

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

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Why General Service?
- Trustees's Report
- Dark Districts
- Grapevine Quotes
- New Trusted Servants



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# San Diego-Imperial Area 08 Assembly

JANUARY 2022 ISSUE

## Why General Service?

There are some who believe that General Service is Alcoholics Anonymous. That anything which falls outside of the inverted triangle, with the groups at the top and the General Service Conference and General Service Office towards the bottom, isn't really A.A. Please don't put me in that camp. Lots of service in A.A. takes place outside those walls. Our Coordinating Council (Intergroup) includes many service committees and while in Area 8, H&I (Hospitals and Institutions) is a standing committee of the Area; that is not the case for the rest of California.

Is a group which chooses not to elect a General Service

Representative (GSR) to participate in the General Service structure a bad group? Perhaps not, if that group is carrying out our primary purpose and carrying the A.A. message to other alcoholics.

However, I would contend that such a group is an incomplete group. Most A.A. groups are aware of General Service and slightly fewer than half directly support the General Service Office in New York with monetary contributions. Yet an even smaller fraction participates in the process by electing a GSR to represent them.

It would be nice if a group's decision not to participate were an informed decision.

But too often that decision is either uninformed or worse, misinformed! Fear of the unknown is a great motivator not to act. Many of us experienced this when faced with the Twelve Steps, but later found the great benefits of working them. The same could be said of a group's potential GSR. Worse are the words of many old timers who badmouth General Service with stories of it being "too political," or of meetings that seem to go on forever. I have heard this garbage from the mouths of individuals who have never participated in General Service.

The group that chooses not to participate in General Ser-

## Report on the Work of the Trustees of the General Service Board

**Note: This is a partial report on the work of the General Service Board Trustees.** The trustees meet four times each year: January, April, July, and October. Their year-round work includes many projects that have been directed by the Conference or will be directed to a specific Conference Committee for the upcoming General Service Conference. When the General Service Conference is held, the decisions that have been made by the Confer-

ence are referred to as Advisory Actions. Recommendations made by Conference Committees for work or development by the trustees are known as Additional Considerations.

### Progress Reports of the work of the Trustees' Committee on Literature:

1. Plain and Simple Version of Alcoholics Anonymous (Fourth Edition) - The trustees reviewed the progress report on the translation of the Fourth Edition into plain

and simple language which is being designed to be accessible and relatable to as wide of an audience as possible. The committee is working through a subcommittee progress report on a plan for consultation and oversight. There will be another update at the January meeting.

2. Tools to Access the Big Book (TABB) - The AAWS, Inc. Publishing Department gave an oral report on the work on the Tools to Access the Big Book (TABB) subcommittee



WHEN A NEW GSR FINDS OUT  
HOW MANY MEETINGS THEY  
HAVE TO ATTEND EACH MONTH.

Check out this NEW  
Feature added to the  
Area 08 Website  
GSO Group Directory  
LOOK UP YOUR  
GROUP ID NUMBER  
[area8aa.org](http://area8aa.org)  
(Click [Here!](#))

## Why General Service? (Continued from Page 1)

vice has no voice. It is by electing a GSR to be part of each area's assembly that the group can express its opinion on what goes on in Alcoholics Anonymous.

This past year the General Service Conference dealt with several "hot button" issues including changes to the A.A. Preamble, the Twelve & Twelve, and new editions of the Big Book. I certainly heard lots of vociferously expressed opinions from individuals and from groups on these sub-

jects. Yet from the groups not represented by a GSR, not a whisper was conveyed to the Conference. It is akin to the citizen who chooses not to vote, but then is happy to criticize the government.

There were some groups who, after hearing about the changes affecting A.A. as a whole, wanted to take a group conscience to not support or honor the changes. There were those too who left their groups over the changes. Essentially, their group already

had a vote, but no one was there to take that vote back to the Assembly. Elect a GSR to carry your vote to the General Service Conference. It works that simply.

So, if your group has made a decision not to participate in General Service, I would ask each member to examine that decision and ensure that it was not made on the basis of fear or misinformation. That is all that we ask.

--Blaine H. Past Chair, Area 08

## Report on the Work of the Trustees of the General Service Board (continued from page 1)

on recruiting from a wide pool of plain-language professionals for this project. The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report at the January 2022 meeting.

3. Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous - The progress report regarding development of a draft The committee discussed the preliminary timeline that is being developed by the subcommittee devoted to the project. There will eventually be a call out for stories. To help gather sample stories, the committee requested that their secretary seek input from the

Grapevine editor on ways to use online and audio story submissions forms. The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report at the January 2022 meeting.

4. Spanish version of the book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos* - In their development of a draft Fourth Edition of the Spanish version of the book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, the Trustees' Committee on Literature is trying to expand the ways to gain submitted stories by:

A. Requesting the committee's secretary seek input

from La Viña editor on ways to use online or audio story submissions.

B. Review a list of upcoming Hispanic events; and

C. Look at potential outreach efforts at Spanish linguistic districts and Central Offices. October - November 2021

**Report on the Work of the Trustees of the General Service Board Regarding New Versions of and Changes to the Big Book:** The following items have been referred to the Conference Committee on Literature for the 2022

"AA has taught me that being 'a small part of the great whole' carries with it a responsibility and that there is always something that I can do to contribute to 'our common welfare.'"

[Click here to receive Grapevine Daily Quote](#)

## Dark Districts and How They Affect Us

A district that sends no one to represent it at Area Assemblies is considered "dark." This occurs with the breakdown of the process by which General Service Representatives (G.S.R.s) meet to elect a District Committee Member (D.C.M.) to attend area meetings. When the district goes dark, its members no longer have a voice in Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. There are 93 areas in the United States and Canada, comprising hundreds of districts. Judging from a group of five delegates who spoke about their experience for Box 4-5-9, participation varies—sometimes widely—from area to area.

In Area 08 we strive for quorum at each meeting, especially if there is business to manage or elections. For 3<sup>rd</sup> Legacy Proceedings, it is critical that DCMs and GSRs attend. Districts with absent GSRs at the district meetings are considered "dark." A GSRs job is to participate in their General Service area. There has been a noticeable decline in attendance by some districts

while other districts remain robust with roll-call numbers in the 10s and 20s. We have 23 districts in Area 8 and DCMs generally number 18-20 at Assemblies. Any AA member can attend an Area Assembly but only the GSRs, DCMs, Committee Chairs, and Officers can vote. If you know a group that is in need of a GSR, try to recruit someone who is eager to find out more about the service structure. If you know a GSR that is not attending the district or area events, let them know that they are representing a group and that the group depends on them for their connection to the General Service Office in New York.

To encourage active participation, most Districts reimburse the DCM for any costs associated with participation such as mileage and accommodations if the Assembly is out of town. GSRs can sometimes submit receipts for reimbursement to their group or the Area so that participation is not hindered by finances. No AA member doing the work of the area should worry about

funding. These days we offer the Assemblies via Zoom as well so there is little cost to participants.

It is suggested that each DCM and GSR join an Area Committee. There are 12 committees in our Area and all of them need help. They are a fantastic way to experience our Three Legacies and it will develop you as a leader for future AA service work.

Our Area website, [area8aa.org](http://area8aa.org), is an easy guide for both the DCM and the GSR commitments. The more you know about the 12 step work our Area conducts and supports, the more you will want to participate. The website has an event calendar as well as email addresses for committees. With today's technology, you only need your phone to stay connected to and involved with A. A.

***"Concept I: Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship."***

## Report on the Work of the Trustees of the General Service

(continued from page 2)

General Service Conference:

1. A request that upon the creation of a Fifth Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous the chapter titled: "The Doctor's Opinion" be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition, published in 1939.
2. A request to follow the 1995 advisory action regarding the first 164 pages of the book Alcoholics Anonymous and to update Appendices III and V after the existing text.

3. Consider a request to restore the original page numbering of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, by making "The Doctor's Opinion" page one, not "Bill's Story".
4. A request to restore paragraph on the story "Freedom from Bondage" in the Fifth Edition of the Big Book and future printings of the Fourth Edition. Regarding Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
  - A request that all proposed changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions be handled in footnotes.

tions be handled in footnotes.

- The trustees sent the following agenda item to the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature: "The trustees' Literature Committee requests that the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature discuss changes to the text of the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions directed by the 71st General Service Conference.

## Do You Want to Grow?

(Taken from Grapevine, September, 1959, with permission.)

**The third of five short talks used in carrying the General Service Message in northeastern Ohio. Others will appear in subsequent issues.**

We came to AA afraid and ashamed. The Twelve Steps opened the door of *recovery*. Those of us who keep on seeking ways to practice the Twelve Steps in our daily lives grow in AA. We grow in happiness, peace

of mind, serenity and sobriety.

We learned that in *unity* there is strength--in AA as well as elsewhere.

We learned that the group is the foundation of AA, and that the groups are welded together in purpose and action by the Twelve Traditions.

Visit AA when you're on a trip sometime. Visit AA in San Francisco, or England, or Peoria, Illinois. You'll feel our unity. You'll

see our strength of purpose and action.

*World service* is our third legacy. First, *recovery*. Second, *unity*. Third, *world service*, through which you can extend your strong helping hand to any place and every place in the world.

If you want to grow, take a giant step, a giant Twelfth Step. Get behind *world service*--talk it up--back it up. As AA grows throughout the world, so we all grow for having helped.

### GV JOKE OF THE MONTH MAY 1989

QUESTION: What is an elder statesman?

ANSWER: A bleeding deacon who's run out of blood.



Letters to the editor:

[newsletter@area8aa.org](mailto:newsletter@area8aa.org)

## Information for New Trusted Servants

The following are common questions of new people in A.A. service positions—our "trusted servants." We also encourage you to reach out to others holding service positions in your district and/or Area 08. Thanks to our Fellowship's long history, many people have experience in service work to share.

### How do I get listed as the new G.S.R., D.C.M., or Committee Chair?

Your Area registrar can update G.S.O.'s records with your contact information. Here is a list of Area websites in the U.S. and Canada to get in touch with your Area registrar. Another way is to update your information directly with G.S.O. through our Member Services Department.

**Contact G.S.O. Member Services here.**

### Will I receive material to get started?

Once you're listed with G.S.O. as a new G.S.R. or D.C.M., we'll automatically send you a Kit. You can see the contents of the **G.S.R. Kit** [here](#) and the **D.C.M. Kit** [here](#).

If you are a new committee chair, once listed with G.S.O., you will also receive a Kit. The contents will depend on your role. District and intergroup/central office committee chairs receive a workbook, plus appropriate pamphlets and service material. Archives Committee chairs will receive the Archives Workbook. There are specialty literature packages for certain committees (see below).

These materials will help you get started in your service position. Delivery may take up to two weeks. We send these materials to new trusted servants at no charge, thanks to contributions to G.S.O.

### How do I order literature for my service work?

Committees, groups and others may be able to order literature from an Area, district or local intergroup/central office. The General Service Office cooperates closely with these offices. They are a valuable resource for members and groups throughout the U.S. and Canada. Ordering locally can help support local service efforts.

You may also order from the **A.A.W.S. Online Store**.

### What are the special literature packages for committees?

The General Service Office offers special items and discount packages to some committees.

These committees include  
 Corrections Committee  
 Public Information Committee  
 Accessibilities Committee  
 Treatment Committee  
 Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee

**Contact the G.S.O. staff member on the appropriate desk to find out more**