

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

SPECIAL POINTS OF IN- TEREST:

- Participation
- Service Sponsorship
- Conference Agenda
- Standing Committees
- Notable Agenda Items



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Where is the Willing- |
ness Key?

What Can Service |
Sponsorship Do For
Me?

Asian American | 3
Pamphlet Proposal

Common Solution | 3
Through Committees

Proposals for Change | 3

District 16 Motivates | 4
GSRs for Service

Notable Agenda | 4
Items/GSO Financial
Highlights

area8aa.org



San Diego-Imperial Area 08 Assembly

JUNE 2022 ISSUE

PARTICIPATION: THE WILLINGNESS KEY SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MISPLACED

This article calls into question a time-honored practice of Alcoholics Anonymous, rotation. There are those who believe that adhering to the Twelve Steps (first published in 1939), the Twelve Traditions (first published in 1946), and the Twelve Concepts of World Service (adopted in 1962) will see us through challenging times and sustain our program for an eternity and these are challenging times. We cannot overlook the fact that participation in the General Service portion of A.A. has decreased dramatically. This is not something we can blame on the pandemic, or really any other external factor. The decline has been going on for decades. When our founder, Bill

W. died in 1971, the participation of A.A. groups in General Service exceeded 70%. Meaning, not only that the groups contributed money to GSO, but they elected GSRs to represent them in the Conference process. Today, in Area 08, we have approximately 1200 registered groups, but only 160 have elected GSRs to represent them. And of those elected GSRs only 110 attended our most recent Area Assembly – the Pre-Conference one where the groups get a chance to speak (and vote) their conscience on the Conference agenda items. If you do the math that is 13% with GSRs and 9% Assembly attendance!

At our last Election Assem-

bly (September 2021), there were positions for which no one stood, out of the many eligible to do so. Some readers may recall an Election Assembly of a decade or so ago when Spanish members contested the election for Alternate Registrar, feeling that a member of their community was denied the position because the votes were improperly counted. That resentment lasted for years. In the election mentioned above no eligible person even stood for that position, and scores were eligible, both English and Spanish speakers. This problem is not unique to Area 08, a similar problem occurred in Area 09 at their election last November.

Is it time to look at the

What Can Service Sponsorship Do For Me?

Like an AA Sponsor, a *Service Sponsor* is a trusted and reliable member who shares their experience, strength and hope in matters of one's understanding and participation in General Service. Their role is to help guide you through the *Twelve Concepts and Warranties of Service*, and the trials and tribulations that surely surface as you trudge the path of service. Whether you are new to General Service (a first-time GSR, committee liaison or service

member, even a group secretary or treasurer) or an old-timer, you will find a *Service Sponsor* can be valuable to your understanding and your participation. Developing a relationship with a *Service Sponsor*, like a regular sponsor, can help you navigate the jargon, the acronyms, the procedures, and the processes of our service structure.

The most frequent questions you may hear between a *Service Sponsor* and a sponsee are, "What am I do-

ing or supposed to do?" or "What is the purpose of a committee meeting?" Some will ask, "Where am I supposed to find this information and why is it not provided?" Some of the complaints from GSRs and Committee Members have been that alcoholics are impossible to deal with and that it is stressful. Some may complain that their participation is a waste of time and that their group did not seem to care. If you have ever been a GSR, you

**GSO Grassroots
Challenge:**

The cost to fund GSO operations in 2022 is estimated at \$6.06 per member. If each member contributed \$6.06 on 6-6-2022, the Fellowship would be instantly self-supported for the fiscal year. Many members will contribute to GSO on June 6 in the amount of \$6.06.

**Grapevine Daily
Quote:**

**"We are called to
Unity,
not Uniformity."
Oak Harbor,
Washington, 1984.**

**Check out this NEW
Feature added to the
Area 08 Website:**

GSO Group Directory

**LOOK UP YOUR
GROUP ID NUMBER**

area8aa.org

(Click [Here!](#))

Participation: The Willingness Key Seems to have been Misplaced

(Continued from Page 1)

"spirit of rotation" as being part of the problem? Rotating leadership IS the ideal, provided there are qualified individuals who are willing to step into a position when the time comes to rotate. But when that is not the case, is it better to have a group not represented or to have one represented by an incumbent GSR willing to continue that service? Would not that unrepresented group "get used to"

functioning without that GSR? Would it be better for the group to remain connected with the hope of filling the position at a future date? At least the group will continue to live whereas a District or Committee goes dormant without a leader. Perhaps meddling with rotation is not an answer. I have heard it suggested that we need a Workshop to address

the problem. In my years in Area 8 service, I have attended many superb workshops. The problem has always been that the attendees are people already involved in service. It is likely that the intended audience was not even aware that a workshop was taking place. It is time to admit that our local General Service needs bold solutions for our future twelve step work. --Blaine H.

What Can Service Sponsorship Do for Me? (continued from page 1)

may have given a report that was received with indifference or created confusion. Service sponsors can help you feel more comfortable in your position.

One obvious reason for securing a Service Sponsor will be the growth opportunities. AA work is not always about the intended result; it is a process that serves a higher purpose. It is not so much "what" we do in AA that matters but "how" we do things in AA that matters. Service is a prolonged exercise in humility and acceptance. AA is not to be shaped by the trusted servant, but rather the trusted servant is to be shaped by their participation. A service sponsor also reminds us of the

degree of pride and ego that exists behind clever ideas and intentions. Working with a service sponsor develops the leader in you and teaches you to communicate in AA more effectively.

Remember that *service* is many things. Service is the practice of AA's third legacy that completes the triangle with recovery and unity. It can complete you as a well-rounded member of Alcoholics Anonymous, helping you grow in understanding and effectiveness. It is also a gift to serve and support others in ways you cannot imagine. It will bring about a deeper connection to AA, your fellows, and your Higher Power. Lastly, it is a

shared responsibility in which to participate and help AA move forward as intended by our founders, and to remain available to those who are here and those who have yet to arrive.

Having a service sponsor will help you learn how the AA structure truly works, and how it feels to be a part of [AA as a whole](#). Your new service sponsor will help you overcome the challenges of general service, and most certainly will allow you to experience the pleasure of serving others that will bring about personal growth and unimagined rewards, enhancing your overall sobriety —Bill S., serving as a member of the Area Committee (ACM)

"About one-third of the women gave a family history of alcoholism, either in the father, siblings, or both, but rarely in the mother. Women, far more than men, date the onset of their alcoholism to some crisis, tragic event, or loss. However, their drinking had already been leading in the direction of alcoholism. " About Alcoholism, August 1974

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

Suggested Conference Agenda Item: Develop a Pamphlet for the Asian-American

The General Service Conference has approved a number of pamphlets to help people identify their alcoholism and seek assistance that is culturally relevant. Pamphlets have been developed for members of the armed services, those with mental health issues, older alcoholics, those with accessibility issues, persons in custody, LGBTQ alcoholics, teens, young people and women. In addition, the Conference has approved pamphlets directed toward those with spiritual concerns such as, "Many Paths to Spirituality" and "The 'God' Word: Agnostic and Atheist Members in A.A."

Though not Conference-approved, Grapevine has developed books on women in A.A., persons in custody, atheists and agnostics, those in mili-

tary service, young people, and LGBTQ alcoholics. Also, the General Service Office has produced guidelines on helping deaf alcoholics and those with other accessibility issues. Apparently only three Conference-approved pamphlets deal with issues of race and ethnicity: A.A. for the Black and African American Alcoholic, Hispanic Women in A.A., and A. A. for the Native North American. Glaringly omitted from this list is any pamphlet for Asian-American or Asian/Pacific Islander alcoholics.

We are certain that treatment programs and medical organizations that focus on this population would welcome a pamphlet to facilitate the referral of Asian-American and Asian/Pacific Islander alcoholics to Alcoholics Anonymous. Such organi-

zations include the Chinese Medical Association, National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians, South Asian Public Health Association, Asian American Pacific Islander Nurses Association, Philippine Nurses Association of America, Samoan National Nurses Association, and National Asian Pacific Americans Against Substance Abuse, not to mention the many treatment programs specific to this population.

A pamphlet directed to our Asian-American and Asian/Pacific Islander friends with alcoholism is long overdue.

"While Asian Americans have the lowest prevalence of alcohol use disorders (3.0% compared to around 6.0% overall) they are the least likely to get help," a spokesperson from the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism said.

A Common Solution through Standing Committees

As a new delegate to the General Service Conference, I was assigned to the Policy and Admissions Committee. We started meeting at the beginning of the year. Half of us were new, and half were from the last panel, and there was an instant connection. The Chair insured we had all the information needed to make a collective decision by allowing each person to have a voice.

Each conference agenda item under this committee was discussed in a remarkable cross section of the United

States and Canada. We heard ideas and opinions from several regions, always with the newcomer and AA as a whole in mind. Standing committees are where most of the work happens and where hearing feedback is paramount. All discussions lead to a vote. It is where the collective voice resides.

The work of standing committees is year-round. There is always something to plan, discuss or inform. By meeting on a regular basis, nothing is left behind.

The conference is currently doing a three-year trial by distributing a small group of items to other committees for discussion. The results of the first year was that a greater group conscience existed, allowing the conference to cover more ground. Working towards a common solution is our plan. Every committee within Area 8 needs your help. This is a way of life that should not die so bring a friend or sober partner and join us on the high road of recovery. —Monty C. Delegate, Panel 72

Proposals for Change at the Group Level

The South Oceanside Men's Group recently passed a motion to add to its group customs that allows for funding its GSR and Intergroup Representatives, as well for others with a group commitment who incur expenses in performing that commitment.

Previously, the group representatives were required to ask for reimbursement, which was rarely if ever the case. The reasons given for this were shyness, or uncomfortable for other reasons. Some wanted to contribute the expense as a grateful gesture, usually stating that they can afford it.

The problem with the grateful gesture and willingness to incur expenses, is that those to follow, specifically ones who cannot afford to incur expenses, are not likely to make themselves avail-

able to serve in this way. This is the practice the group corrected with the passing of this motion.

This is it how it works. The group treasurer provides the Representatives with an expense reimbursement form each month to complete and submit. Submitting and receiving reimbursements is not an option.

In the past, the Reps themselves were against implementing this group custom, but once they understood that it is not about them, but for those to follow, and that they could always contribute said funds into the 7th Tradition basket, they were in favor. The motion carried with substantial unanimity.

District 16 Serious About Motivating GSRs to Participate in Area Events and Committees

District 16 strives to remain involved in General Service and continues to bring the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those in need. Located in North County Coastal, our district spreads from South Carlsbad in the North to Carmel Valley Road in the South, and from Lake Hodges in the East all the way to the Pacific Ocean in the West.

Current goals of the district include imparting knowledge of the concepts to GSRs and support of the Area Standing Committees. This is accomplished each month by having a different GSR share on the concept that corresponds to the month. We also encourage our GSRs to share reports about the committees they are actively participating in, as well as inviting Committee Chairs to our District

meetings to inform GSRs about the work their committees are doing in the Area.

We know how important it is to carry the message within our District to our members, both current and potential, and entertain all suggestions on how best to do this. We are very excited that a pre-Covid event has returned, with support from District 16. We will be screening the movie "My Name is Bill W" at the historic La Paloma Theater in Encinitas. This free event is being held in honor of Founder's Day. Join us on Thursday, June 9 at 6:30pm to enjoy the movie in addition to two dynamic speakers.

After the mesmerizing presentation by YPAACC on Anonymity in the Digital Age at the Pre-Conference Assembly, District 16 has decided to partner with the young

people to bring a workshop of the same topic to the district. Details are in the works with more info to come.

We are not a glum lot, and the District 16 sponsored Labor Day Picnic, traditionally held at Oak Crest Park in Encinitas on Labor Day, is right around the corner. All are welcome.

As we rev up for our participation in the Post Conference Assembly and look forward to welcoming our Delegate Monty back from New York, the District hopes to bid on and co-host an assembly before the end of 2022. We take our responsibility of being of service seriously, and what better way to do this than to help facilitate our most sacred of duties, bringing the group conscience of our members to the Area at large.

At Wits End, August 2014:

The Road Less Traveled

"There are many paths on the journey through life. I think I might have chosen the psychopath."



Letters to the editor:

newsletter@area8aa.org

Notable GSC* Agenda Items GSRs Can Report to Groups:

- Revise the pamphlet "The A.A. Group" to reflect the importance of the group as a "spiritual entity" as stated in the Long Form of Tradition Five. **Passed (117-3)**
- Revise the pamphlet "Do You Think You're Different?" to include stories reflecting greater diversity. **Passed (110-13)**
- Revisions to the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" Add a section about virtual meetings. **Passed (96-26)**
- Request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media. **Neither Passed or Failed - Moved to Trustees for Review**
- Chapter titled "The Doctor's Opinion" be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition. **Failed**
- Limit changes to the book Alcoholics Anonymous. **Failed**
- Proposed changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions be handled in footnotes. **Failed**
- Discuss the impact the Preamble change has had on our A.A. Fellowship. **Failed**
- Revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" to reflect shared experience on service sponsorship. **Failed**
- Consider request to include a G.S.R. preamble in the pamphlet "G.S.R.: Your Group's Link to A.A. as a whole. **Declined to Consider**



2021 GSO Financial Highlights

7th Tradition of Self-Support \$10.78 million set another record (3 Yrs. in a row) up 5.07% from 2020.

Record Yr. 2020 \$10,256,687

Record Yr. 2019 \$8,863,480

**General Service Conference*

Publishing gross profits \$6.3 million were down 4.3% from 2020.

Gross profits were down due to high production costs.

Grapevine is experiencing a deficit, but not as big as planned. "Its time to start having conversation about Grapevine's financial health."