

Area 42 Newsletter

Fall 2007

Confidential Alcoholic Anonymous Document

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DATES TO REMEMBER:

Area 42 2008 Spring Assembly

Friday, April 4
at 6:30 p.m.
Saturday April 5th, 2008
Sunday
April 6th adjourning
at noon.

PRAASA 2008

March 7,8,& 9,2008

Egan Convention Center
Anchorage, Alaska

Pacific Regional Forum

August 29-31 2008
City Center
Spokane
Doubletree Hotel
Spokane, WA

Transcription of Area 42 Inventory

Fall Assembly
September 8, 2007 Tonopah, NV

Larry N., Facilitator

Note: these notes were compiled from the audio recording of the inventory and the minutes that the recorders took during the comment periods. In attendance were 154 currently-serving members and several past trusted-servants, all of whom were invited to participate.

Good morning everybody. My name is Larry and I am alcoholic. And I just want you to know that I am sober today by the grace of God and Alcoholics Anonymous. And I'm grateful to Sophie for asking me to come and be with you today. I just want to say that the most important aspect of this whole procedure of taking an inventory is that if you have something on your mind, do not repress it. Every thought, every concern, every question that's there in your heart – this is the time to bring it out. There will be no criticisms of anything anybody says today, anywhere. So, having said that, AA's conscience depends on that thing happening: you expressing your heartfelt feelings about Alcoholics Anonymous and your experience and knowledge about AA's Traditions, Concepts and Steps. So, the very first thing I have to do today is we have to determine the order that you're going to review these questions. So how Sophie wants this done and how the committee decided would be that we would go by each question. Question #1: I'll read it very quickly. Then I'll ask all the people who feel strongly that this should be one of those six questions we're going to consider today. Not all ten of these will get considered – just six. As we go through here, there will be ten opportunities to vote. But you're really on your AA honor, and this is an honest program you know. You can't vote more than six times. Only raise that hand six times.

So, the first question is: with respect to discussion

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From our Area 42 Chair :

The last item of business before the Assembly closed on Sunday morning was the following motion:

“The Chair is to appoint a committee to follow up on the [Area] inventory results to suggest ways to implement the suggestions made during the inventory.”

The motion carried, and here is the update on the Assembly's request for an *ad hoc* committee.

The Alternate Delegate (Jason C.), Area Treasurer (Marion S-T), Alternate Chairperson (Mike M.), Area Secretary (Carol B.) and I discussed the request before we left Tonopah. We liked the idea of six subcommittees – one for each of the six inventory topics that we addressed. And we wanted to be sure that all GSRs and Area Committee members for whom we had contact information (both legible and current) received an invitation to participate. We agreed that the subcommittees would be up and running by November 1, and that it would be prudent to ask them to wrap up their work before the winter holiday frenzy begins.

The Area Secretary sent out an email blast – with snail mail invitations where appropriate – on September 11 with a RSVP date of October 15, 2007. Twenty-five people replied enthusiastically: 15 from the South and 10 from the North. Of those 25, 15 are GSRs, two are DCMs and the remaining eight are either officers or committee chairs. Fourteen are women and nine are men.

In forming each subcommittee, I have done my best to balance members from the North and South, GSRs and Area Committee members, and reptiles and amphibians – I mean men and women.

Each subcommittee has been asked to address one, assigned inventory topic. As a committee, they will thresh the comments on their assigned topic completely and determine if they have any

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The following was submitted by the Northern Area General Service chair Ray G:

It's Not a Wedge

This is my take on the election proposal. One mans opinion and is not by any means intended to sway any one to one side or another. In fact what I hope to do is eliminate the "sides" all together.

Had the situation been reversed, (so many positions being filled with only one person standing from the North), the proposal would be exactly the same. It is not about the North or South at all. It is about having more of us standing and willing to serve. A real wakeup call for our Area 42. I have no interest in a yah or nay vote. What I am interested in is that the presents of the proposal itself will have a very positive effect on Area 42 and it's membership as a whole. We struggle constantly to interest members in service. It seems that it will be that way forever at least at a group level. So it is at the District and Area levels also. This proposal has simply brought it to the floor. It is time for us to dig in and pay attention to it.

Lets look at this as a whole body. Because we live in one location or another has nothing to do with the task at hand. The task as I see it is;

- #1 . Now is the time to take a good look at our election process.
- #2 . Now is the time to learn how to interest more members to move into Area service. Or
- #3 What is the lesson here—learn it and move on.

We all have and are entitled to our perception and opinion. My experience is that when we bring our A.A. program along with us we can "disagree without being disagreeable."

As I see it, the single intent of the proposal was to insure the Right for Participation to everyone and also quoted was, Chapter 6, page S47 of the Service Manual where it states, **"Some Areas have adopted their own policy of "rotation"**

from real to urban sections or from one part of the area to another, to avoid domination by one or more heavily populated locations. However, no well-qualified A.A. member should be passed over in the interest of geographical rotation."

This was the spirit with which the proposal was intended

Respected submitted

Ray G.

NAGSC Chair

The following was submitted by the Southern Area General Service chair Mike M:

On September 15, Spanish-speaking District 21 invited (SAGSC) Public Information Chair Darryl B., Delegate Mike D. and myself to participate in their starting up a Cooperation with the Professional Community committee within their District.

Darryl B. spoke on PI, what the committee does in making the public aware of our fellowship. He emphasized that they are looking to reach out to the younger audience. I shared on General Service and Mike D spoke on CPC, the history of the committee -- what they do and what they don't do. There were about 25-28 members in attendance, all with the clear mindset that they were there to establish a committee to reach out to local professionals.

The district had an interpreter who translated to and from Spanish for the English-speaking guests. This experience of having a translator gave me a huge appreciation of what Spanish speaking members experience while attending the Area assemblies. The frustration I felt while trying to piece together what others were saying while seeing the passion expressed with their body language made the discussions difficult to follow.

By the end of the evening the district very lovingly put together a committee to reach out to the professional community, and I am very grateful to have witnessed the occasion. Thank you to District 21 for the invitation!

Proposal for New Locations of Area Assembly Semi-Annual Meetings

10/16/2007

To: General Service Assembly, Area 42

From: District 6, as per requested from the South Shore Group

Re: New Locations of the Area Assembly semi-annual meetings.

It has been proposed by the fellowship of the South Shore Group that Area 42 consider the possibility of changing meeting places to involve more members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This action would add to the Delegate Area 42 General Service Assembly Guidelines, under "Preamble" section 1.2 Meetings: A.

The proposal is as follows:

The Assembly Area meetings could be held each year once in the north (even numbered district i.e. Reno Dist. 2) and once in the south (odd numbered district i.e. Las Vegas Dist. 1). One year the meeting in September could be held in the north, and in March be held in the south. The following year the meetings would reverse and the south would host September's Assembly and the north would host the March meeting.

Please note Reno and Las Vegas are used only as examples. We would not need to limit ourselves to a certain city. Reno and Las Vegas are used only for their ability to accommodate large groups.

This proposal is based on the following conditions:

1. We are out growing Tonopah and last March it was standing room only for most of the Assembly.
2. We could encourage newer members from our local areas to attend the Assembly and learn how AA works at the Area level. (Promote services)
3. It would help cut down on the travel for GSR's within smaller groups, so they can afford to send a representative. To at least one Assembly a year, if not both.
4. Finally, as much as I like Tonopah, the possibility of have good recovery visiting other areas and carrying the message of service would be a great service to our fellowship.

Respectfully Submitted
Rich B., GSR, South Shore Group.

Unanimously Approved through District 6
Kevin M B., DCM District 6 Area 42

**The current amended Area 42 Guidelines are available to
view and download from the Home Page link**

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www.nevadaarea42.org

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at assemblies

- A. Do I feel it is my right and responsibility to speak my mind on a topic when my thoughts have not been expressed by someone else?
- B. Are questions, comments and minority opinions given respectful consideration?
- C. Do I sometimes rely too much on the opinions of our officers and past officers, rather than continue to explore my own conscience?

How many – well, I'm going to read all of them then we're going to go one at a time so that I'm sure everybody understands what the questions are.

Number two is: are we as an area doing enough to discuss all agenda items that may require a vote or a sense of the assembly, so that the individual group conscience (from GSRs and DCMs) can make an informed collective group conscience for the delegate to take back to the GSO conference? Or are we forcing the Delegate to go to the GSO conference and make our decisions for us?

Number three: are we doing enough to educate new GSRs and DCMs about their role as "Trusted Servants" and the assembly process?

Number four: GSR and DCM participation.

- A. Do they know what services, information and workshops the various area committees, standing chairpersons and officers can provide for them?
- B. How can we increase participation of GSRs and DCMs throughout the area?

Fifth question: Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care? Is there a sufficient pool of eligible and willing candidates?

Number Six, regarding our primary purpose: With the mention of Dark or Dim Districts in our populated and rural areas, are we reaching out to all of the districts, groups and members of AA in Area 42 and is participation at area assemblies reflecting a good cross section of our area?

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suggestions for the assembly. Then, if, as a committee, they decide that they would like to consider suggestions concerning any of the other five inventory topics, they have that option. Each subcommittee will have up to five minutes at the Pre-conference Assembly to present their suggestions.

Please note that it is not the task of the *ad hoc* subcommittees to take action on any of the comments made during the inventory. Nor is it their job to implement any of the suggestions that they may make to the Assembly. **It is the role of the groups (through their GSRs) and/or individual members of the Area Committee to decide to initiate (or not to initiate) a process for change.**

Thanks to all who participated in the inventory, to those who have volunteered to take the next step, and to my HP for this opportunity to be of service.

Sophie K.
Area 42 Chairperson

Editorial: On the 1st Tradition

"Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."

Our whole A.A. program is securely founded on the principle of humility--that is to say, perspective. Which implies, among other things, that we relate ourselves rightly to God and to our fellows; that we each see ourselves as we really are--"a small part of a great whole." Seeing our fellows thus, we shall enjoy group harmony. That is why A.A. Tradition can confidently state, "Our common welfare comes first."

"Does this mean," some will ask, "that in A.A. the individual doesn't count too much? Is he to be swallowed up, dominated by the group?"

No, it doesn't seem to work out that way. Perhaps there is no society on earth more solicitous of personal welfare, more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. Alcoholics

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Editor's Note:

The Area 42 Newsletter is comprised of service oriented articles submitted by its members. We welcome submissions and suggestions. The deadline for the next newsletter is February 9th, 2007. Please submit to area42newsletter@gmail.com

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Seven: does my home group know what the Area is and what it does?

Eight: What is the purpose of the Area? Is the branching of our Area into the NAGSC and SAGSC divisive, or instrumental in fulfilling that purpose?

Nine: the website. How can we improve our website?

And ten: where does the area need the most improvement?

So, on question number one: I'll give you about ten seconds to think about it. *(pause)* How many would like to have question number one included in the inventory?
(71 in favor)

Number two: *(LN read the text of #2 again)* How many people would like to have number two? (77 in favor)

OK, thank you. And then, number three: *(LN read text of #3 again)* How many people would like to have that among our six questions? (77 in favor)

Now remember, if you've already raised your hand three times, you've only got three times left!

Number four: *(LN read the text of #4 again)* How many would like to have that? (90 in favor)

Number five: How many would like to have number five be on the *(pause)* ? (77 in favor)

Thank you. Number six: regarding the dark and dim districts? (86 in favor)

Number seven: (52 in favor)

Number eight: what is the/about/regarding the purpose of the area. How many would like to have that on there? (74 in favor)

Number nine: (15 in favor)

And number ten: (66 in favor)

If I could have your attention please. *(pause)* Thank you. The numbers will be in the order of the/your selection process there – the number of people raising their hand. The first question will be #4, the second question will be #6, the third question will be #2, the fourth question will be #3, the fifth question will be #5, and the sixth question will be #8. The three losers were #1, 7, 9 and 10.

Just a quick reminder everybody, the things that Sophie asked in the beginning. The first will be to honor all of the Traditions – especially One regarding unity and Two, our ultimate authority. That means we're going to respect each other all day long. And number two is to speak only from a microphone when recognized by a facilitator. So I have to point at you or describe you and then you may speak. When someone is speaking, please don't speak at the same time or discuss the question with your neighbor. And then, number three, speak only once on any given inventory question and you have those two minutes to make it count. And we have someone up here keeping track. Curt is the guy that's going to put on that red light.

OK, number one. Regarding GSR and DCM participation. I'm going to read it as though it was all one question. And though it's a little bit long, then your answers, your responses to it, your feelings, your concerns can reflect/be regarding the whole question or any one part of it. *(LN reads #1 question)*

So I wait for someone to raise their hand or stand or go to the microphone, actually.

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Question Four: GSR & DCM Participation

A. Do they know what services, information and workshops the various area committees, standing chairpersons and officers can provide for them?

B. How can we increase participation of GSRs and DCMs throughout the area?

Discussion:

1. North and South have different procedures, so DCM workshop would be a good idea. (Carol)
2. As much as we love our past delegates, maybe we can get the DCMs involved in our workshops, panels and area Functions so we can get to know them better. (Ted)
3. We need to hear success stories of how to recruit new members from our home groups into General Service – to share what has worked. (Rick)
4. Not only are few people interested in service but also we don't have alternates. Bring alternates to events like this to learn the job rather than to muddle through on-the-job-training. (Kathy)
5. There's a BIG learning curve for new DCMs. Information sheets and training materials about how to do service workshops, sponsorship panels, etc. would be really helpful. How about a "lending library" of workshop materials?
6. Orientation for GSRs is good, but ½ hr. isn't enough. Increase time for more information. Have area officers come to The district to educate the GSR further. Also, bring alternate GSR to district meetings. (Cynthia)
7. The group should support their GSR to the Assembly, but if the group is unable to, the Assembly should. We should do a better job explaining if there is funding and how to go about obtaining it. (Joan)
8. How about a panel to educate people on the responsibilities of being in service and the process of growth through General Service? Emphasize the responsibilities, not just the duties. (Andy)
9. My experience in New Jersey was that we had regular GSR workshops where Area officers came to inform and go Through the Service Manual. There was a GSR workshop in each section of the area and pizza was provided for lunch. (Neils)
10. My homegroup voted for me to say that we would like our DCM to participate at the group level. We want the DCM to visit groups throughout the district sharing the message of service. (Rich)
11. It's hard getting GSRs interested – especially when most announcements are at the end of a meeting. Make announcements at the beginning of the group meeting so people will hear them instead of just walking away. (Andy)
12. In the South, new groups are popping up and they don't think that GSR expenses are part of the group's expenses. They disburse their "extra" money to Intergroup, the area and GSO before they fund their GSR. (Sonnie)
13. I get new GSRs for only about 6 months. They don't know the structure, they are untrained and they disappear. The Area could provide assistance in keeping GSRs interested. (Mariano)
14. The groups are uninformed about General Service. We need to have more information sent out (flyers, etc.). (Will)
15. The groups don't know what the GSR is and few people will spend the time and money to come here. Groups need to Be taught to be responsible to continue the services. Larry asked how the area could help? The GSRs in Reno think They should tell the DCM what to do and the DCM should represent the district to the Area. (Tobias)
16. We can hold workshops but we can't get them into service. We're failing in our sponsorship responsibilities. (Marvin)
17. GSRs, not just DCMs, can also visit inactive groups to share enthusiasm for service. (Diane)

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18. We can educate sponsees, and we can do the work. (Ed)
19. Lack of communication and fear of service keeps some people away. We need to groom our replacements. Central Office could have a hot line to list service activities in the Area. They could be the hub of information. (Pat)
20. Invite committee chairs and officers to come and talk to your group and district. Officers and chairs are underutilized. Use them! (Mary)
21. Our website has a lot of info. Maybe we could make a flyer to distribute to clubs, etc. that provides info about what's on the website i.e. guidelines, workshops, district meetings, etc.
22. A district is only as strong as its DCM. The DCM can visit groups and explain that without a GSR, a group has no vote. Also, if you take a commitment, show up!
23. Lots of emphasis on using **current** rather than past members in service can lead to three great experiences:
 - a. new person in service will learn a topic well if they have to teach it
 - b. the voting body will see how the new person handles a commitment
 - c. the new person builds a reserve of enthusiasm and has energy to continue (Julian)
24. Sponsorship is key. I needed to know what I'd be getting out of it before I learned what I could give. (Richard)

Question Six: Primary Purpose

With the mention of Dark or Dim Districts in our populated and rural areas, are we reaching out to all of the Districts, Groups & members of AA in Area 42 and is participation at Area Assemblies reflecting a good cross section of our Area?

Discussion:

1. Was a past DCM in two different rural districts. Groups didn't want a business meeting so she'd visit regular group meetings, I introduce herself and invite the group to send a representative to the District meeting to participate. (Joan)
2. June '07 meeting list in Vegas shows 318 groups on the schedule. I'm not sure, but I think there are 90 voting members here. Maybe 1/2 of the 90 are from the south. This shows how big the problem is. (Jason)
3. Several years ago someone from Hawthorne showed up at the assembly and asked who the DCM was. It was a dark district, so he became the DCM. The same thing happened when someone showed up from Winnemucca. After that, NAGSC took a service workshop to Winnemucca. Rural areas can get lost and left behind. But I was surprised to learn that in downtown Las Vegas there is a dark district. (Paul)
4. "Meeting makers make it!" In 2 1/2 years in AA I never heard of GSR, "district" or "area." I was appointed Alt. GSR. I buddied-up with the GSR, and it was more appealing to serve. (Bob)
5. My district has a large Hispanic population w/faltering meetings in Spanish. Could be about cultural differences? I'd like to meet with the Dist. 22 Spanish-speaking DCM to discuss this. But a cross section of the community is NOT being represented in District 8. (Phil)
6. I was 14 years sober before I ever heard of General Service – and my sponsor was a past Delegate! If WE don't talk about General Service at the group level, they don't learn what we're doing. Some people still don't want to hear about service, but I need to give them the information/carry the message. (Mike)
7. I was a DCM of a rural district in Pennsylvania. I kept on visiting the groups and giving my report until the groups sent someone to the district meeting. Keep visiting until they send someone! (Ted)

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8. I was a DCM in California. Now I'm working in District 21 (Spanish). When I go to a group "with angered face" the don't want to participate. I need to go with a smile. I need to be polite. Then I'm not just talking to stones with eyes. I need to convey the message that if no one else will do the job, I need to do it. I need to be the example. (Marvin)
9. Marvin and Spanish-speaking members will be assisting with new Spanish meeting in Pahrump. (John)
10. To revive our "dim" district, we had a brainstorming session. Then our district meetings went from 3 to 17 GSRs attending. We increased district meetings to once a month and announced it at meetings. We called or contacted every GSR on our roster. We had food. We invited our delegate to talk about the benefits of service. GSRs went to visit other groups. We revived the district picnic. (Pat)
11. re: "Dark" Districts - Are We Reaching Out? Yes, because we have some formerly dark districts represented here today. (Brett)
12. This topic comes up at every monthly district meeting. We've come to understand that we can only get others interested in service by sharing the benefits to ourselves. Our words and actions are the example. It doesn't work to force people to do service. (Ron)
13. Suggests that Area officers contact "dark" and "dim" districts and groups in those districts and explain how the area can help them. The acronyms (like PI, CPC, etc.) don't work. (Lizz)
14. In the North, at our best, GSRs, DCMs, area committees, officers and intergroup are all linked, coordinating efforts and communicating well. There are people in this room who would drive long distances to share about service if asked. Maybe written clear-cut, specific guidelines for Area officers and committee chairs would insure more assistance from them. (Jason)
16. From my past experience [in New Jersey] the Area Chair organized neighboring DCMs to assist GSRs in dark districts who are willing to serve and invite them to the neighboring District's meeting. Maybe SAGSC should address "dark" districts in Nevada at the next meeting. (Neils C.)
17. My predecessor threw the book at me and ran away screaming. In our rural area we suffer from a lack of information – from the Area, from NAGSC, from Central Office – in every aspect of service. (Gene)
18. Lack of enthusiasm in my district. We need to pass along enthusiasm, sponsor to sponsee. (Lou)
19. When I was Registrar, the delegate instructed me to create a "welcome" letter to send out to each newly registered group with info about the services that were available to that group, who their DCM was and when the NAGSC and area assemblies were. When I followed the letter with a phone call, we had a GSR at the NAGSC meeting and maybe at area assembly. Human contact makes the difference. I can pray for the willingness to be an attraction. (Sophie)
20. We have held Traditions workshops and have educated our GSRs. We support PI and H&I, but we need Area assistance with CPC work. (Marco)
21. NAGSC took a road trip to Ely to see if we could light a dark district. We had great results. Why aren't we doing that now? Maybe it's time to move the assembly around the area so each part of the area can experience having enthusiastic service workers visiting their neighborhood. (Kevin B.)

Question Two: Are we as an Area doing enough to discuss all agenda items that may require a vote or a sense of the assembly, so that the individual group conscience (from GSRs and DCMs) can make an informed collective group conscience for the Delegate to take to the GSO conference? Or are we forcing the delegate to go to the GSO conference and make our decisions for us? (Concept 1)

Discussion:

1. At past assemblies we have done roundtables on only a few selected items. What about the other items? My home

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- group asked, “what happened with [XYZ] ?” But we didn’t discuss [XYZ] in Tonopah. Should we be talking about all agenda items or only a few? (Paul)
2. In another area, agenda items were divided up by the committees and given to the equivalent committee in the area. (i.e. agenda items for the conference CPC committee were addressed by the area CPC committee) I’d like Joyce to explain this better. (Marion)
 3. The service structure in Arizona mirrored the Conference. Each GSR was assigned to an area committee for two years. That committee would have an agenda that was created by the area officers, so when a GSR came here he/she would have something to do. Assignments to committees were done randomly; each home group, whether they had a GSR or not, was assigned to a panel. The DCMs would be the panel chair or the alternate chair. The information would come to the assembly as a seconded motion. Everyone who wanted to would discuss it and then a vote was taken, if necessary. Conference agenda items would be assigned to the committee that it was assigned to at the General Service Conference. (Joyce)
 4. If the Delegate stated whether or not they felt like they had – or needed any further – group conscience of any item (Jason)
 5. *to the assembly*: Do you feel adequately informed? We may move our pre-conference assembly a couple of weeks later. That will give everyone more time to discuss the items. (Mike – delegate)
 6. The delegate could get Districts together in clusters to get info to the GSRs and discuss pertinent items. It’s nearly impossible to discuss all items. I would like all background material on all items so maybe we could discuss all items. (Neils)
 7. I wasn’t sure if we were voting or just discussing. Clarity on what items we are voting on would be helpful. (Andy)
 8. We take “a sense of the assembly”. The Delegate serves on one committee. The items of my committee we vote on, then the area officers select a few other items. The Spring Assembly provides the conscience of the assembly to assist the Delegate at the conference. Delegate’s primary job is to serve on his own committee. He will be able to make comments on other committee agenda items if/when they come to the floor. (Mike – delegate)
 9. At the General Service Conference the delegate is certain of discussing only the items pertaining to the committee to which he/she has been assigned. And that discussion may be only within that committee. All conference agenda items are discussed within committees first, and the committees may or may not decide to bring one or more of the agenda items to the floor of the general session for discussion &/or vote. The best our delegate can do is to take the questions for his/her committee. In looking at the rest of the agenda items, he/she can see if there are issues that pertain to groups that we know here in our area. And then, ask for information on those specific agenda items to be discussed here at the assembly. These items may never get to the conference floor, but if they do then our delegate has the ability to vote the area’s conscience. The delegate may not even get to vote on anything we discuss here – other than the parts of the committee he is on. Everything is last minute. It is frustrating, but we do our best. (Joan M.)
 10. When we do receive the final agenda items, I send them out to the DCMs for distribution to the GSRs. I will be more than happy to send the agenda items to every legible GSR’s e-mail address that’s on this registration/sign-in sheet. (Carol B. recording secretary)
 11. The southern area had roundtables last spring about the agenda items. I found those extremely helpful to clarify the information I took back to the groups. Please let’s keep doing them. (Cynthia)
 12. We like to brag about this “upside down triangle”, that the groups decide what’s going to happen to A.A. The time slots eat up our discussions, we don’t even see all of the stuff that’s going to be talked about back there, and then when our Delegates go to the conference they get this much of what they’re going to do about it. We need to think about some way of doing business differently or Alcoholics Anonymous is going to turn into the deal where the big shots are telling us what to do about everything. (Eddie K.)

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Question Three: Are we doing enough to educate new GSRs and DCMs about their role as “Trusted Servants” and the assembly process?

Discussion:

1. None of the GSRs in District 14 have received any info from NY even though they registered here in a timely manner. (Duncan H.)
2. Anyone in the North who submitted new group or group information change forms needs to submit them again. We have no idea what the recently-resigned alternate registrar did or didn't do. (Ray)
3. My DCM didn't give me enough information when I took over. I still haven't rec'd DCM packet from GSO. Maybe we could have workshops for DCMs to prepare us? (Patty)
4. *(Explanation of group registration process)*
The GSR fills out a form and gives it to the DCM. The DCM makes a district record of the group and then gives the form to the Registrar. The Registrar makes an area record of the group and then sends the form to GSO. GSO waits 30 days before registering the new group just to make sure it doesn't fold. (Mike – delegate)
5. When I registered as a new GSR I sent the form to NY myself. I rec'd the packet in 4 weeks. I also sent copies of the info to my district and the area. (John)
6. Get and use a service sponsor. Attend a GSR Survival Training. Participate in (or host!) service workshops. Then tell your officers what more you need in the way of information/direction/assistance in doing your “job.” (Sophie)
7. I called NY after waiting 6 weeks and then received the packet very quickly. Registrar can send a form letter to all new groups with Area information on meetings, events, etc. That first contact with the GSR is very important. (Sonnie)
8. Happy to hear about service sponsorship. The new GSR doesn't know what they need to know, so maybe past GSRs could teach Concepts, the Service Manual and how we practice Traditions within General Service. (Jackie T.)
9. Service sponsors are helpful; the Service Manual has great information. Maybe the GSR Survival committee needs to work harder at making information available. (Niels C.)
10. There are lots of resources available for GSRs and DCMs: guidelines, training workshops, past servants and the Service Manual. When I was new I got a sponsor and a Big Book. When I read something I understood (or didn't understand) I was told to call. In service, it's the same. Enough information is available. Just use it and ask for help. (Ron W.)
11. Suggestion: lots of people don't get to the GSR orientation on Friday night, so move it or add one at 7 a.m. on Saturday (concurrent with the open A.A. meeting). (Libby)

Question Five: Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care? Is there a sufficient pool of eligible and willing candidates?

Discussion:

1. As a new GSR from the North, I didn't understand the positions or know any of the people standing for election. More alien were the people from the South. I had never even seen them before – and they comprised ½ of the candidates! So in any election, at least ½ of us voting for any position have no experience observing the candidates in action. How have they handled commitments in the past? Do they know the requirements of the position? Have they come behind and trained with the current, out-going officer/chairperson? Are they willing to stretch beyond their comfort zone? (Sophie)

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2. Last September we had just one person stand for some positions. I'm grateful that someone is willing. My responsibility is to teach others what I've been taught: "steps and service". It's difficult to get people to serve in AA, and I'm grateful for anyone to help. (Michael)
3. I had my service sponsor at my first Assembly. She helped me to understand what was going on. The service resumé helped me to know something about the people from the other half of the state. (Annie)
4. When I'm a voting member I would exercise my right not to vote when I didn't understand the situation. When I needed help, I asked others from my table. When the last Alternate Chair was elected, I was elated because I knew he was very well qualified. But I do believe we need to encourage others to make themselves available. (Jim)
5. Service résumés helped me a lot as a new GSR. The resumé said to me that the candidate was interested enough to create a resumé and that standing for a position was not a last-minute decision. Although only one member may stand from one side of the state the other side may have 4 or 5 people who are available and willing. (Carol)
6. "Pass it on" – suggest to someone from the group to step up and then groom them for the position. Resumés are also helpful. It is important to prepare others and to push them beyond their comfort zone. (John)
7. I went to my group business meeting to discuss the proposals for this weekend. The group brought up the ability to nominate from the floor. At times we choose the most popular rather than who can serve us the best. (Kathy)
8. The red light for me was that 5 positions went to unopposed candidates. I worry about apathy. We need to work harder to get to know people beyond their clique. It might be important to open up the election to people from both sides if there's only one person standing. (Lee)
9. My sponsor suggested I take on the responsibility of GSR and now DCM. We need to show newcomers how to form a community of Alcoholics Anonymous. Serving teaches how to love. (Mariano)
10. Every GSR & DCM, committee chair and their alternates are eligible to stand for everything except delegate, chair and their alternates. The directions are in the Guidelines. (Marion)
11. A lot of work goes into putting on an assembly. This shows that we did elect very good people to be our trusted servants. (Roger R.)

Question Eight: What is the purpose of the Area? Is branching of our Area into NAGSC and SAGSC divisive or instrumental in fulfilling that purpose?

Discussion:

1. The purpose of the Area is to provide a structure where members of AA can have their point of view represented from the group to the Delegate to NY. Is branching our Area into NAGSC and SAGSC divisive? No, but it may not be instrumental in helping. Maybe we should split the Area and get another Delegate. (Jason)
2. Yes, but we also have area business – in addition to getting our groups' consciences to our Delegate. More people could be involved by having two areas. Maybe when we have 1200-1500 groups GSO would consider it, but we have a long ways to go. (Ruth J.)
3. We're here to enable members to better carry the message. We make sure that everything they need is available. Is the North/South set up effective, is it appropriate? The geographic argument (distances are so great) isn't valid; there are single areas much larger than ours. What about looking at how it would work to be one area rather than two areas practicing being one area, twice a year. What's going to be best for the area? (Sophie K.)

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4. We're really lucky to come together this way. It looks and feels like one area to Her. It's all in how you look at it. (Kathy S.)
5. If it ain't broke, we sure as hell don't need to fix anything! (Bob)
6. I'm the Archivist and I make sure that the North and the South have all the same stuff in their archives. It seems to work good – except that I need to make a lot of copies of everything. (Roger L.)
7. The purpose of the Area is to carry the message and to keep the information highway open between the group, the Delegate and the General Service Conference. NAGSC, SAGSC and the Area are doing a fair bit of that. I'm told that historically, in Area 42, the N/S was set up to further reach into Nevada and parts of California. We were able to send people out to Ely, for example. And at PRAASA I compared the money we spend supporting the 30+ members who serve the Area with other areas our size; we don't spend any more than anyone else. (Jason C.)
8. Would be be more effective meeting in any other way (north/south) than we are today, here in Tonopah? I feel for people in the rural areas. Meetings can be few and far apart. I think this is the real problem – not with the North and South. (Melvin)
9. Everyone, to a person, who spoke at the open meeting this morning said how grateful they were to be here. I can't imagine cutting this body in half. How about instead we each bring along a friend to the next assembly and there will be twice the people here! (Ray G.)
10. This is like a family reunion – we all get to meet and to know one another. I feel for the people in the rural areas, but they choose to live there. (Sunnie)
11. I agree with Sophie. The purpose of the Area to me is to get together to inform our Delegate. Tonopah is good because it's not as far as Reno (for us in the South) and there aren't many distractions here. (Pat G.)
12. Splitting our Area is like dividing a baseball team – we would need two managers and we would split the best players. It's better to have one manager and the best players all on one team. (Horacio)
13. I live in Ely, NV, in a rural area. I used to be registered in the North, but for winter travel reasons I changed my registration to the South. We need help out in Ely with workshops. How about we be one body and carry the message where it's needed regardless of north or south?
14. It's not necessary to divide us in two. It's okay to be north/south/east/west. We can all work together. That's the only good idea I have. (Marcello)
15. If we don't work together something bad could happen. Maybe we can try to work together better. (Marco)
16. Looking at the Service Manual I see 10 areas a lot larger than ours. Some of these have requested to split but don't meet GSO's criteria for dividing. Would Ruth or Julian please explain why we do it this way? (Mike D.)

Ruth: Prior to the early '70s the Area met in Reno or Las Vegas once a year. When it met in Reno, there was heavy participation from the Reno people and very little from Las Vegas it was the same. There were a lot of Las Vegans and not very many folks from Reno. So they had the idea to meet in the center of NV. The first one here in Tonopah was, I believe, in 1972 or '73. My first one was in '73 and it was still very small. About 40 voting members. And then we added the Pre-Conference Assembly, and then we added the NAGSC and SAGSC and got more people involved. So for us, it has worked, and that's why. There's no reason why you can't try to all go back and be one big area again, but the travel is going to be a problem. You have people who get off work at 5:00 on Friday. They cannot make it to Reno or Las Vegas for ANY business on Friday night. And not everybody can afford to fly. There's a lot of considerations. But that's why we do it, and that's when we did it, and now we meet twice a year. Many areas meet four times a year. That's why we have NAGSC and SAGSC – so that you people don't have to travel to downtown Tonopah four times a year.

Julian: During the time I had the privilege to serve the fellowship in New York, over the years, I heard a lot of inquiries from other areas as to how we were set up, how it worked and so on. I have not heard of another area that has duplicated our

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set-up. Geographic distance is a consideration but not a prime consideration by any means. And when I went to NY for the first time as a Delegate, we had to give a two minute Delegate's report. I focused on the 700 miles that we had between Laughlin and the northern border up there. And then the next day I heard about an Alaskan GSR that went to a District meeting in a bush plane as 2/3 of Alaska is road less. But the thing that really made a lasting impression was a presentation made by a Canadian Delegate. He lived just north of the [US] border. He showed the northern-most point in his Area and said that if he went the same distance to the south, he would be in Guatemala.

You can find the minutes for Area 42 Fall
Assembly
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www.nevadaarea42.org

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Anonymous has no "musts." Few A.A. groups impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. We do suggest, but we don't discipline. Instead, compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual; he is the judge of his own conduct. Those words of old time, "Judge not," we observe most literally.

"But," some will argue, "if A.A. has no authority to govern its individual members or groups, how shall it ever be sure that the common welfare does come first? How is it possible to be governed without a government? If everyone can do as he pleases, how can you have aught but anarchy?"

The answer seems to be that we A.A.s cannot really do as we please, though there is no constituted human authority to restrain us. Actually, our common welfare is protected by powerful safeguards. The moment any action seriously threatens the common welfare, group opinion mobilizes to remind us; our conscience begins to complain. If one persists, he may become so disturbed as to get drunk; alcohol gives him a beating. Group opinion shows him that he is off the beam, his own conscience tells him that he is dead wrong, and, if he goes too far, Barleycorn brings him real conviction.

So it is we learn that in matters deeply affecting the group as a whole, "our common welfare comes first." Rebellion ceases and cooperation begins because it must; we have disciplined ourselves.

Eventually, of course, we cooperate because we really wish to; we see that without substantial unity there can be no A.A., and that without A.A. there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside personal ambitions whenever these might harm A.A. We humbly confess that we are but "a small part of a great whole."

(All of the editorials by Bill covering the 12 Points of Tradition appear in the new 48-page Tradition pamphlet, along with the 12 Points themselves. Copies of the new pamphlet were distributed free during November by the Alcoholic Foundation through the group secretaries. Extra copies may be had at 10 cents each by addressing requests to: Alcoholic Foundation, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Annex, New York 17, N. Y.)

Bill W.

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