

# The Assembly Reporter

## General Service News for the Group

JANUARY 2023  
ISSUE

**San Diego – Imperial  
Area 08 Assembly  
of Alcoholics  
Anonymous  
(SDIAA)**

[www.area8.org](http://www.area8.org)

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Introducing the<br>New Area<br>Newsletter | 1 |
| My First Time                             | 1 |
| Resources and<br>Other Links              | 2 |
| What it Means<br>to be a GSR              | 3 |
| Area Standing<br>Committees               | 4 |
| Area Website                              | 4 |
| PRAASA<br>Save the Date                   | 4 |



## Introducing the New Area Newsletter

The purpose of this newsletter is to offer area assembly members, most importantly the General Service Representative, (GSR,) accounting for two-thirds of the assembly membership, a reliable tool for serving the members of the area groups. The newsletter can be a source of information with insights into the 12-Step work and service opportunities within the Area, the critical efforts of the General Service Office (GSO) and the General Service Conference (GSC). The content is designed to be utilized for a group GSR report. Other content will include shared service experience that might inspire and attract participation from our general membership. There is a wealth of service opportunities within the area structure that can be shared with your group.

Being of service in A.A. is our third legacy, and it is increasingly lacking involvement. Bill W. wrote in the pamphlet A.A.'s Legacy of Service,

Copyright © 1969 (Reprinted with Permission); *Vital to A.A.'s growth, that 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.*

It is for this reason and at the pleasure of the area newsletter committee, it's contributors and supporters, that we strive to provide a resource that may enhance one's overall understanding and effectiveness, to help those of us who are here, stay here, and to reach those not yet arrived. -Editor

## My First Time

I do not recall the date of my first Area Assembly, but I'm fairly sure it was on a Saturday. I am not even sure that it took place in San Diego as early in my sobriety I dabbled in General Service while living on the East Coast. Chances are, it was not an Orientation Assembly as the various groups I have represented seldom had contested elections for GSR. If you were willing to serve, you were it! However, I do recall the feelings I felt that day: confusion and boredom. I am sure that I left early as that was my custom back then.

This tepid introduction does not seem like a ringing endorsement of Assemblies, but, you will notice, I am still here and regularly attending them decades later. What changed? It was my appreciation for how integral Area Assemblies are in the work of our Fellowship and its primary purpose of carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those who still suffer. While I can stick out my hand and wait for a Newcomer to take it, that effort alone will be insufficient to reach the myriad of drunks out there who could use our help.

Getting back to that first Assembly...Having participated in Step Study groups from the beginning of my sobriety, I had a rather good understanding of both the Steps and the Traditions. But here people were talking about Concepts, a term which I had not been introduced to. These were actually the Twelve Concepts of World Service and are printed in the Service Manual, something else that was new to me. While some of the Concepts dealt with issues relating to GSO and the Trustees, a number were related to what we were doing at that Assembly!

How about that boredom? Well, some A.A.s really like to talk. And while we are advised not to speak if another has already expressed our opinion, some of us just can't help it. I sometimes still cringe when, after a vote of 113 – 4, the Chair asks if the minority would like to speak and one of the 4 states exactly the same thing they said during discussion. If listening to that is the most hardship I have to endure in this job, so be it. (Continued on page 3)

## RESOURCES

### General Service Office Quarterly Newsletters

Inside you will find...

- ◆ Communications from the General Manager
- ◆ Trustee Reports
- ◆ Committee Reports
- ◆ GSO Financial Info.
- ◆ Literature Updates
- ◆ Contact Info, etc.

**box 459**

[www.aa.org/box-459](http://www.aa.org/box-459)

**About A.A.**

[www.aa.org/about-aa](http://www.aa.org/about-aa)



### Read/Listen Big Book

[www.aa.org/the-big-book](http://www.aa.org/the-big-book)

### Read/Listen 12 & 12

[www.aa.org/twelve-steps-twelve-traditions](http://www.aa.org/twelve-steps-twelve-traditions)

### A.A. on YouTube

[www.youtube.com/@alcoholicsanonymousworldse1373/featured](http://www.youtube.com/@alcoholicsanonymousworldse1373/featured)

### Media Library

[www.aa.org/](http://www.aa.org/)

A.A. is a well structured, and yes, well organized Fellowship. General service members who become familiar with this structure and its resources will find that they can serve their fellows in a uniquely useful and effective way. The General Service Office (GSO) and Alcoholics Anonymous World Service, Inc. (AAWS) is **our 411**, and every member will benefit from knowing about these resources and the value of the materials available to them. Its all just a click of a mouse or a phone call away.

[www.aa.org/aa-gso](http://www.aa.org/aa-gso) | Tel. 212-870-3400 (EST)

## What is an Area

An area is a **geographical mapped zone** within and throughout the U.S. and Canada. California alone accounts for six areas (plus 1 that crosses into Nevada), four of which are in the Southern part of the State. The primary purpose of an area is to elect a delegate who represents the area's conscience at the annual General Service Conference, where decisions are made that affect A.A. throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Collectively, there are 93 area delegates attending the conference who represent an approximate 1,967,613 active members, comprising of 120,455 groups.

## Area Assembly

At the heart of each area is the assembly meeting, where elected service members gather and become informed by the area delegate about the workings of the General Service Conference (GSC) and the General Service Office (GSO). This is also where proposals and decisions affecting the area are conducted. Assemblies are held five times each year and are day long events. These meetings are held in a hybrid format.

The body of the assembly consists of 10 Officers, 23 District Committee Members (DCMs), 14 Standing Committee Chairs, a Webservant and Archivist, and approximately 220 General Service Representatives (GSRs) including alternates, plus as many as 12 liaisons from intergroup/central office and other service entities. They are all voting members, though alternates vote only in the absence of their primary.

A qualifying quorum (attendance) of two-thirds GSRs is required to vote on motions regarding proposed area business concerns, e.g., financial matters, area structure and guidelines, officer elections, etc. It cannot be over emphasized the reliance for every assembly member to attend each assembly.

Assemblies are open to all A.A. members who care to join as guests.

## Specific to Area 08

Area 8 covers both San Diego and Imperial Counties from the California border with Mexico to the South, Arizona in the East, and Riverside and Orange Counties to the North. The Area is formed into Spanish-language and English-language districts.

The area is divided into 23 districts, consisting of approximately 1,125 groups, 2,037 meetings each week with an estimated membership of 28,608.

The purpose of the area is threefold. One, is to elect a delegate and fund their attendance at the General Service Conference, held annually in New York. Two, to form a decision-making structure so groups can collectively decide on matters affecting the area. And three, to carry out Twelfth Step work that may not be practical for groups, districts or intergroups to take on by themselves, such as, but not limited to, the work of the area standing committees.

## Area Committee Meeting (ACM)

The area committee members are the officers, DCMs, committee chairs, the webservant and archivist, and liaisons from intergroup/central office and other service committees. ACMs are three hours held monthly.

The ACM is primarily a steering committee for the assembly, providing support, guidance and to a degree oversight of progress. The work of the ACM is multifaceted and very much a work in progress. ACMs are open to all A.A. members who care to join as guests.

## District (Committee) Meeting

The purpose of a district is to support the groups within its district boundaries. The district committee is made up of local GSRs who meet monthly. This is a where GSRs work together, plan events, and seek help with any problems their group may be having. The district groups are represented at the area level by a district committee member (DCM) aka a district chair.

# The Group and its General Service Representative

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A GSR

For most A.A.s, membership in a home group is one of the keys to continuing sobriety. In a home group, we accept service responsibilities and learn to sustain connections with other recovering alcoholics. The home group affords individual A.A.'s the privilege of voting on issues that affect the Fellowship as a whole; it is the very basis of the service structure. While many A.A. members attend other groups as well, the home group is where they participate in business meetings and cast their vote as part of the group conscience of the Fellowship as a whole. As with all group conscience matters, each member has one vote. The role of the general service representative (GSR) is essential to general service. Bill W. wrote in Concept I of *The Twelve Concepts for World Service*: "The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services." The role of the GSR is essential to ensuring that groups can fulfill that responsibility. Only when a GSR keeps the group informed and communicates the group conscience can

the Conference truly act for A.A. as a whole. This communication is a two-way street, making the GSR responsible not only for bringing forward the group's voice, but for taking back to the group Conference actions that affect the Fellowship's unity, health and growth.

So what is the role of a GSR?  
The GSR is the link between the group

**GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE  
MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB IN A.A.**

and "A.A. as a whole." This link becomes a channel through which news, information, opinions and ideas can flow back and forth. Importantly, this also gives the group a voice in the affairs of the Fellowship. The GSR is that voice.

There is more than one way for GSRs to express their group's thoughts and wishes — their conscience — in general service.

When the GSR is **present** at assemblies, the group's voice is heard. The presence of a GSR says their group cares about what's going on in the Fellowship and wants to learn and make its concerns and

suggestions known.

When the GSR **participates**, the group's voice is heard. It can be through a GSR sharing the group's concerns across a conference table from other GSRs in a district meeting. It can be through questioning a budget item or proposing an idea important to the group at an area assembly. It can be through making an impassioned plea about an agenda item to the delegate on the eve of the annual General Service Conference meeting.

When the GSR **votes**, the group's voice is heard. The GSR votes on the trusted servants to lead the district and the area as well as the delegate to represent the area at the annual General Service Conference meeting. The group's voice is heard when the GSR votes on how best to use Seventh Tradition contributions to carry out Twelfth Step services.

What's important is to participate.

*A.A. Service Manual (Chapter 1, pg. 7)  
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**Online edition: Click on any of these featured pamphlets which could be helpful to a GSR or DCM**



### My First Time (Continued from page 1)

Some of my friends say they always feel the presence of God in the room at Assemblies. I am not quite there yet, but I am young (78) and maybe it will come. What I have learned is that this stuff works! It may seem strange, but since 1935 millions of hopeless drunks have been saved by these methods. Who am I to question success? I would love to see you all at future assemblies, so that we can make the magic continue. Blaine H.

### Never Fast Enough

"If you're an alcoholic, instant gratification takes too long."

Paul C., Oceanside, CA  
Grapevine Humor - January 2023



## Area Standing Committees

Area committees can play a vital role in the functioning of our area and facilitating twelfth step opportunities and events to our local Fellowship.

There are fourteen committees in the area. Of these committees, five are devoted to administrative or technical operations, such as finance, information and technology (IT), newsletter, policy, and the translation committee. These committees are most always in need for members with the necessary knowledge and skill set to contribute to their efforts. The remainder of the

committees directly perform twelfth step work.

Committee membership has mostly relied upon GSRs and DCMs to fulfill the needs of these committees, in fact, it is somewhat expected of them, with few volunteers from the groups.

It can not be said enough the benefit to the group members who practice our third legacy. Being of service can be critical to members staying sober, staying in A.A.

Area assembly members, this is a **call to action**. To bring to the groups the

knowledge of general service opportunities at the area level. To share information about the committee work that is being done, that needs to be done, along with our shared experiences in receiving the gifts of service.

To learn about the work of these committees, meeting dates and times (most if not all of the committees now meet online) and contact info., visit their web page within the area web site [www.area8aa.org/sdiaa/committees](http://www.area8aa.org/sdiaa/committees)

-Editor

### Area Standing Committees

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| △ Accessibilities                      | △ Grapevine / La Viña                      | △ Newsletter                                |
| △ Archives                             | △ Hospitals & Institutions (H & I) SD      | △ Policy                                    |
| △ Armed Service                        | △ Hospitals & Institutions (H & I) No. Cty | △ Translation                               |
| △ Cooperation with Professionals (CPC) | △ Information & Technology (IT)            | △ Young Peoples Coordinating Council (YPCC) |
| △ Finance                              | △ Literature                               |   |

## Area 8 Website

[www.area8aa.org](http://www.area8aa.org)

AREA INFORMATION

CALENDARS

COMMITTEES

CONTACTS

DISTRICTS

FORMS

GLIDE APPS

The area website can be a wonderful tool to communicate information to our local Fellowship, specifically to those participating in general service who are tasked with relaying information to the groups; such as DCMs and GSRs. For instance, each district and standing committee has its own web page. Districts may post meeting agendas, minutes, upcoming projects and other news they want to disseminate to the groups.

The site also features Glide Apps., a convenient tool and method to deliver assembly and area committee meeting documents, GSO bulletins, reports and this newsletter.

Other information such as "Look-up you group GSO Service Number" is now a mouse click away, as is the New GSR wel-

come packet, GSR and DCM manuals, and the area structure and guidelines, and much more.

No longer should members be without access to the information they want. And if you're seeking information that is not posted, simply shoot an email via the website to the area committee chair, IT chair, or webservant.

For those of you who have been around for a while and haven't visited the site in some time, you will find much progress and enhancements thanks to the efforts of the IT committee and webservant. Still, maintaining the website requires quite a bit of work to keep it up to date and to further develop its user friendliness. New members are needed and very much sought to assist in this endeavor. -Editor



LOS ANGELES - AIRPORT MARRIOTT

## Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly

The purpose of PRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups, and Areas of the Pacific Region; to encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences; and to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of A.A.

[www.praasa.org](http://www.praasa.org)