

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

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:**

- Reallocations
- Renee Robinson
- GSB Trustee
- Area Chair Elect



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# San Diego-Imperial Area 08 Assembly

NOVEMBER 2021 ISSUE

## Reallocations

The pandemic has wreaked havoc on many of our venerable institutions, including Alcoholics Anonymous. While most groups have maintained a virtual presence on Zoom, and some are now returning to in-person meetings, there is a goodly number of meetings which are gone and will not return.

Within Area 8, that havoc has not included our financial situation. Groups have continued to support the Area with contributions while our expenditures have dropped significantly. Rent, travel expenses,

mileage reimbursements have been low to non-existent. The unexpected result is a surplus of funds. This was true in 2020, the first pandemic year, and remains true in 2021.

At year's end it is our custom to send a portion of surplus funds to the General Service Office (GSO) in New York. Certainly, this is putting those funds to good use. However, as groups do contribute to GSO directly, it was thought that funds contributed to the Area were intended to be used locally,

to support our administrative costs and to aid in the 12-Step work performed by our various standing committees.

Last year the Assembly approved a motion to set aside \$12,500 of surplus funds and invited the Area (districts, committees, groups, and individual members) to propose local projects which would benefit the Area and better enable us to carry the message. In the end we received fifteen proposals. These included such things as computers for the Internet and Technology and

## On the Passing of Renee Robinson Skidmore, October 15, 2021

We lost a great one this morning. Renee was our beloved Panel 70 Secretary and so much more to anyone who was lucky enough to have known her and served with her in our Area. Renee served humbly, with quiet dignity, and often behind the scenes. But low visibility could not hide the passion she held for our program and our Fellowship.

No job was too big, but even more telling was the fact that no job was too small. If it needed to be done, she was there. Towards the

end, while she was obviously suffering, she continued to do the job she was elected to do. She made sure that there were suitable substitutes to fill the Secretary's role and actively supported our Panel 72 Secretary elect who has agreed to fill out the remainder of Renee's term.

One big thing that you all may not be aware of was what she did when the pandemic hit. Sensing that alcoholics still need to meet despite the shutdown, she established a daily 12:00 Noon on-line A.A. meeting, Midday

Miracles, which now has met more than 500 times with attendees from across the U.S. and the U.K. as well. That group has welcomed many newcomers into its fold. Those newcomers are finding sponsors, working the Steps, and achieving A.A. milestones. This may well be Renee's greatest legacy!

We should not forget that Renee found love in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our hearts go out to Rich most of all. In loving memory of a truly wonderful person. --Blaine H., Chair

There will be a virtual memorial gathering for **Renee Robinson** at 1:00 PM on Sunday, November 14th. The Zoom Information: ID: 393 949 572 PW: 831480

## Reallocations (continued from page 1)

Newsletter committees, Zoom accounts for the Area, Replenishing Literature for Spanish District 18's, La Vina Committee, Public Service Announcement Cards for Armed Services Committee, and the technology required to widely disseminate information through mass texting.

At the 2020 Budget Assembly the powerful tool of preference voting was used to allow the Assembly to rank each proposal and thus create an order reflecting most to least desired proposal. Based on the allocated total of \$12,500, a total of eight of the fifteen proposals were

selected for funding. The largest proposal, \$5,300 to support the Gold Can for ASL Interpretation, finished second in the voting. Following the Assembly, the Accessibility Committee withdrew the request, having received support elsewhere. In the end that allowed all the remaining fourteen proposals to be funded.

This year we face a similar situation. While contributions from the groups are down, our expenses are down further. Again, we have a surplus of funds. Again, the request has gone out for proposals. At this writing the exact amount to be reallocated is unknown but it is likely to

be similar to that which was available last year. Should the Assembly again decide to reallocate excess funds, we will go through the same procedure (preference voting) as last year to determine which proposals will be funded.

A.A.'s principle of corporate poverty attempts to ensure that no funds are held onto without an expressed purpose for their use. By reallocating our excess funds to be used locally, we are following that principle. And, as is always the case, the remainder will go to GSO and be put to good use. --Blaine H., Chair

## Learn All You Can About the Area Budget

### Ten Things to Know About the Area Budget



1. How can I report the budget in 3 minutes or less to my group?
2. What is new on this year's budget?
3. Do I need to be able to read a spread sheet to understand the budget?
4. How can I be part of the committee who creates the Area budget?
5. Who is our Area Treasurer?
6. How do digital contributions change how we implement the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition?
7. How does our Area cooperate with our Intergroup?
8. What part does GSO play in our Area budget?
9. What part do my contributions play in the Area?
10. Is there a workshop I can attend to learn more about the budget process?

If you can find the answers to these questions, you would make an excellent member of the Finance Committee! [Area8aa.org](http://Area8aa.org)

**"I know it isn't about money. It is about sharing a message of hope and life with someone who has lost both. My money is nothing more than a tool used to help us get that gift to the next person who will have it." AA Grapevine 2009, Wes H.-Idaho**

## New Podcast: *The AA Grapevine Half-Hour Variety Hour*

Each week, since October 4, 2021, Don and Sam interview a different member about their experience, strength, and hope, in a casual “meeting after the meeting” manner. Special features enhance each episode. A new podcast episode is available in English every Monday at 9:00 am EST. Here is an edited transcript of one podcast, “Behind the Curtain with Josh E. of the AA General Service Board.”

**When did you get sober?** July 6, 2007.

Today is my anniversary.

**How do you show up for service?** At the top of the upside-down triangle, I am of service in my homegroup in any capacity from coffee server to secretary. As we move down the triangle to General Service, I show up as a General Service Representative to bring the message of the Conference to my group. As a DCM I am responsible for the collective message of the Conference agenda and the distribution of that message as well as support for my Area. As a committee member I show up to support a committee at the Area level such as Grapevine/LaVina or Newsletter. As a Delegate I am responsible for bringing my group’s voice to the floor of the General Service Conference. As Trustee I am responsible for the work of the committees and the day-to-day operations of the General Service Board.

**How does knowing the service structure help someone at the homegroup level?** Structure does two things: It shows us that direct services are services provided for 12 step work as a member, one alcoholic helping another, directly helping each other. When we take advantage of General Services, we are taking the 12 step work we do and asking for support such as providing a Big Book or other Literature. We might go into an H & I meeting and need copies of the Grapevine for distribution in the jails, prisons, or other institutions. These materials are produced nationally at Corporate Headquarters, which is larger in scale than the area level, but equally important. We recently started

an Instagram account after a vote by the fellowship at the Conference.

**Who pays for all the things you just mentioned?** Because “we are self-supporting through our own contributions,” it is paid through our 7th Tradition contributions. **Can you contribute to the Grapevine or LaVina directly?** You can contribute to the Grapevine by buying a subscription but not by sending cash. If you send a check, the Grapevine will send it back. You can always give a subscription to someone as a gift or buy a subscription for yourself.

**How did you end up on the Grapevine Board?** I had about 8 years of sobriety before I reached this level of service. It started in 2012 when I was an Area DCM. I heard the delegate report that they were seeking members of the fellowship who had at least 5 years of sobriety and experience in communications and marketing to work on the Public Information Committee. I was interested and I applied. I belong to Area 51. North Carolina, and they were happy to send my resume into the General Service Office. I am an AA nerd who went to AA assemblies just to watch. The information is interesting, but I really enjoy the chaos. We don’t always deal with things spiritually and we are not a glum lot. I am amazed after lively Assemblies when we can all still be friends. One of the things that has served me the most is remembering the experiences I had when I first got sober. All experiences are different. I must remember that. If I get emotional about a topic, I think that my experience is the only experience. Many of us have the same passion but different experiences.

**How has your sobriety been affected by doing service work on this level?** Is it a chore? Since my first meeting more has been revealed. When I first came in I had so much anxiety. People tell you to do things and when you finally agree, you still must get to

the other side. It might take years. When you struggle you are happy to get past it but never tire of hearing about it from others. A guy I respect once told me that service is meant to be a form of sacrifice—you can’t just give what is comfortable. Get to the level of being uncomfortable. Everything feels like what I am doing is the most important thing. I try to take a broader look at this. The work I have done in General Service has made it easier to do things in life outside of AA. Practicing these things here gives me experience to do things in every area of my life. We learn to work with people. In our home group this learning may not always go well. When I started to chair at meetings, I learned humility and how to let go. We get our first “coffee critique,” then get bent out of shape, but we learn. Some people are sponsored through this, and some just fall into it through circumstances.

**How many hours a week do you contribute?** The board use to be made up of retirees, since not having jobs or kids made things easier. We need people with day jobs who can contribute from the modern world. I am still working and still going to meetings, even more than before.

**Do you keep up with your regular meetings?** It still applies that if you are having a problem at work, take an hour and go to a meeting. It will make things better. It still works that way. It is a lot to commit to and things can feel excessively important.

**Is there something that’s happened in service work where you thought, “This is beautiful?”** All this is bigger than me. I have had one of those experiences at every Conference. We get to see the beginning and the end of conversations. I can see the completion of ideas I was a part of 9 years ago. Today I was excited to say that our Instagram page had over 500 followers. A discussion that started 12 years ago is now live. Talking in this podcast is another thing we saw come to fruition...and thanks for that.

## Adrian, Our Panel 72 Area Chair Elect

General Service has kept me connected to AA and taught me how to show up to life. I will expose my humanity to retain my humility and live my truth, not disillusionment.

I have always “struggled” to get to meetings. I acknowledge that I need to do better since my most recent sobriety date, 11/19/15. I have sobered up many times but could not stay sober. There were many suggestions that I did not heed; choosing a Home Group and attend regularly, have a commitment, work with others, to name a few. I do not work with many newcomers. I realize that I must “show up” to make myself available to any alcoholic looking for a solution to their drinking problem. It is a mixed bag, taking different approaches, to create a visible example of the power of Alcoholics

Anonymous. I still experience isolation and social anxiety. This is a barrier to my usefulness not lost on me. I continue to ask God to have me be what he thinks I should be in this arena.

My journey began with Inter-group Service in month 3 of my sobriety, the Public Information Committee. Though only once a month, I’d be damned if I couldn’t do that. I have held a commitment with my home group, Common Solution, since I was *voluntold*. (God works through others, despite me). GSR seemed interesting to me, so I figured why not offer myself up. My world within Alcoholics Anonymous expanded 10-fold when I attended my first Area Assembly. I found out that being a GSR was more than just holding a title within the Group. If you are reading this, I need not

explain the significance of a GSR to their Group and Greater A.A.

Now I am about to embark upon a 2-year chapter in my General Service experience which will find me the Chair of Area 08. I stood for this position because the Fellowship needed me in an unprecedented time where participation dipped even further than times in the past. My time as DCM of District 19 is ending but I will remain present in this commitment until December 31. I knew the “definition” of responsibility prior to my time in General Service, I just had my wires crossed as to how it related in relationships, work, and A.A. I struggled with its practical application. Today, no one will have to search to find me. I am here, sober, right in the thick of it. How may I best serve our area?

Have something going on in the near future? Let the Area 8 Newsletter Chair know to see about putting the dates in here: [area8.org](http://area8.org)

**Seasonal Joke:**  
**Why did the ghost have to join AA?**  
 He had a problem with BOOze.



**Letters to the editor:**  
[newsletter@area8aa.org](mailto:newsletter@area8aa.org)

## More About Concept 11

Concept 11 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest of the 12 Concepts of Service because Bill outlines in detail each of the functions and relationships of the standing committees of the General Service Board, the subsidiary operating boards, the General Service Office and the Grapevine. What is interesting about this chapter of the Service Manual is the part about rotation among the paid staff workers. These are the people hired to work a particular desk in the General Service Office. There are 13

desks ranging from Accessibilities and Remote Communities to Public Information. Each of these staff members rotate to a different desk every two years. The rotation practice, much like it is in our group service work, is done because ultimately, they want each person to have some knowledge of all parts of the work done at the General Service Office. Additionally, it is always better to have a group of people who are familiar with a particular job than just one person.



# Unity Strengthens the Connection Among Us

## 6th Hispanic Women's Workshop

### In Alcoholics Anonymous

Saturday, December 4, 2021

Host Area 03

7:30 AM to 5 PM

English Interpretation  
Provided in Hybrid Event.

#### In Person:

3220 S. Fair Lane

Tempe, AZ 85282

**ZOOM ID: 843 5490 3897**

**Passcode: 121212**

More Information:

Rosa Maria (Chair)

Phone: 480-570-1397

Brisa (Secretary)

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Holiday Inn Express & Suites Tempe

1520 W. Baseline Road

Tempe, AZ 85283 (\$89 + tax/night)

Group Rate: AAW

