being held. It took me a while to catch on to the fact that this was where the Delegate receives the group conscience of the area, and that the most important part of the weekend is planned not by the host committee, but by the Area Officers planning the agenda for the business meeting.

During the past fifteen years or so I have seen many changes in the way the Utah Area conducts its business, and particularly in the way we handle this important task of sharing the group conscience with the Delegate. Are we doing it in the best possible way? I think we are doing it in the best way we know right now. That does not mean that improvement is impossible. After all, I thought we were doing a pretty good job fifteen years ago! But I can now see that

having our Standing Chairs and the standing committees meet to discuss the agenda items that will affect their service position, and then sharing their input with the Delegate, allows for a much broader spectrum of the AA membership in the area to be really involved in providing this group conscience.

And now I understand that all of the friendly greeters, comfortable meeting rooms and great speakers are not what this event is about. They are the frosting on the cake. The real purpose of the Pre Conference Assembly is far more important! The true purpose is to allow our Higher Power to express itself through our Group Conscience, so that our Delegate can truly act in a way that is best for A.A. as a whole.

Mickey H.
Past Delegate
Panel 49, Area 69

Group Decisions

The Pre-Conference Assembly is an excellent example of collective group consciences working in A. A. Perhaps it is the primary example of our special connection with each other in recovery. Every year, in the middle of February, our delegate receives the agenda items. Within a short time, generally less than five weeks, we converge on a location to provide our delegate with our group conscience decisions regarding these items. Then, three to four weeks later, all the delegates

get together with all their collective group consciences and share these at the General Service Conference.

The power of the group conscience is nothing short of amazing. Each major decision that takes place at the group, District, Area or National level owes it fairness and solidarity to the group conscience.

The solidarity of the group conscience is commented on in this article by Bill W. from the Janu-

ary 1948 Grapevine. It reads as follows;

“We are coming to realize that each group, as well as each individual, is a special entity, not quite like any other. Though A.A. groups are basically the same, each group does have its own special atmosphere, its own peculiar state of development. We believe that every A.A. group has a conscience. It is the collective conscience of its own membership. Daily experience informs and instructs

this conscience. The group begins to recognize its own defects of character and, one by one, these are removed or lessened. As this process continues, the group becomes better able to receive right direction for its own affairs. Trial and error produce group experience, and out of corrected experience comes custom. When a customary way of doing things is definitely proved to be best, then that custom forms into A.A. Tradition. The Greater Power is then working through a clear group conscience.” *Excerpt from January 1948 Grapevine article by Bill W.*

When the Area holds events to formulate decisions, it is impossible to have every group represented, let alone fully discuss each item of that decision to the fullest. In my experiences, most decisions are made with a substantial unanimity and the minority opinion is always heard. The minority opinion is our best insurance against overlooking important facts or experience. It also serves to minimize the dissension that could result if we are not thorough in fully discussing each decision made.

In seeking a substantial unanimity, we guarantee that the decision made, whatever that may be, is thought to be the best course for a group to take. This type of decision-making is vital at a later date when the course of action voted on appears to be not in the group’s best interest. No one can place blame on any one member when a substantial unanimity has been received. No finger-pointing or armchair quarter-backing is necessary. All members of a group are protected from that type of mistreatment because we are all in this together.

I have learned to not only be grateful for the informed group conscience but to believe that it is a Power Greater Than Ourselves working in our program. How else can we explain the results we receive from this process? This event is an outstanding example of the power of the group conscience. Each group truly has a voice in developing Alcoholics Anonymous. Whether it is the smallest group or the largest, the richest group or the most humble – we listen to all in this fellowship.

That is one of the many reasons why the job of the GSR is so

important. We need to hear what the groups want and come to a group decision, as an Area in providing our delegate with the best information we can.

Many times today you will be asked to offer your group vote on items and at other times you will be asked to give a ‘sense of the meeting’ after hearing discussion on issues. I know the decisions we come to at this Conference will be the correct ones for us, now and with the information we have to utilize today. That is not because we have the smartest group of alcoholics ever gathered together for a Conference – we are probably very average along those lines; it is because we have assembled the best-informed group of alcoholics we can assemble at this time and asked one simple question.

“What does your group think about

?”
I’m grateful to be a part of this event.

Pete G.
Area 69 Literature Chair
area69literature@utahaa.org

Editors Note:

It is with great sadness that we share the news that Nell Wing died on Wednesday, February 14, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. after a lengthy illness. Nell was 89 years old.

As most of you know, Nell was Bill W.’s secretary and assistant for 17 years and a close friend and long-time companion to Lois W. She worked at the General Service Office of A.A. from the beginning of 1947 until her retirement at the close of 1982, starting as a receptionist and later becoming secretary of A.A. World Services, Inc. Additionally, she served as G.S.O.’s first archivist for the last ten of her years at the office. The Archives opened in 1975.

We would like to take a moment to celebrate Nell’s life and share the following article from the AA Grapevine.

A Treasury of AA History

A nonalcoholic who has served AA almost from the beginning writes of her new work as AA archivist

I CAME TO WORK for the Alcoholic Foundation (the old name for the AA General Service Board) in March 1947, when AA was only twelve years old. The Fellowship then was barely out of its infancy, with a membership of about 40,000 in some 1,200 groups.

There were thirteen people, including Bill W., in our three-room office at 415 Lexington Avenue, directly across from Grand Central Station in New York City. Before I arrived on the scene, an office manager had been brought in to shape up the rather freewheeling office crew, who had divided up the jobs among themselves and turned rebellious at the first hint of discipline. Indeed, they shortly quit en masse.

Today, some thirty years later, there are seventy-three employees occupying three and a half floors. It seems incredible that, whereas it took twelve years to garner 40,000 members, today it is estimated that about 100,000 new people join AA in one year. Today's estimated membership stands at more than a million--enough to boggle the mind of even a nonalcoholic!

The year I came to the foundation--in fact, that entire decade, 1945 to 1955--was an exciting and important time in AA history, probably the most productive period of growth and development we've seen to date.

What was happening? The Big Book was earning money, and had been since 1942. Old debts had been repaid. The trustees were passing resolutions about making AA self-supporting. By 1945, the groups were contributing to the support of the office. During 1946 and 1947 especially, the public became much interested in AA, and various Hollywood studios were in contact with our Headquarters,

wanting to make a movie about AA. There were good radio programs, newspaper articles, and two excellent documentary films on AA. *Time* Magazine and the *Reader's Digest* carried articles, and the latter brought in more than 3,000 inquiries in one month alone. The medical profession gave AA the Lasker Award in 1951 and recognized alcoholism as a disease in 1956, and the Veterans Administration began to open the doors of its hospitals to AA.

Inside AA, too, things were popping! Bill was writing the Twelve Traditions, and they were being published in the Grapevine. The Grapevine itself was evolving, beginning to be recognized as the international journal of the Fellowship. Intergroup offices were being established in localities where there were many groups, and AA was growing steadily in Canada and overseas.

Lone Members were touching and changing the lives of suffering alcoholics all over the world. Captain Jack S., soon to be the founder of a group of AA seamen, the Internationalists, was seeking out alcoholics in various ports of call, leaving behind pamphlets and books and potential members. American AA servicemen stationed in foreign countries were following in the footsteps of earlier Loners who had dropped AA's message into fertile soil along the East Coast and in the Midwest of the United States in the 1940's.

At Headquarters, Bill was working on plans for a future General Service Conference, and he and the trustees were hotly debating the merits of this idea. The issue caused much concern and bitterness, with many board members threatening to resign and some doing it (though all took back their

resignations later on). Bill finally won the approval of Dr. Bob and the majority of the trustees for his idea, and in October 1950, the board empowered Bill to proceed to organize the Conference, which held its first meeting in 1951.

In the late 1940's, controversy also developed over implied participation by AA in the fund-raising activity of an outside agency, causing the trustees to issue a policy statement declaring that AA would ask no endorsement and solicit no funds from non-AA sources. To lessen the chance of misinterpretation, the trustees passed a firm resolution, in 1949, to accept contributions from AA groups and members *only*, all others to be declined.

At the 1950 International Convention, the Twelve Traditions--defining and describing the principles of AA unity--were accepted by the membership. And at the 1955 Convention, Bill formally turned over the guidance of AA's affairs to the Fellowship.

The 1940's had been years of creation and change, establishing basic structure and tradition. The 1950's were years of consolidation. Groups and members communicated not so much via long, newsy letters as through more business-like letters from groups to GSO. GSO became more of a real service office, less an advisory entity.

During the 1960's, general service offices were proliferating in other countries; literature distribution centers opened around the world; general service boards and conferences were being organized abroad. Everywhere, AA was steadily growing and maturing. And of course, the growth of AA since 1970 is a story in itself.

Now, it's time to talk about the archives, a project that got under way about four years ago. With the advice of a professional librarian, I set about wading through and organizing mounds of accumulated correspondence and historical records. In the fall of 1973, the Archives Committee was set up as a standing committee of the General Service Board. It deliberates on matters of policy and budget, guards the integrity and confidentiality of all archives material, and considers requests from individuals who want permission to use the archives for research projects. But the main purpose of the committee is to help keep the record straight.

The archives occupy three rooms on the eighth floor at 468 Park Avenue South, where the General Service Office is located. There, on any working day, you'll find me and my two AA assistants hard at work--sorting out historical material, processing the new material we receive daily, and answering the many inquiries and other correspondence that come across our desks.

Archives material consists of documents and other records of AA's history, divided into three principal categories: Bill's and Dr. Bob's letters and records; historical records of early groups (1940 to 1945); and Alcoholic Foundation-GSO records (1937 to 1955). All of this has been microfilmed, indexed, and placed in coded storage boxes, with everything done in duplicate.

Along with organizing and micro-filing already available material, we've been engaged in creating and continuing to build an oral-history section. Interviews with many early members, some done by Bill W. in the early 1950's and others taped more recently, make up the bulk of this section, and new tapes are constantly being received. So far this year, we've interviewed about thirty people--AAs and non-AAs. We're also retaping some old materials in a format of better quality and greater durability, making them more useful for researchers and others.

We're accumulating state, provincial, and overseas AA histories, encouraging individuals knowledgeable about their areas to write them up. Many have been received, and more are in the works.

An exciting current development, we think, is the enthusiasm expressed for establishing local archival and tape centers. Now being set up in many areas of the U.S., Canada, and other countries, they will be a wonderful means of ensuring the preservation of area history and making the whole archival project more comprehensive.

Bill W.'s widow, Lois, who is currently writing her autobiography, has been helpful and interested, and has contributed valuable information from her own files. These include a duplicate of an early scrapbook and copies of her correspondence with Bill in 1935, when

he went to Akron and first met Dr. Bob. Especially interesting are copies of her diaries dating from 1937 to 1954. These contain intimate and affecting glimpses of events and her reactions to them during the early, struggling years of AA.

What else can you expect when you visit the archives? You'll see photographs of people, places, and events in AA history; the Lasker Award, presented to AA in 1951; bulletins, directories, and reports from early years to the present; early and current Grapevines; different editions and printings of the Big Book and other literature; phonograph records, scrapbooks, and memorabilia. Eventually, we hope to give visitors the opportunity to hear the voices of the two co-founders, along with tapes of many others who are a part of AA history, alcoholics and nonalcoholics alike.

We hope to give you a real sense of the whole span of AA history, new insight, and new appreciation of AA's beginnings and development. For AA history doesn't stop--it keeps on growing and becoming. As Bill and the early members used to say, "AA isn't an achievement; it's a process, a continuing process."

Nell Wing

Reprinted with permission. September 1977, Vol. 34 No. 4, the AA Grapevine.

What is the Singleness of Purpose?

My name is Dawn Marie and I am an alcoholic. I first walked into the rooms of A.A. in April of 2004. I had been in a treatment center that held A.A. Meetings and attended them regularly, most of the time I was in what they call I.O.P. (intensive outpatient program) I attended a group session with about ten other people. We all had different addictions. Some were heroin addicts and some were dually addicted alcohol-

ics. When we attended these meetings people would say they were alcoholic/addicts, at first I didn't understand this then I thought well I use to do some recreational drugs when I couldn't drink alcohol so I figured that made me an alcoholic/addict and I started to say that in the meetings I attended at the treatment center. When I "graduated" from I.O.P. I had no idea what other meetings would be like. I had gone to few out-

side of the treatment center but not very many and hadn't learned much about our traditions or steps, but I knew I couldn't do this thing alone. I asked about sponsorship and what it entailed and was told to look for someone that I related to. I was turned down twice until I went to a women's meeting and asked a woman with four years of sobriety who was enlightened by life and just plain happy to be sober. She said yes and immediately went over the meeting schedule with me and set me up with meetings she wanted me to attend. During this time she asked me which group I felt that I related with the most. I told her it was the 5:30 Sobriety Hour and she said ok that's your home group. I had no idea what a home group was or what that entailed but was eager to learn, my sponsor lived out of town so the only time she would hear me share was when we attended the women's meeting. Every time someone asked me to share in my home group I would say hello my name is Dawn and I'm an alcoholic/addict until one day an old timer approached me after the meeting and asked me why I would say that I was an alcoholic/addict in a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous? I had no clue why I should or shouldn't say that. He asked me if I had read the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and of course I had because we read them before the meeting then he asked, "well what does the third tradition mean to you?" I was definitely confused but I went home that night and read the long form in my Big Book, it reads as follows:

"Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation."

After reading this and meditating on it, the light came on. I had to ask myself am I an alcoholic or an addict. I stopped saying that I was an alcoholic/addict after reading this tradition and the other two before it. I talked to my sponsor and other members of A.A. about this as well and quickly learned that it is called the "Singleness of Purpose." It has taken me a couple of years to really understand what that means but I think I have a better understanding today.

I have visited sister fellowships and realized that I don't have the same problems or stories that our sister fellowships have. Though I realize that in the times we live in, it is not uncommon for most of our members to be dually addicted. That is the world we live in. I just feel that if we are going to share on the subject of drugs that alcohol should be related in some way. In the pamphlet "*The A.A. Group*" it outlines specifically what a group is here are a couple of things from pages 15 and 16;

"That any group of alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an AA group provided that, as a group, they have no other purpose or affiliation.

Some AA's come together as specialized AA groups. "for men, women, young people, doctors, gays and others." If the members are all alcoholics, and if they open the door to all alcoholics who seek help, regardless of profession, gender or other distinction, and meet all the other aspects defining an AA group, they may call themselves an AA group."

"About Open and Closed meetings:

At both types of meetings, the AA chairperson may request that participants confine their discussion to matters pertaining to recovery from alcoholism."

Now when I am attending a closed meeting of A.A. this means that there is no reason for me to share on my drug use. That is disrespectful to the meeting itself. A closed meeting of A.A. is a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous for people who feel they have a problem with alcohol and may not wish to speak to others about non-alcoholic issues. This tells me that I do not touch the subject of drugs or personal issues. I stick to recovery from alcoholism. That means talking about the traditions or the steps. When I attend an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous such as my home group I can touch on the subjects of drugs as long as it ties in with recovery from alcoholism and the chairperson hasn't requested that they want to stick to recovery from alcoholism.

Our singleness of purpose is a very touchy subject. I have done quite a bit of research on the

studies of alcoholism versus drug addiction and in all cases have found that scientists and doctors know there is not a cure for alcoholism yet there is nothing stating the same for the drug addict. Doctor's and Scientist's are constantly coming up with ways to help the addict. When I speak to an addict on the subject of our "Singleness of Purpose" they feel I am being prejudice. That is not what I am trying to portray. Whether an alcoholic or an addict, if you are in a meeting you are more than welcome, we just need to try to keep our sharing to alcoholism and the recovery there from.

My point is who is going to educate the next generation? We live in a society where drugs and alcohol are an everyday occurrence. So the question is how do WE as Alcoholics Anonymous grow to this trend. We cannot be prejudice and say that an addict/alcoholic does not belong in a meeting of A.A. but yet how do we keep to the "Singleness of Purpose"? And avoid "dying from within" as one of our co-founders said. If this program turns into a melting pot for every addiction then we lose Alcoholics Anonymous. For me I am an alcoholic there are no ifs ands or buts about it. Yet there are going to be people that come in to the program dually addicted or just an addict and how do I just turn them away and say no you don't belong here? I don't. I try to educate them by talking with them. I believe

there needs to be education. If you are an addict by all means please come sit in and see what we're all about, but please don't share about drug addiction. We should be all encompassing. But where do we draw the line?

I feel that a lot of meetings are being watered down by personal issues and addicts speaking at the podium about needles and other things I cannot even fathom. Personally I don't relate. So how many newcomers that are alcoholic going to feel when they walk into a meeting and the topic is watered down by someone's personal experience with no information on the steps, the big book or alcoholism. I would immediately think well this is just a bunch of people talking about their screwed up lives.

Our founders and co-founders built our traditions to avoid this and I feel we are losing sight of our traditions our primary purpose and what it truly means to take the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This is a wonderful program and I say these words hoping to inform and educate so that this program is here for my son if he ever needs it.

Love and Light,
Dawn Marie

How the AA committee system works

As I think back to my time as a GSR I remember feeling pretty baffled wondering how I could get some sort of idea of what my group felt about all the General Service Conference issues. I knew some of them had no desire to sit long enough for me to talk about each item. Frankly, even if the others gave me the time, I didn't understand things enough to have explained all the agenda items anyway. I sat at our Pre-conference Assembly and listened to all the

presentations as one trusted servant after another attempted to cover items on the Conference agenda. They did amazing jobs, and left me feeling more informed, but it was too late to talk to my group, so what should I do? At the same time, hopefully most GSRs have been involved in their home group for awhile and know, at least a little, how they think and feel about some things. I appreciated someone explaining our concept of Right of Decision. So I used all this

together and voted the best conscience I could come up with. Eventually I progressed past the feelings I had that first year in General Service. Every year that followed gave me a little more understanding and perspective. I came to realize that with about 98% of the AA groups out there, it's tough to expect to go over every conference agenda item. Occasionally I hear about a group that will hold a separate meeting just for the purpose of giving their group conscience to

the GSR on all the items – which is wonderful, but rare.

There are many committees that will have items on the Conference Agenda, and all the Delegates will hear reports from each of them. Any committee wishing to take action on an item will put it before the delegates for a vote. While our delegate will hear reports and vote on the items from other committees, she will have direct involvement and the greatest participation in the committees she has been assigned to. This is how the AA committee system works.

So keeping this in mind, how might a GSR be most effective in getting the most useful information back to our Dele-

gate? As a past delegate, the thing I most wanted group input on was my committee. This term our Delegate is assigned to Report and Charter. I might suggest taking a look at the voting items on Julie’s committee early on this weekend, and be sure you ask any questions you might have before the voting session begins. There always seem to be a couple “hot interest” items as well. Some times this may be a current literature agenda item, for example. Sometimes it turns out to be not at all what you thought it was going to be. Julie is also assigned to International Conventions and Regional Forums as a secondary committee, although they have no voting items this year.

The beauty of AA’s committee system is that not everyone has to be completely involved in every part of every process. If we trust each committee to do their initial work, in our roundtables and committee meetings, and we all come together and share what we’ve come up with, we can learn so much more. As a GSR, I can bring my group’s voice, consider any new or additional information I receive at the Assembly, especially if I believe it would have impacted my group’s opinion, then vote with confidence.

Respectfully Yours in Service,
 Jodi E
 Past Delegate, Panel 53
 Utah Area 69

Mark your Calendar

May 18-20	2007	Post Conference Assembly*	District 11	Salt Lake City
June 16	2007	Area Bridge the Gap Workshop	District 4	(District 10 host)
Aug. 18-19	2007	Pre Assembly Workshop	District 2	Tooele
Sep. 21-23	2007	Fall Assembly	District 10	Salt Lake City
Nov. 3-4	2007	Fall Workshop*	District 7	St. George
Dec.1	2007	Area Committee Meeting (Area Inventory)	District 1	

*An Area 69 newsletter will be published at these events.

DCMC Dashboard

The Area’s DCMCs have a secure place on the Area’s website where confidential information can be securely stored and made available to only those members that need the information. It is password protected and it is restricted by search engines so even the most confidential information can be stored there. Currently it contains the Area 06 Agenda item summaries, in English and Spanish, the Standing Chair and Officer information sheet, and the links to the group and service position change forms.

This has already proven itself to be a valuable communication tool. If you are a DCMC and do not have access please see the Communications Char.

Communications Committee Report

Greetings Fellow Servants,

Welcome to the 2007 Pre-Conference Assembly. For those that are new to general service I would like to inform you that the Area has an official website; utahaa.org.

Before I carry on about the website I would also like to explain what the Communications Committee is. In Kanab at the 2006 Fall Elections Assembly the body created the Communication Committee with the following motion.

“That the Area 69 Web Servant position and Newsletter Standing Chair position be joined to form a Communications Standing Chair position. Where the Communications Standing Chair would be the Area’s Web Servant / Newsletter Editor and would be responsible for three sub-committees; the Web Committee, the Newsletter Committee, and the Translation Committee.”

The area’s website has many features and functions including the most comprehensive, up-to-date, and accurate A.A. meeting list of Area 69, which is the state of Utah’

You can search for meetings by geographical area such as northern, eastern, central, etc. Each of these meeting results can be further refined by city, day, and whether it’s on open or closed meeting. These results list all have a printer friendly page that removes the graphics and condenses the information so most lists can be

printed on a single sheet of paper.

You can also search for meetings by city, day, type (Speaker’s, Beginner’s, Women’s, etc.), as well as Wheel Chair accessible. You can also get a list of meetings that are within a particular district. The results pages (those pages that display the list of meetings) now retrieve their data 75-80% faster.

I would like to thank all of those DCMCs, DCMs, and Central Offices who help keep the area’s meeting list up-to-date and accurate. Great job!

Some of the other major features include a calendar of service events, a calendar of A.A. gatherings (which there are several listed), areas with information for newcomers to A.A. as well as newcomers to general service. There are areas for each of the Committee Chairs as well as one for the Area’s Delegate. These areas are blogs that contain addition information that the area servants feel is pertinent to their committees.

We have created a display where you can pick-up a “Site Features” list. It lists everything that is available on the website. GSRs please bring at least one of these back to your group. This list is also available on the website itself. (utahaa.org/sitefeatures.html)

Speaking of our display, we don’t always have internet access at these events so the

committee created a local version of the website. If you have a minute today please feel free to browse through it. Since it’s a local version the external links do not work, but everything else works like it would if you were accessing it through the Internet.

The Web Committee, as usual, has been busy. We’ve gone through every page (682 of them) to make sure they all look and behave as they were designed to do so. All of the meeting maps have been changed, they are much better than the old ones. Karen C., our Alternate Web Servant, continues to backup and archive the website on a regular basis. She is also working on encrypting the ‘Bridge the Gap’ database as well as working on a program that will notify us when information has changed on any of the central office’s websites. This helps us become aware of meeting changes.

The Web Committee meets every second Monday of the month, all are welcome. The meeting agendas and minutes are available on line at admin.utahaa.org.

The Translation Committee actually doubled in size after my request for help at the Roosevelt committee meeting. It amazes me what happens when you put your request out there ‘into the universe’ and trust that things will work out for the best!

The Translation Committee translates the Officer and Stand Committee Chair's reports, agendas, and other Area business documents into Spanish for distribution at these events. If you are one of our Spanish members these reports are available at the registration table.

The Area's newsletter was published today, 100 copies where

printed. It is also available on the website, so if you didn't get one or didn't get enough for your group please print more using the web's version. The next edition will be published at the Post-Conference Assembly in May. GSRs please ask your group members to contribute articles on their experience, strength, and hope. We will be asking various members for

articles on specific topics as well.

I am grateful that I have the ability to serve this incredible fellowship. Thank you all for allowing me to do so.

In fellowship & service,

Doug R.
Communications Committee -
Area 69

Area 69 Literature Report

My name is Pete G. and I am an alcoholic. I have the privilege to serve as your Standing Chair for Literature for Panel 57. What an exciting time to be in General Service! I want to thank the host committee for their hard work in providing the facility.

Interest in A. A. literature at these events continues to be quite strong. I was surprised at the large turnout for the Area Committee meeting and the large demand for literature. A major item which I seem to continually underestimate is the new GSR packets. The two dozen I brought to Roosevelt practically never made it out of the box, and many DCM's and DCMC's took multiple packets for their GSR's that could not make the event. At this event, I have brought another two dozen or so and I hope that they continue to be taken as needed, but I read somewhere something about giving a man a fish and feed him for a day, teach him how to fish and feed him for a lifetime. So I am including all the basic ingredients

of the GSR packet in this report in the hopes that District can adopt providing their own packet to the new GSRs immediately without waiting until the next service event to get some more.

The GSR survival guide is available for download from the Area website, as is the FAQ sheet included in the packet. Alternately, you can copy the survival guide and the FAQ from an existing packet if downloading is not an option. Included in the GSR packet are the following pamphlets and other Area information.

- GSR Pamphlet – I have these here in bulk.
- Circles of Love and Service – I also have these.
- The AA Group – I have some here always or they can be purchased at Central Office.
- Bridging the Gap – I should always have a substantial number of these on hand

- A Bridging the Gap sign-up sheet for the group. This is also available from the Area 69 website.

Of course, no GSR is complete without a copy of the Service Manual. These are not included in the packet but are available here or at Central Office.

I hope this helps those new to Service and those not so new to Service.

The purpose of this event is to provide our delegate with the best group conscience possible in regards to the agenda items. Literature items this year are to review the current progress of the Spanish Big Book, progress on the Native North American booklet and standardize wording for deferment for the GSR throughout the literature.

An additional suggestion that seems to be very logical is to change the title of the pamphlet "Can AA Help Me Too" subtitled "Black/African Americans Share

Their Stories” to “AA and the Black/African American Alcoholic”. All these initiatives seem to be very straightforward and non-controversial.

Other Literature Items that require informed discussion include the following:

Discussion on revising the pamphlet “The AA Member – Medications and Other Drugs”. This pamphlet was developed by Doctors who are in the AA program. Copies of this pam-

phlet are available for your review.

Consideration of a replacement pamphlet for the discontinued “Letter to a Woman Alcoholic”. Basically, prior to its discontinuation Letter to a Woman Alcoholic had a distribution of 72,000. Is the void being filled adequately by existing literature?

Discussion on request to produce an intergroup/central office pamphlet.

These valid items await your input and the input you have received from your groups. Please assist us in providing our delegate Julie with the best information on these and all Agenda items that we can provide.

God Bless You All for bringing your experience, strength and hope to this meeting today.

In service,
Pete G.
Area 69 Literature Chair

Area 69 Corrections Report

Hello Friends;

Corrections activity in Districts 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11 have made a smooth transition to the new Standing Chairs and appear to be “business as usual”. I haven’t been able to contact District 1, 4, 5, or 9’s corrections committees as of yet, but we do know that AA meetings are being held in all of the districts at one or more county or state facilities. District 12 carries the message into the Wasatch facility on Fridays at the Draper State Prison. District 7 recently received clearance to bring in additional GSO approved books, videos, tapes, and various literature that they were not previously permitted to do and we are very excited about that. District 6 recently registered a correctional group

named “Last Call” at the Gunnison Prison---way to go! District 10 is working with the Programming Dept. in setting up A.A. literature libraries in each of the 6 facilities we currently have meetings in at the Draper Prison Site. District 11 holds meeting at the Davis County Jail and is in need of more women volunteers since the jail has recently added 50 more beds to house State Inmates.

I attended PRAASA in Portland and enjoyed all of the service activities and info that was presented there. Several of us from Area 69 attended the Corrections Round table and learned and shared combined experience with others involved in 12 Step work at Correctional Facilities throughout the Pacific Region. I have a copy of the

minutes taken at that round table and will be happy to share them with anyone who wishes to read them.

We are currently in the process of identifying where throughout the State we have clearance and volunteers to hold AA meetings in each county. I will be meeting with the Coordinator for housing of State Inmates in county facilities to work towards implementing a cooperative relationship and dialog with the County Sheriffs, similar to what we have developed with the Prison Administration.

Looking forward to continued service!

Sincerely,
Rena H.
Area 69 Corrections Chair

PLEASE NOTE: The Area 69 Newsletter presents news & notes from the Utah Area 69 General Service Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous. Opinions expressed are not those of Alcoholics Anonymous, since no one person speaks for A.A. Please send your comments, suggestions, questions and article submissions to the Newsletter Chair