

# K. I. T.

Area 62 - Keep In Touch

October 2011

## A Message from Our Area 62 Delegate

David T. – Area Delegate

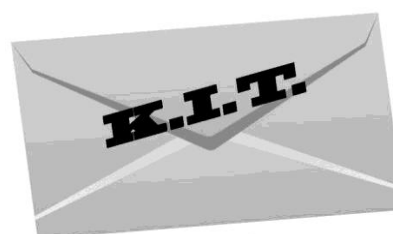
I would like to take this final opportunity to thank you all for allowing me the privilege of serving as your delegate. Many times, I'm sure I have fallen far short of the mark, but I do hope I have done my best in representing you. I began this term as most do, questioning whether or not I was the right person for the job and, honestly, I have finished the term with the very same thoughts. I guess, if nothing else, I have demonstrated one great fact- If I can serve as delegate, any of you can do it too.

After serving AA for the last number of years, I've developed some pretty strong feelings about those we elect to serve us. It is vital for the welfare of AA and those to come that we choose our elected representatives with care. This is true of the Delegate who will serve us next, but even more true of our GSRs, who are our future pool of candidates for trustee, delegate, and area and district officers. I have noticed at all levels of service that there are many members who are comfortable at the microphone and well-versed in Robert's Rules of Order. Many know Traditions and Concepts, have held a long list of service positions, and can quote chapter and verse from the service manual. Those things may be important, but they can be learned or acquired by anyone. What I

*continued on page 2*

- 2** Notes from Area 62 Archivist
- 3** Area 62 Service Updates
- 7** Behind the Walls
- 7** Upcoming Events

## K.I.T. Newsletter, Available On-Line



A reminder to all that K.I.T., our Area 62 Newsletter is available on-line and as a subscription.

Simply log on to the Area 62 website at [www.area62.org](http://www.area62.org) and click on the Members Section and then the quick link for KIT. (*You will need the user name and password to login to the members section. Your DCM or GSR should be able to give this to you.*)

At his point, you can click on the link to subscribe to KIT and receive new issues as they are released via email. You can also do this if you click on the link for the KIT Committee page.

The KIT Committee page will also allow you to view and print the current issue of KIT or any of our past issues.

Of course, hard copies are still available at the Area Assemblies and will continue to be distributed to your District KIT Rep or DCM.

Thanks for supporting our Newsletter!

feel is most important for AA as a whole is that we elect our trusted servants based on the quality of their recovery and a demonstrated commitment to our primary purpose. For myself, I want those making decisions for AA to be the kind of people I would recommend to my own brother or best friend for sponsorship. I want persons whose service is an extension of their recovery and personal 12<sup>th</sup> step work rather than a substitute for it. With the issues facing AA today, we'd be better served by members acting out of a sense of responsibility to the alcoholic who still suffers than those who simply enjoy the "busyness" of service and are serving simply to keep themselves sober and occupied.

My views may be a little too one-sided, but I've sat in far too many meetings where we have argued procedure and debated insignificant words like "AND" vs. "OR", while we demonstrated an incredible reluctance to discuss issues related to the steps as our program of recovery. I truly believe that a majority of the problems facing AA today could be solved, or lessened, by a sincere effort to improve the quality of our one-on-one 12<sup>th</sup> step work and by a committed effort by our service entities to assist members to this end. We don't need another pamphlet, book format, public service announcement, or workshop session to do what we should be doing face to face, while we wring our hands and wonder why membership has been flat for over 2 decades, literature sales are dropping, and the Grapevine is floundering.

We need some good old-fashioned, practical, step-working drunks to be willing to stand for service and help make decisions for AA. We need to make a real effort to see that the hard-earned dollars given to us really go where they may best help the still-suffering alcoholic. We need to encourage members committed to our primary purpose into service and we need to step up and be willing to serve, even if we don't like committee meetings and long-winded debates I'll let you in on a secret. I don't like them either, but no one ever asked me what I liked. They only asked if I was willing to help out.

David T.  
Area 62, Panel 60 Delegate  
Member of the Primary Purpose Group,  
Spartanburg, SC

## Notes from the Area 62 Archivist

*"Practice makes perfect' in the realm of the spiritual, as well as in other things. You see, your real trouble is spiritual, so that the remedy must be spiritual too."* — Peter Marshall

The question sometimes arises, how can I be of service to the Area Archives? One of the easiest ways is to see that your groups' history is in the Area Archives (repository), that it's current and if at all possible has member's last names. This also goes for group membership lists that contain dates of sobriety. If the group history is more than ten (10) years old, an addendum can be placed on file with the person's name making the submission and the date. Last names are needed by the Archive to make sure that the history of A.A. in South Carolina can remain as clear as possible.

As Bill W. once said; "We are trying to build up extensive records which will be of value to a future historian..." "It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion..." "We want to keep enlarging on this idea for the sake of the full length history to come..."

As the Area Archivist, I am responsible for both the physical and the intellectual integrity of the collection. It is important to ensure the privacy and protect the anonymity of members whose names are included in the collected documents. When there is a request for a copy of a groups history for publication in a District, Area or Intergroup newsletter and permission has been sought from the group, then the history is released keeping anonymity in mind (no last names, etc.). It should also be understood that once a history is published in such a newsletter, it will most likely become a part of the world wide web (internet) and become a public document containing any errors that was in the history.

As always, thank you for your continuing support of the Area 62 Archives.

K.C.H.  
Area 62 Archivist

## **Area 62 2010-2011 General Service Term in Review**

Cyndi F. – Area 62 Chairperson

From deep in my heart, I want to sincerely thank everyone in general service to Area 62 who stepped up to make the five assemblies and other events over the last 21 months work so well for Alcoholics Anonymous in South Carolina. Can you remember these highlights?

**Grapevine Survey:** At the March 2010 Assembly, David T., Panel 60 Delegate, brought forth challenging questions from the agenda items for the 2010 General Service Conference held in Rye, NY, and asked us all to participate in a survey designed to elicit membership participation in future deliberations concerning the Grapevine magazine.

An overwhelming majority of results maintained our membership's commitment to our meeting in print, but those same people often do not subscribe. Concerns remain as to the expense of printing the magazine.

The digital pages of the online Grapevine are now available by subscription at [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org).

**2010 State Convention – Myrtle Beach:** With workshops and great speakers, including AIAnon, another Area 62 Convention at the Landmark satisfied our urge to gather together for fun and to keep the Convention Fund solvent. Thanks to another successful host committee and to the State Convention Committee.

**WWHHAATT? The Ramada is closed!!!** El N., SE Regional Trustee, called on the Wednesday before the scheduled June 2010 Assembly (where she was to be our guest) to alert me that there was no answer to multiple calls to the hotel where we usually held our assembly meetings. By all appearances, there had been no sign of trouble at the March Assembly, nor had the hotel contacted anyone on the Area Committee.

I called Matt V., our then Arrangements Chair, who drove over and confirmed that, indeed, the doors were padlocked. He and Past Delegate Robert H. and Treasurer JoAnne B. went into high gear checking for alternate meeting places. Perhaps we would have to meet in two places... or try to squeeze the agenda into one day?

Then, out of the chaos, up rose the Radisson (formerly the Sheraton, now the DoubleTree) where JoAnne hosted a Columbia State Convention five or six years before. The event manager at the hotel remembered us, and another AA miracle happened;

their meeting rooms were available. We have been blessed ever since with a much nicer venue for our meetings.

### **San Antonio! 2010 International AA**

**Convention:** A grand time was had by everyone from South Carolina who attended our celebration of recovery around the world through Alcoholics Anonymous. Once again, over 53,000 recovering alcoholics saved up travel money and filled the room blocks in Texas—in July, no less! David T. suggested many of our names to the GSO planning committee, resulting in an abundance of sharing from the podiums by your friends from SC at workshops throughout the weekend.

GSO holds an International every five years. The next one (2015) will be in Atlanta, GA. We have the opportunity and responsibility to help their host committee show the world the best of Southern hospitality. See you there!

**Email option for Area Assembly Minutes:** In October 2010, the Assembly passed a revision to the Structures & Procedures to allow members the option to receive the minutes by email and/or snail mail. The Article in the S&P was further amended in June of 2011 to allow any form of electronic delivery rather than just email. You may pick up the Opt-in/Opt-out form at Assembly or download it from our website member services section. Please send it to the Registrar who produces our mailing labels from the database.

**SE Regional Forum in SC:** Gerald T. and a local host committee worked seamlessly with GSO staff to make the December 2010 Forum at the Springmaid Resort in Myrtle Beach a resounding success. We met the new Grapevine editor, Ami B., and heard much to assure us that Phyllis H., General Services Office Manager, and Ward Ewing, AAWS Board Chairman, are facilitating staff and services in New York with wisdom and accountability.

**2011 State Convention – Charleston:** Tom D. and Althea pulled it off! A Charleston Convention came in to the black. Great venue, workshops and speakers with extra thanks to a wonderful Archives display by the Committee, K.C., and Chuck H.

**2011 General Service Conference Highlights:** David T. again asked for and received many thoughtful comments from committees and districts concerning issues on the table at the 2011 Conference. He shared with us his second year experience as Chairman of the Treatment & Special Needs Conference Committee. The Conference report is posted at our member services pages.

**Website updates:** Cecil R. and the Website Committee kept in contact with other committees and the districts to provide the best online information possible to Area 62 and the public, and still stay consistent with our Traditions of non-alignment and anonymity. The districts now each have extra storage at the website for documents and service opportunities. Clickable maps highlight group meeting locations in each district, and GPS coordinates are included for smartphone locator apps.

**Finances in Area 62:** We amended our Structures & Procedures at the June 2011 Assembly and changed the Area's prudent reserve from a goal based on the Area's annual budgeted operating expenses downward to a more reasonable range of 6 to 9 months of the same.

Even in these challenging economic times, the Area has each year budgeted and spent rationally and prudently so that as we prepare to rotate out, we leave the Area solvent and ready to provide the essential communications and services that keep AA in South Carolina strong and able to meet the needs of the still suffering alcoholic who reaches our doors anywhere in the state.

**SE Region AA Service Assembly:** In his term as delegate, Robert H. and other delegates from the Southeast Region began to discuss holding a service assembly similar to events in other regions, perhaps to alternate with the biennial Regional Forums presented by GSO. Area 62 continued over the last few years to support the concept in theory and in practice (by budgeting a line item for same).

Deliberations in the region have resulted in several suggestions, but creating an additional gathering or changing the existing SE Conference to include more general service content has proved challenging. Next month, November 4-6, Virginia Area is presenting a "Southern States AA Service Assembly" as an example of the idea.

Nothing is beyond possible in the spiritual realm we walk in Alcoholics Anonymous, but what an amazing list of achievements, opportunities, and lessons we witnessed during this rotation. The opportunity to serve with you enhances my recovery more than I can say.

Cyndi F.  
Area 62 Chairperson

## **That District Committee Member (D.C.M.) Job**

I'm alcoholic and grateful to be sober. I am a D.C.M. who will finish the term at the end of this year. Perhaps that service job has been a huge factor in me staying away from a bottle.

Standing for D.C.M. was scary for me even though I had been participating in District service for several years. The job description did not look extensive. What I was scared of was chairing those meetings and dealing with "issues"... "people issues".

Right off the bat I had to deal with resigning Officers, service meetings gone sour and complaints about groups. I got lots of help from members who had experience, my sponsor, and lots of prayer. Every issue worked out alright. Chairing the meetings wasn't all that bad. Bill's writings on leadership (see *Language of the Heart*) helped a LOT, not only on organizing meetings but also on knowing when to take action and when to back off, etc., etc.

Early in my first year of my term as D.C.M., I got very discouraged with the District. The lack of enthusiasm and participation for Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community was particularly astounding to me. I thought about giving up. My sponsor found that idea unacceptable and suggested that, instead, I dig in and give 150% to those projects that seemed vital to me. So I quit complaining and got busy. I am glad I did because I can look back on my term and feel good about my efforts rather than look back and see that I failed to step up to the plate. I discovered that with my enthusiastic attitude others joined me in several P.I., C.P.C., Special Needs and Corrections projects and the District turned around.

Learning how to decipher which principles to take a stand on and which were unimportant was quite a process. Prayer, reading Bill's writings and consultation with others were invaluable. Not everyone has agreed with me along the way, as it should be. Learning how to deal with that has also been quite an experience. It has helped build some character traits in me that are useful in life, in and out of A.A.

So, was standing for D.C.M. a good choice for me? Sure. Might it be for you? Sure.

***By a D.C.M. who served and stayed sober***

## Structures & Procedures

Thank you for the opportunity to have served as the Area 62 Structures and Procedures (S&P) chairperson for the past two years. It has been a great learning experience for me.

Working with the S&Ps has given me knowledge of the day to day operation of the area assembly, and why we have S&Ps.

The S&Ps outline the guidelines for conducting and managing a successful assembly. They set the path for the Area Chairperson and members of the assembly to follow. The S&Ps identify responsibilities and roles of members and each officer; how meetings and elections are conducted; and which standing committees are appointed by the Delegate and the Area Chairperson.

The S&Ps note the requirements for an Area Assembly quorum and state general information such as group conscience, the Three Legacies, and what type of information may be distributed at the Assemblies.

Financial Affairs are stated in a separate article within the S&Ps to assist the assembly in managing Area 62's monies.

The S&Ps are posted to the Area 62 website for review by any AA member and area distributed at the Area Assemblies for all Group Service Representatives (GSRs). Each GSR (especially new ones) should read and review the S&Ps to better serve their perspective groups and the assembly.

I pass on the piton with gratitude and joy, and will continue to be of service where needed.

Carol S.  
Area 62 S&P Chair

### Getting out of Me...

It was somewhere around 60 to 90 days of being in A.A. that my sponsor first told me to pickup and clean the ashtrays after our home group meeting. It was a large meeting, 27 large gold glass ashtrays, and they were filled with butts. I don't even smoke, but here I was in the kitchen washing these ashtrays and fuming at my sponsor. This was the first time in sobriety that I was getting out of me and serving my fellows. Then came the coffee making, greeting members at the door before meetings, and cleanup afterwards.

My sponsor took me to district meetings and to the area assembly. I started to chair meetings, stood for trusted positions in my home group and became a part of the fellowship in a way that is hard to describe. My sponsor told me to find something I am good at in A.A. and do it in order to give back some of what was given to me.

Over the years I have been given the opportunity to serve my home group, my district and our area in various positions. And each and every time I am doing something for A.A. I am not wrapped up in me. I have found that as a trusted servant, I am not a leader, but truly serving in whatever capacity I have been entrusted. I remember the first time I became GSR, I asked my sponsor if I should get business cards made so that everyone would know who I am. He gave me the pamphlet on GSR's to read and once I again I found out that it not's about me.

We are told that work with other alcoholics is vital and now as a sponsor I get to pass on to them what I have been freely given. Time and time again I have found that whenever I am serving my fellow A.A. member that I am in a better place. And I have even learned to be of service in general in my family and friends outside of A.A. as well. Thank you for the opportunity to give back some of what I have been given in service to you all.

Jim S.  
Area 62 CPC Chair

## Public Information

Thanks for allowing me to write a letter of gratitude to the assembly. I've enjoyed being your public information chairperson. Involving ten to twenty people at each meeting, discussing the topics given us, voting on them and passing on our group conscience was a great thing to be a part of. I want to thank District 51, Karen and Mark for allowing Robert Z. and myself to do a PI Workshop. We really enjoyed it. I also want to thank Patti C. of District 11 for her involvement, participation and for covering for me as an alternate when I couldn't attend the assembly. Robert Z., I couldn't have done it without you. Thanks. I also want to thank Ray, Robert, El, Patti, Cindy and David.

This has been quite a growing experience. I hope we have been helpful.

Ed Mc.  
Area 62 Public Information Chair

## **Alternate Chair**

This is my first service at an area committee position. It is an honor and privilege to be active with alcoholics in action. I had a front row seat watching Area 62 unit, participate and be responsible together. I am grateful for this experience. AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

Marshell C.  
Alternate Chair, Area 62

## **District KIT Representative**

Being a District KIT Rep. is a great position for a new person with little or no knowledge of service in the world of A.A. The simplicity of the duties offers just enough responsibility to be accountable. The commitment of being present and delivering copies of the KIT issues to your District is a stepping stone to building relationships with your fellows and presents opportunities of learning about the various service positions around you. Any service commitment is vital to how this all works and being a District Kit Representative is a great beginning for any Alcoholic wanting to give back what was so freely given to them.

Katie R.  
Dist 43 KIT Rep. 2010/2011

## **KIT Editor**

I want to thank everyone that submitted an article and everyone that supported our Area 62 Newsletter, **KIT**. I have learned so much during the last 21 months and met many amazing people that love Alcoholics Anonymous.

When asked to accept the job of KIT Editor, those old fears and insecurities came rushing in. But I can't say no to Alcoholics Anonymous. I had no experience in producing a newsletter, but I remembered one of the most important things I have learned in Alcoholics Anonymous, "YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS ALONE"! So many of you gave me ideas, suggestions and the encouragement I needed to do this. I couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve Area 62.

MaryAnn D.  
Area 62 KIT Editor

## **What An Order! I Can't Go Through with it! Coming Into A.A.**

When I came into AA I was, what I thought at the time, completely broken. I had literally lost everything. I came to on my parent's farm staring at cows and wondering what had just happened to me. I had a successful career, long-term relationships, plenty of money, self-respect... and it was all gone. I was drying out after a half-gallon vodka/day habit and I thought this time I would have the courage and wherewithal to fight this thing. I started going to meetings, and as mocus as I was at the time, I picked up a few of the sayings. It gets better, keep coming back, own side of the street, etc. I thought by doing these things, I could get back to my old self before the debacle.

What I didn't hear was the "change" part. And obviously I didn't hear the "honesty" and the "willingness" part, because it wasn't a few months later that I was sneaking drinks again. This time, I was living with my brother under the condition that I go to AA. I remember distinctly telling a friend in AA that there were certain things that I would never be willing to change. I deeply resented that fact that I had to surrender every part of my life to this simple program. It wasn't long before I was back to my full blown alcoholic living. The disease picked up right back where it left off. I was completely powerless. I came to this time on the cold jail cell floor after my second DUI.

Whiskey brought me back. This time, however, I was ready and willing to do whatever my sponsor, the Big Book, and you suggested. That point of surrender brought about a sense of ease and serenity. I could no longer play God. It didn't work. It took me 42 years to realize the truth of this three word sentence. The only thing I had to be willing to change was everything.

I began to work the steps again with my sponsor. I balked, but was willing to go ahead with a fearless and thorough 4<sup>th</sup> step. I saw that change was happening in my life, not only with the drinking obsession, but with my actions and

## Treatment Chair

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Treatment Chair for the last two years. It has been a wonder to be a small part of Alcoholics all over the state bring the message to others in Treatment. Because of Bridging the Gap I have gotten to know people all over the U.S. My heart would be warmed by the ring of the telephone and someone on the other end is looking for a contact in South Carolina. Sobriety has brought responsibility on a level that I never would dream. I still think sometimes, is this me?

So what will I tell the one next? Blessed spirit of rotation!!! Have fun and remember you are the link to other suffering Alcoholics in Treatment.

Amy B.  
Area 62 Treatment Chair

attitudes. These changes came subtly over time, and were pointed out by my friends and sponsor. After working on steps 6 through 9, I began to feel deep emotional and spiritual changes as well. As the Big Book said, I could look the world in the eye. I hadn't been able to do that for years. A peace and calmness replaced the calamity that lived between my ears, even in grave circumstances that life brought my way.

It sounds great looking back, but through each step of the process, change seemed insurmountable for me. I couldn't see past the moment and never thought that I could change. Behaviors and ideas had been a part of me for many years. I saw that it worked in you, but I was un-fixable, I thought. An old-timer pointed out to me one day, son, you don't have to do the work, God does. All I had to do was become willing to do the next right thing in front of me.

Ed S.  
Greer, SC

## Behind The Walls

Hello, my name is Justin T. and I am an Alcoholic. I am 22 years old and am in the South Carolina Department of Corrections, being housed in the Trenton Correctional Institution. I will be released into the free world soon, but not soon enough. I have been some form of an addict since the age of 9 and up until now I had no clue how to solve it.

Since coming to my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, I have begun to change. I now try to apply the principles I have learned from A.A. to my everyday life. Since then, it's as if my eyes have been truly opened. My horizons of thoughts of the future have broadened in many ways and become much more clear.

I am not a very religious person, but I have Faith. Faith more in myself than anything else. That is a feeling I owe completely to the meeting. Thank you for letting me share.

## Upcoming Events

1<sup>st</sup> SSAA Service Assembly  
November 4 – 6, 2011  
Fairfax, VA

---

Area 62 General Service Assembly  
Double Tree Inn  
Columbia, SC  
March 3-4, 2012

---

65th South Carolina Area62 State Convention  
Greenville, SC  
March 15-18, 2012

---

## A Newcomer's First Year

My name is Dina and I'm an alcoholic. My last drink was May 25th, 2010 and for that I am eternally grateful. It's been a year of fulfilled promises and miracles, improvement of character and spiritual repair. All of these have occurred everyday (every day in which I don't pick up a drink is a miracle), but I am only able to speculate on the three most drastic effects. I call them: ***The Lift, The Laugh, and The Life.***

Gratefully, gratefully, the desire to obsessively drink was lifted from me early on. This occurred only after I obtained a sponsor and began working the steps. I don't know *exactly* when this occurred, but I do remember when I *noticed* it. It was about 9:30 on a Sunday night and I felt like I had forgotten to do something that day, something "important". It took a few minutes, but that's when I realized that I had not even *thought* about a drink that day. And then, upon thinking about it, I didn't even want it. A major miracle for someone whose body and soul craved and consumed alcohol for years. I felt a sense of relief and calmness, like a weight had been lifted. ***The Lift.***

The first time I laughed at an AA meeting, I realized that I didn't recognize the sound. That's how long it had been since I had been happy enough to have a sober moment of humor. Once I started working the program, I began to have these little pockets of unexpected joy and happiness, moments of exultation and solace. As the year progressed and I continued to work the steps with my sponsor, those moments turned into days of remembering the person I used to be, the sober person inside ready to meet the world. ***The Laugh.***

I find that at the end of these 12 steps and 12 months that I have this insatiable thirst for service work. The desire to give back is immense, this willingness to be there and help a fellow man. This action in turn, serves me by keeping me accountable, ensconced in AA and sober. I'm beginning to learn what's important and what can wait. And all that other stuff? Well, it's just stuff. ***The Life.***

Dina T.  
Area 62, District 72, Member

## Poem from a Recovering Alcoholic

Sometimes at night  
I look at the sky  
I ask the Lord  
Why, Lord why.  
When he answers me  
I start to cry.  
He says  
My Dear child  
You let this be  
It all began  
When you turned your back on me.  
I forgive you my dear  
But it's a shame  
That I, your savior  
Is the one you blame.  
I said in return  
Back then I did  
But now Dear God  
I want you to know  
There's no length for you  
That I wouldn't go.  
I'm sorry I stole  
I'm sorry I lied  
But the life I once lived  
I want to say goodbye.  
You've kept me safe  
When danger was here  
I knew your ear would always be near.  
My children and I  
We need you so much.  
Right then I felt his mighty touch  
I knew then  
I'd always be his child.  
I looked up to heaven  
And I started to smile.

Emily Mc.

### NOTE from the Editor:

**If any of you have suggestions to make the KIT a better newsletter, please contact me at [62kitchair@area62.org](mailto:62kitchair@area62.org). If there is something you don't like, please let me know. I am here to serve Area 62. As always, we need articles to make a newsletter.**

**KIT presents the experience and opinions of members of Alcoholics Anonymous on the disease of alcoholism. Opinions expressed here are not those of AA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous or the Area 62 Assembly.**