

Kit

Keep in Touch

WITH SERVICE

Summer 2009

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South Carolina

On the Web at

Area62.org

2009 Is Election Year for Area 62 Assembly

Greetings to all in Area 62. 2009 is an election year for the Area Assembly. At the Sunday business meeting of the Assembly in June, we will be asking members willing to serve to stand for election to area office, so that their names may be placed in the minutes for groups to consider before the October election assembly. There will also be an opportunity to stand at the October Assembly, so those unable to attend the June assembly, or undecided in June, will still be able to stand for election.

I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage all of you who may be interested in serving A.A. at the Area level to stand, so that the Assembly has the best possible choice of candidates for each office.

"If you are willing and able and wish to express your gratitude to A.A. through service, please stand. We need you."

You may consult the information contained in this K.I.T. and the A.A. Service Manual to find out the suggested experience and duties for each office, but also feel free to contact the current officers to find out what is involved in their service positions. I'm sure each would be more than happy to share with you their experience with day to day responsibilities, time commitment, etc.

In deciding whether to stand for office, A.A. literature suggests that we consider a few things:

- 1) Have we enjoyed our past service experience and did we fulfill the responsibilities of the offices we've held?
- 2) Do we have time for the commitment and have we discussed this commitment with those close to us?
- 3) Are we familiar with the Traditions and Concepts and how these are applied to local issues?

What A.A. literature does **not** suggest we consider is

- 1) Are we good enough?
- 2) Smart enough?
- 3) Popular enough?

Many of us sell ourselves short, and all of us learn on the job. And as soon as we feel comfortable that we do know what we're doing, we're asked to rotate on. So, if you are willing and able and wish to express your gratitude to A.A. through service, please stand. We need you. We'll let our Higher Power working through the group conscience of the Assembly decide who will do what.

David T
Area 62 Chairperson

Spirit of Rotation: Would You Please Stand . . .

As it does every two years like clockwork, there is a changing of the guard of Area 62 officers, as our eight elected officers rotate off positions they may feel they have just settled into.

Members willing to serve in those positions are asked to stand for election during the June Area Assembly so that their names may be placed in the minutes for groups to consider before the October election assembly. Those unable to attend the June assembly, or who are undecided in June, will also have an opportunity to stand at the October Assembly.

Rotation isn't easy, but it is essential to the fabric of the A.A. way of life. Is rotation necessary? The collective voice of A.A. experiences suggests that limiting the length of individual service promotes "anonymity in action" by avoiding issues of power, prestige and personal recognition. Service is not a popularity contest, and we are reminded to place principles before personalities.

"Bill often shared anecdotes about the perils to A.A. posed by 'bleeding deacons' who want always to be in charge — and seldom missed the opportunity to poke fun at himself," according to the August/September 2007 issue of Box 4-5-9. "Surely I can make these assertions [about rotation] with the greatest of confidence," he wrote in a January 1947 Grapevine article. "For in my own turn I, too, have tried a hand at governing A.A. Each time I have strenuously tried it I have been shouted down; —so loudly, in fact, that on several occasions it looked as though I was due for swift and certain excommunication!"

At the October Area Assembly we will elect officers for the next two years. Their duties and qualifications, based on the A.A. Service Manual and Area 62 Structures and Procedures are as follows:

DELEGATE

DUTIES: The delegate is our voice to the US/Canada conference as a whole. As a voting member of the Conference, our delegate represents the viewpoints of Area 62. The delegate position is a demanding job. Though the high point is the Conference meeting, the delegate's job goes on year-round and involves all aspects of the Conference structure. The Delegate shall make a report

on the General Service Conference to the body of the Area Assembly at the first Assembly immediately following the General Service Conference..

Qualifications: The delegate ideally should have several years of active participation in local and area affairs, as a G.S.R., and as a committee member. The delegate must be able to commit to the large amount of time and work are required to perform the job year-round.

Five or six years of continuous sobriety are suggested for delegates. They should be experienced in chairing meetings, have the ability to take suggestions and criticisms, and have a deep knowledge of A.A. affairs. They should be thoroughly familiar with the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts and how to apply them to local problems, and they should be open-minded, able to form consensus in the area and with other delegates on matters vital to A.A.

ALTERNATE DELEGATE

Duties: The alternate will be the Finance Chairperson and will be responsible for working with the D.C.M.s, G.S.R.s and respective treasurers to assist their groups in developing a plan to contribute funds to operate the Assembly..

Qualifications: Same as Delegate

CHAIRPERSON

Duties: The chairperson is responsible for the smooth running of area assemblies, consulting with the committee before setting the date and time, making sure that all groups are notified, consulting with officers and committee members on the program, and chairing the assembly meetings. The chairperson, more than any other officer, keeps the delegate informed about what is going on in the area, and makes sure that committee members are aware of what goes on in world services.

The chairperson is responsible for preparing a balanced budget for the approval of the Area Assembly; appointing, along with the delegate, the Standing Committee Chairpersons for the Area Assembly; preparing, along with the delegate, the agenda for each Area Assembly; and from time to time, appointing ad hoc committees to attend to any matter of importance to the Assembly.

Qualifications: The chairperson should have a solid period of sobriety (minimum three to five years), and experience in group, central office, institutional, and/or area affairs. Area chairpersons need a sound understanding and appreciation of the Steps, the Traditions, and the Concepts, along with a good fund of experience gained through applying these guiding principles successfully to local problems. Communication skills, leadership qualities, and sensitivity to the wishes of the local are also important.

ALTERNATE CHAIRPERSON

Duties: The Alternate Chairman is ready to step in for the Chairman in case he/she is unable to fulfill the duties of the position. They attend the Committee Chair meetings and offer support, experience and strength. They are also responsible for Workshops at the Area Assemblies that inform on various topics of interest to the Assembly and attend district and group meetings to provide workshops as well. The Alternate Chairperson is on call to the Chairperson to help in any area that needs for assistance.

Qualifications: Same as Chairperson.

SECRETARY

Duties: The secretary must take accurate minutes at Area Assemblies, and distributes minutes to Area 62 groups in a timely manner, keeping mailing lists up to date. The secretary also sends out or reproduces any other correspondence in support of area officers, conducts workshops when called upon, keeps the group roll books for assembly voting, helps setup prior to assembly, and other tasks as they arise.

Qualifications: The secretary should have a reasonable period of sobriety. Some service in group or central office or general service is useful. So is some background in general office; computer knowledge is essential. An effective secretary needs to have a sense of order, and the ability to capture the essentials of what is happening at a meeting. The job is time-consuming and needs to be carried out on schedule, and the secretary needs to be sure that ample time is available.

REGISTRAR

Duties: The registrar develops and maintains records of all groups in the area, including group name, meeting location, time, and G.S.R. or group contact. Registrars are also responsible for names, addresses and phone

numbers of the G.S.R.'s, D.C.M.'s, district and area officers and area committee members, and maintain mailing lists for area publications such as mailing of minutes. For this job, an organized approach as well as computer literacy are essential.

Qualifications: The registrar should have a reasonable period of sobriety. Some service in group or central office or general service is useful. Computer knowledge is essential.

TREASURER

Duties: The treasurer keeps financial records for the area and reports regularly to the assembly. The Treasurer collects group and district donations; makes timely deposits after postings of group donations; pays for our area incurred expenses with accumulated funds; provides efficient financial reports as needed and requested, and has information available as to where our money comes from and how it is distributed, or is able to direct a member to someone with the answers to such questions. In most cases, the treasurer is responsible for encouraging contribution support for area and G.S.O. services.

Qualifications: The treasurer should be a responsible person with a solid period of sobriety. He/she should be organized enough to keep good records, and some accounting or bookkeeping experience is useful. Persuasiveness, firmness, and diplomacy will help the treasurer do the job.

ALTERNATE TREASURER

Duties: The primary responsibilities of the Alternate Treasurer are to assist the Treasurer, double checking financial information, making collections at Area Assembly Saturday night speaker and Sunday morning business meetings, and making deposits from the Assembly Meeting.

Qualifications: Same as treasurer.

Individual A.A. groups should name their G.S.R.s and Alternate G.S.R.s on the same schedule as the Area, whose officers officially take office on January 1 of even years.

Their terms run concurrently with those of D.C.M.s, Area Officers, and the Delegate, according to Area 62 Structures and Procedures.

Districts 10 & 7 Combine Strengths on Workshops

Districts 10 & 7 decided that, as a whole, we were not covering our area very well. The suggestion was made to get both districts together and let the committees meet. This proved to be most informative and productive. The committees have since been working and serving together. We have decided, as a whole, to continue to have workshops for both districts. Amy and I have planned many workshops, which have proved to be quite good. We are now in the process of planning another, which we feel is long overdue. We all have benefited and grown by this endeavor and look forward to more.

We are looking forward to hearing the Delegate's Report at 2:00 p.m. on July 24, 2009 at the Alano Club, 111 Catalina Drive in Greenville. Bring a covered dish and enjoy a great day.

Mac J,
DCM, District 10

A Message From Area 62 Secretary

It is an awesome experience to serve as Secretary of Area 62. I only had a vague idea of what was involved in planning and organizing the Area Assemblies until I was elected as an officer. It is amazing to me what dedicated people can accomplish!

I hope all of you reading this will take the opportunity to experience what happens at Area Assemblies. I personally like to visit the various committee meetings (Corrections, Treatment, Special Needs, etc.) on Saturday mornings. I love hearing what Districts across the state are doing. We have such creative people among us. Even if I don't have a service position that involves Area work, I still go to the Assemblies. Fellowship with folks from all over the state is something you will not want to miss. Bring a sponsee. Bring your sponsor. I will see you there!

Elise M
Area 62 Secretary

South Carolinian Elected as Southeast Regional Trustee

Elisabeth N., who served as Area 62 Delegate in 2006-2007, has been elected Southeast Regional Trustee for 2009-2012. The Southeast Region encompasses Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Puerto Rico.

Elisabeth is one of eight regional trustees, six from the United States and two from Canada, who serve four-year terms. She will bring our regional point of view and experience to the General Service Board's discussions.

Area 62 Website Quickly Responds to Assembly Action

Assembly's decision in March to create an at-large linguistic district for Spanish-speaking Groups, District 90, gave members of the Web Committee another opportunity to make sure the Area 62 website would continue to provide timely and accurate information to its visitors. In early April your website, area62.org, debuted new site content in response to Assembly's action.

A more experienced past chairman of the Committee (and current Alternate Delegate), Cyndi F., spearheaded the development of new Group pages and the underlying site structure. She was greatly aided by Javier, the District's DCM, who provided a large amount of the needed translation services for such an undertaking. David T., Area Chairman, also a past website Chairman, and Cis G., Registrar, also were instrumental in helping the Committee meet its obligations to you so quickly.

The Web Committee will continue its work by discussing other ways it might meet the needs of the linguistic district, such as developing translations into Spanish of Area's "Structures and Procedures" and other helpful documents that can be posted in the Members' Section of the website.

If you'd like to assist your Web Committee in any way we'll gratefully welcome your service to Area and all suffering alcoholics!

Cecil R.
Web Coordinator

Importance of a Home Group

For most A.A.s, membership in a home group is one of the keys to continuing sobriety. In a home group, they accept service responsibilities and learn to sustain friendships.

The home group affords individual A.A.s the privilege of voting on issues that affect the Fellowship as a whole; it is the very basis of the service structure. While most A.A. members attend other groups regularly, the home group is where they participate in business meetings and cast their vote as part of the group conscience of the Fellowship as a whole. As with all group conscience matters, each member has one vote.

Group service from coffee maker to secretary, treasurer, or chairperson is usually the way members first experience the joy and the growth that can be derived from A.A. service.

From The A.A. Service Manual

The home group is where recovery begins; it is where A.A. members grow up in sobriety by the time-honored process of trial and error, to discover that they can be loved, “warts and all.”

It is where they learn to put the needs of others, especially the needs of the group, ahead of their own desires. It is where they first have the opportunity to serve others, and where they learn of opportunities to serve beyond the group. It is where they begin to adopt the guiding principles of Alcoholics Anonymous as working realities in their own sober lives.

*c.1993 The A.A. Grapevine,
“The Home Group: Heartbeat of A.A.,” page 9.*

Correction: Our apologies to Lyn K, who wrote the article entitled “Annual Meeting of Districts 11 & 12” for the Spring issue of K.I.T. which was incorrectly attributed to Rhonda S.

Keep In Touch (Kit) is distributed at each Area 62 Assembly. Area officers, committee chairs, and A.A. members share about what is happening in service work around Area 62. If you have a story to share about exceptional service work that carries the message to the still-suffering alcoholic, please send it to 62kitchair@area62.org. KIT presents the experience and opinions of members of Alcoholics Anonymous on the disease of alcoholism. Opinions expressed here are not those of A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or the Area 62 Assembly.

Are We Failing the Suffering Alcoholic?

Have your group and district taken an inventory lately? We recently had a wake up call about the work we do, how the lives of others and the happiness of their families depend on us, and what happens when we fail in our service work.

David T, Area 62 Chairperson, received this email from Russ, a District Web Rep in District 7. It is a message from a wife whose husband is taking his first steps toward recovery. Her email read as follows:

“Is there a way to get a current schedule of meetings?”

After much prayer and heartbreak my husband finally reached the decision to take steps to save his life and his family. He attempted to attend his first meeting using the on-line schedule for District 7. He first tried the meeting on Friday at McCarter Presbyterian Church at 8 p.m.; he arrived and eventually two others arrived, only to find there was no one to facilitate a meeting. He called the number listed and Ashley apologized and assured him this was an unusual occurrence. On Saturday he called and asked about the meeting at San Souci Baptist tonight at 8 p.m. and was assured there would be a meeting – only to go there and find no one.

This is a pivotal time in our family’s life and hopefully recovery for my husband and our family – at least a step. How can this experience be avoided?”

Russ read this aloud at the district meeting, which led to an overhaul of the meeting schedule, renewed emphasis on their DCM visiting all groups, etc.

Sometimes we get so caught up in the “business” of service that we forget that we are helping with a life-and-death mission where others are concerned. Bill often spoke to service groups about alcoholics dying within gunshot of the place they were meeting. He knew the need to remind us in service of why we are really here. We can get wrapped up in the detail, procedures, or social aspects of service and forget the greater goal.

This Is Also Rotation Year at G.S.O.

When was rotation first used at GSO?

The first reported use of rotation as “an A.A. tool” came from Dorothy, the wife of Clarence S., who had founded the first A.A. group in Cleveland, Ohio. In an October 1939 letter to the Fellowship’s first (non-alcoholic) secretary, Ruth Hock, Dorothy reported, “Our committee of 7 is really functioning — 5 men, 2 women, and they appoint leaders, discuss tendencies, fellowship and stuff . . . One man and one woman drop off each month and are replaced by seniority.”

When and why did G.S.O. adopt rotation?

Rotation came to the G.S.O. staff a dozen years later, in September 1951. Before it was implemented, the staff members, then numbering six, were asked for their input. Eve M. suggested that rotation could do away with a competitiveness that she felt was out of keeping with the A.A. spirit. Ann MacF. noted that, among other things, it would provide an equal chance for each staff member to contribute and utilize as fully as possible the experience of each person. Some years later another staff member, Beth K., a familiar presence at G.S.O. from 1959-83, said that A.A. co-founder Bill W. leaned toward rotation “so that if anything happened to one person, the office could continue to function efficiently. It wouldn’t fold up if somebody got drunk! The more each of us knew about the different assignments, the better.”

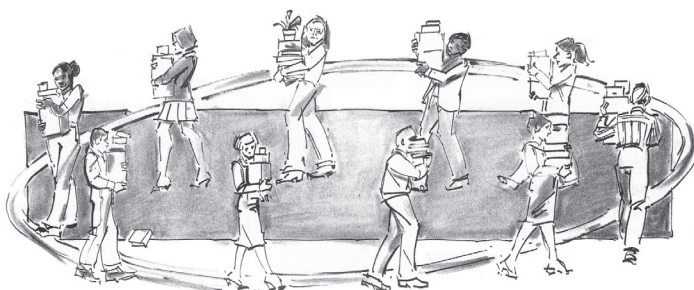
Bill himself describes the events leading to rotation at G.S.O. in article No. 3 of concept XI (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, page 58; 59): We once had the conventional system of one highly paid staff member with assistant at much lower pay. Hers had been the principal voice in hiring them.

Quite unconsciously, I’m certain, she engaged people who she felt would not be competitive with her. Meanwhile she kept a tight rein on all the important business of the place. A prodigy of wonderful work was done. But suddenly she collapsed, and shortly afterwards one of her assistants did the same. We were left with only one partly trained assistant who knew anything whatever about the total operation.... Thereafter we installed the principle of rotation in a considerably larger staff.”

How many workers does G.S.O. employ?

At G.S.O. every staff assignment has necessarily expanded in scope with the rapid growth of the Fellowship. Since 1968 membership in the U.S. and Canada has tripled, with the greatest numerical increase occurring since 1980. Yet comparatively few staff and clerical positions have been added to handle the extra workload (not counting the inexhaustible, non-rotating computer system). Since 1951 the rotating staff members have to number eleven. Approximately 80 employees work at the office, which coordinates the overall work for the Fellowship, shares its collective experience in recovery from alcoholism and serves as the main center for the distribution of A.A. literature worldwide.

Answers are reprinted from Box 4-5-9, August/September 2007



59th Conference Notes

Our Delegate Robert H. reports that at the 59th Annual Conference Meeting, the following items were approved:

- a request to develop a Special Needs recovery pamphlet;
- expansion of the scope of the Conference Treatment Facilities Committee to include services to the Areas’ Special Needs Committees;
- changing the name of the Committee to the “Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs.”

Volunteer Work Keeps Me Sober

Volunteer work was the key in knocking down the road block that prevented her from going forward. Suddenly she found herself enjoying her days instead of dreading them.

For years I had been an extremely unhappy person. I was lost and lonely — depressed and unneeded. I drank to escape reality but found myself sinking deeper and deeper. I desperately needed a change — I wanted my life back.

I came to A.A. nervous, reluctant and skeptical. I didn't believe A.A. could help me, but I was willing to try anything. I started attending meetings every day and just listened. I got a sponsor and started working the steps. I really tried, but after several months and a couple of slip-ups, I felt hopeless. This just wasn't working for me.

Then one day I came across a statement in one of the books I was reading, and a light bulb went off in my head. If I wanted to change my life, I had to change the way I was living it. So I decided to change my daily routine. The first thing I decided to do was get more involved in A.A.

Since the beginning I had been attending my home group business meetings. In one of those meetings, it was announced that the Intergroup Office needed office volunteers. Since I had always worked in an office, I decided to volunteer one day a week. I met new people from other groups who came in to buy literature, and I made new friends. I was surrounded by tons of literature, and during my slack times I read and learned about A.A. on a whole different level.

Soon my one day a week turned into two days a week. I thoroughly enjoyed the work. I began attending the Intergroup Business Meetings and volunteered to help the Literature Chairman in inventorying and ordering literature. I learned even more, met even more people, and made even more friends.

Later on I began attending my District's business meetings. Wherever clerical help was needed, I volunteered. The group soon made me their Secretary. That opened up even another avenue of service and more new friends.

Long story short — by taking the simple step of volunteering, I found a sense of purpose. Suddenly I had my motivation back and began feeling needed again. It made all the difference, and I felt a tremen-

dous relief from the dark hole I was in. Other areas of my life began to improve as well. I even changed my attitude toward A.A. and the Twelve Steps. I realized they DO work.

By no means does my story end here. In fact, it's just the beginning. Volunteer work was the key in knocking down the road block that had prevented me from going forward. Suddenly I found myself enjoying my days instead of dreading them. My newfound purpose and motivation enabled me to start living my life and enjoying it without alcohol.

Volunteer work really does keep me sober.

Linda L.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 13-16, 2009

Southeast Region AA Convention

Riverview Plaza, Mobile, AL

Sharing the Sunlight of the Spirit

October 3 & 4, 2009

Area 62 (SC) Assembly

Columbia, SC *Election of Area Officers*

March 11-14, 2010

63rd Annual SC Area 62 State Convention

Landmark Resort • Myrtle Beach, SC

July 1-4, 2010

International AA Convention

San Antonio, TX

December 10-12, 2010

Southeast Regional Forum

Springmaid Resort • Myrtle Beach, SC

Service Sponsors: Passing On Third Legacy of Service

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

—*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, page S1.*

Sponsorship in A.A. is basically the same, whether helping another individual’s recovery or service to a group. It can be defined as one alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and/or performance in service, sharing this experience with another alcoholic who is just starting the journey. Both types of service spring from the spiritual aspects of the program.

Individuals may feel that they have more to offer in one area than in another. It is the service sponsor’s responsibility to present the various aspects of service: setting up a meeting; working on committees; participating in conferences, etc. In this matter it is important for the service sponsor to help individuals understand the distinction between serving the needs of the Fellowship and meeting the personal needs of another group member.

A service sponsor is usually someone who is knowledgeable in A.A. history and has a strong background in the service structure. The A.A. member is introduced to a new language: G.S.R., D.C.M., area assembly, minority opinion. They will become familiar with the Traditions, Concepts and Warranties, as well as the A.A. Service Manual/ Twelve Concepts for World Service, Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age and other A.A. literature.

The service sponsor begins by encouraging the member to become active in their home group — coffee, literature, cleanup, attending business or intergroup meetings, etc. The service sponsor should keep in mind that all members will not have the desire or qualifications to move beyond certain levels and, thus, the service sponsor might help find tasks appropriate to individuals’ skills and interests. Whatever level of service one performs, all are toward the same end — sharing the overall responsibilities of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Eventually, the service sponsor encourages the individual member interested in this form of service to attend district meetings and to read about the history and structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. At this point, the individual beginning this work should begin to

understand the responsibilities of service work, as well as feel the satisfaction of yet another form of Twelfth Step work. Such individuals should be encouraged to take an active part in district activities and consider being elected to alternate positions in the district so as to learn about the responsibilities of various jobs in the service structure.

During this process it is important for the individual to continue to learn about the Three Legacies — Recovery, Unity and Service, and to understand that the principle of rotation not only allows them to move on in service, but also gives newer members the privilege of serving. Rotation also allows them to understand that no one should hold on to a position of trust long enough to feel a proprietary interest and thereby discourage newcomers from service.

Co-founder Dr. Bob said, “*I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:*

1. *Sense of duty.*
2. *It is a pleasure.*
3. *Because in doing so I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.*
4. *Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip.”*

The basis of all sponsorship is to lead by example. Service sponsors can impart to their sponsees the pleasure of involvement in the work of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is best done by stressing the spiritual nature of service work and by pointing out the usefulness of simple footwork and faith.

Now, through knowledge and experience, the newer member is aware that service is our most important product after sobriety. With this knowledge, the individual is able to share their vision with others and ensure the future of Alcoholics Anonymous.

—*Reprinted with permission from “The AA Group” pamphlet*