

A NEWSLETTER FOR
GSRs AND ALL OTHER
MEMBERS OF A.A.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Surveys and 12 Step Work
- Committee Updates
- General Service Story
- The Service Manual and our Legacy



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San Diego-Imperial Area 08 Assembly

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The Membership Survey

AA's NY General Service Office does not conduct 12-Step work. They act as a resource center of literature, Service Materials, films, and information to support the local AA areas in carrying the message. One of GSO's resources has been the Membership Survey.

In 1968, GSO began to regularly survey AA members in Canada and the United States. The General Service Conference decided the 2014 survey would be the last one conducted until corrections were

made to the survey's questions and outdated group data. The random sample of respondents is drawn from their group database. The survey will continue when the problems are corrected.

The San Diego-Imperial Area's Young People's Coordinating Committee decided a survey could take leadership to help GSO and identify the 12-Step work needed in the San Diego-Imperial area.

First, the survey's main flaw is having updated group information. Each

local AA area and its districts are responsible for updating GSO's group database. Because central offices are completely independent of GSO, updating a group's listing in the central office's meeting directory does not update GSO's data.

Before the pandemic, only 15% of our local groups had a GSR. The 85% of the groups that are unrepresented need to be contacted by their district to request they refresh their data at GSO. The data refresh is vital to AA's unity

Why I Participate on the Area Accessibilities Committee

Over three years ago, a woman who came into Alcoholic Anonymous through our Meetings to Go program, changed my life. She was in desperate need of a liver transplant but to have the transplant she was requested by the hospital that she attend AA meetings. Because she could not leave the hospital, she was referred to a San Diego program called Meetings-to-Go. We got the call from our Meetings-to-Go representative at the monthly Area 08 Accessibilities Committee meeting, of which I

was a member. Another member from the Accessibilities Committee and I went to bring a meeting to her. She continued to receive a meeting on a weekly basis so she would be eligible for the liver transplant. The Accessibilities Committee member also continued to go and became her sponsor. The woman ultimately was blessed with getting her liver transplant. Today she has over 3 years of sobriety. Her life has turned around. She is even getting married in a month. She is a miracle.

Serving on the Accessibilities Committee has been an honor and a blessing in my life. We can reach out to so many who cannot make it to an AA meeting in person with Meetings-to-Go. We also help people who are deaf and hard of hearing to be able to listen and share at meetings by providing ASL (American Sign Language) interpreters to meetings. Our committee has created a Gold Can, circulated in many San Diego AA meetings, where monies collected are used to pay for ASL Interpreters. It takes many

The Membership Survey (continued from page 1)

You can find a full listing of the committees on pages 8-12 of the San Diego-Imperial Area Assembly's Structure & Guidelines through this link: <http://www.area8aa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/SG-Working-11-07-2017.pdf>

Click Here:

[2020 Membership Survey Presentation -](#)

[to Download \(accedb00d\)](#)

"AA service is anything whatever that helps us 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 AA's General Service Headquarters for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy."
Bill W., Letter, July 1955

and the two-way communication of the service structure. For example, while groups are not required to participate in general service, there will be occasion for the local general service representatives to inform them.

AA as a whole acts as a continuous invitation to participate in general service. For example, the Conference has a few considerations concerning the the Big Book. One direction of the two-way communication is to inform all groups on the work; the other direction is when a group informs the structure on its thoughts, ideas, concerns about the considerations. We must always remember, a good idea can come from anyone, anywhere.

Updating group info is coordinated by each Area Registrar through the work of the District Committee Members (DCMs), District Registrars, and General Service Representatives (GSRs).

Second, the San Diego-Imperial Area can form its 12-Step work to serve the needs of its demographic. (The GSO survey returns a demographic profile of the entire U.S./Canada membership.) There are 15 standing committees serving to carry the message in the San Diego-Imperial Area. The work of some committees is to provide administrative support to the work going on in the area (Agenda, Finance, Policy, Translation); other committees perform direct 12-Step work (CPC, Armed

Services, YP Coordinating Committee).

The table below holds a high-level demographic profile based on the responses to the 2020 San Diego-Imperial Area Membership Survey. The survey presentation holds additional demographic details.

The most important part of the data is the comments section of the presentation as respondents have taken the Fellowship's inventory in their own words. The comments on meetings during the pandemic and Accessibility issues have been organized by age group. The other comments are grouped into several categories such as Inclusion, Safety, Mental Illness and observing AA Traditions.

-Jane G. Past Delegate, P66

High-level Demographic Profile - Are we diverse, inclusive?

Race/Ethnicity	84% White
Gender	50% Female; 47% Male; 3% Other
Sexual Orientation	83% Heterosexual
Age	Largest population is in the 51-60 age group.
Marital Status	51% Married/Life Partner
Member of an Organized Religion	40%
Active or Retired Military	13%
Member of a Home Group	94%
Top 3 Ways Members are Referred	Treatment/Recovery Facility Through a Member Self-Motivated

What General Service Has Done for Me

I was introduced to General Service by making a sarcastic comment. Subsequently, I was elected GSR. I did not know what to expect but I showed up anyway. Soon, it seems, I became the DCM for my district. I was given a half sheet of information and a service manual. After reading the service manual and talking with other DCMs, I found out there was much more to the role. I have grown immeasurably in General Service. Opportunities for participation are endless.

I have held several positions at the Area level, each having given me a different perspective on recovery. I have used some and pass along many.

General Service taught me to show up even when I was unwilling. It also forces me to listen better and develop sound responses then come to my own

understanding. Some might call this "getting out of my own head" and that is huge. It is why service works.

General Service allows me to help people I do not know. Carrying the message is a driving force that keeps me going. To live and strive in the recovery community has given me gratitude. So much so, that when the pandemic surprised us all, I worked with members from all over to change formats where necessary, but to continue to deliver the message of the 12 steps. Our Area began using Zoom a couple of years before COVID 19 hit. When I traveled for my job, technology made it made it easy to do General Service work consistently. I was able to use my experience to help others. We have found a new way to communicate with newcomers and old timers. 2020 has been quite different but it has compelled

us to adapt and change our way of thinking about our program.

The General Service Office continues to provide for still suffering alcoholics across the United States. GSO reached out to the fellowship and the fellowship responded. We continue to provide rooms (virtual) and places across the country for our members to find recovery. General Service has given me a place to fit in. I am participating is something that is bigger than me. Standing alongside other members in AA, is an honor.

Anyone who is willing to get involved is invited to do as I did. Join a committee. Serve in your home group. Call an alcoholic. Be the difference you want to see. The rewards will last a lifetime. --Monty C., Alt Delegate Area 08

**Everyone can be
great because
everyone can
serve."
Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr.**

Meetings-to-Go in San Diego--Helping the Shut In Get a Meeting

Meetings-to-Go (MTG) was started when DCM David Nenny, now deceased, asked if Accessibilities had a program to bring meetings to people's homes because he knew someone in need. Later, Richard K., chair of the Area Accessibilities Committee in 2009, saw an article in the Grapevine about the "Sunshine Club" in San Francisco that had such a program. He reached out to someone he knew from PRAASA, who works with deaf alcoholics and she put Richard in touch with them. They gave the committee some advice and documents. Linnea, a member, designed the card and was the first MTG coordinator.

Blaine H., Area 08 Chair, became involved in MTGs while active in H & I. Jan McD was the coordinator at the time. One purpose of MTG was to visit hospitalized A.A. members for a meeting and recently expanded to prospective members. Focus on liver failure patients who would no doubt benefit from A.A., but do not necessarily ask for it gets some criticism. Requests sometimes comes from a family member or social worker.

Blaine says that the most rewarding part has been taking meetings to long term shut ins "and those of us who do this be-

come like part of the member's family. One was an amazing lady we visited in Chula Vista for several years. She and her husband built a room on the back of their house for A.A. meetings. When we visited, she was completely bed bound, on oxygen, and had 24-hour nursing care, yet she took calls from women who called Central Office for help! Our Saturday morning meetings were a highlight for all. She was nearly 90 with over 45 years of sobriety when she passed. Several of us attended her services." -- Richard K. and Blaine H.

Why I Participate on the Area Accessibilities Committee (from Pg.1)

members of the accessibilities committee to help carry the message and to provide whatever is needed to stay sober. Big Books in Braille, CDs or DVDs for the deaf and so much more. I am extremely grateful to be a part of a committee, not only

to be of service, but to do God's will in my life, not mine. If you are not already on an area committee, today is a good day to sign up for one. -- Renea C. (r.i.g.c.t1988@gmail.com)



A.A.'s Legacy of Service by Bill Wilson

Our Twelfth Step — carrying the message — is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an 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.

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

Vital to A.A.'s Growth

These services, whether performed by individuals, groups, areas, or A.A. as a whole, are

utterly vital to our existence and growth. Nor can we make A.A. more simple by abolishing such services. We would only be asking for complication and confusion.

Concerning any given service, we therefore pose but one question: "Is this service really needed?" If it is, then maintain it we must, or fail in our mission to those who need and seek A.A.

The Service Manual
2018-2020, page S1.

**"I am the man I am today
because of the experiences
I have had." Feb. 2009 GV**

"When we love, we see in others what we wish to have in ourselves." Oct. 1997 GV



Letters to the editor:

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The Redesign of the Service Manual

The decision for AA World Services, Inc. to conduct an evaluation, update, and redesign of *The Service Manual* was made at the 2018 General Service Conference. The AAWS Publishing Department's progress report on the project notified the 2019 GSC of the challenges identified by The AA Service Manual Working Group.

Download the PDF of the 2018-2020 Service Manual: https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_bm-31.pdf

It's not your imagination— *The Service Manual* is not an easy read! AAWS acknowledges the content of *The Service Manual* lacks focus and direction. This condition has occurred because the last full update was in 2000. The past 18 years of piecemeal edits have resulted in a somewhat

disjointed and unattractive "textbook". The opening of the book is expected to have a "how to use" section to set the tone.

The most exciting news in the report is the manual's organizational content will focus on the General Service Representative as the intended reader. AAWS notes the book serves to inform on the wide variety of service positions. The most important person to become knowledgeable of the service structure is the GSR, and in total, they outnumber the population of all other service positions combined.

Other challenges and the collected thoughts toward solution are:

1. Physical format

- Find a binding that allows the book to lie flat in its use as a

"workbook" type of resource

- Use large print with 8.5" x 11" pages to provide space for handwritten notes
- 2. Design**
- Adopt a design that facilitates navigation of the contents using a logical topic hierarchy
- Create tabs, color, call-outs, and graphics to better explain complex topics
- Use an easier-to-read font

The draft of the redesign was expected before the end of 2019. Please note it was a 2016 GSC decision to publish *The Service Manual* every two years. The next edition will be 2020-2022. If you wish to view the full report, please request it from your Delegate. Area8delegate70@gmail.com