



Seeds of Service

VOL. XXX ISSUE 1
WINTER 2015—THEME
Diversity in A.A. -
Our Heritage of Inclusion
DCMs & GSRs
Please share this
newsletter with your group!

Hello Everybody!

Jody K. Area 60 Secretary

Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism.

"Some physically challenged A.A.s can get to meetings; others cannot. In both cases, there's a lot the group can do to make it possible for these alcoholics to be active, participating members." From the pamphlet, "Serving Alcoholics with Special Needs."

When I came to AA, I had a lot of the common issues: jobs, relationships, homes lost. I had a hard time getting past my ego in order to be honest with anyone. I didn't have that playgrounds and playmates issue, really. Most

folks, even those who drank like me, weren't interested in my company anymore.

I was also in a wheelchair. While none of my other issues set me apart, I was concerned that my disability would. No one treated me any differently when it came to my alcoholism, and if any special treatment was afforded me in regard to my disability, it taught me how tenacious and creative we sober alcoholics can be.

Anyone, anywhere.

One meeting was held in a men's shelter. While the shelter itself was accessible, the separate entrance that was used for

AA was not. Women were not allowed in the shelter. It was a firm rule. Thankfully, this group had a good relationship with its landlord, so when one of the group members talked with the manager of the shelter, I was given special permission to enter the main entrance on Tuesdays and Fridays. It was kind of a big deal!

So many of our meetings are held in church basements, down steep sets of stairs, and at one meeting that became a favorite, there was no way for me to get there. Not to worry. We pitch in and get things done, I learned. With a member on each side, my chair, with me in it, was lifted and carried down those steps and then back up after the meeting was over.

(Continued on page 10)

Diversity in AA: Our History of Inclusion

Teresa K., Area 60 Alternate Chairperson

Every time I sit down to contribute to our newsletter, I have to think honestly about myself, and how I walk this path of sobriety. I learned a very long time ago that it's important to "walk as you talk." My first sponsor taught me that...and I have to give credit where credit is due. That statement basically means don't be an egotistical hypocrite. I know — strong words, but very true. My ego got me drunk in the past, so today I am very watchful of it. I have to be. I am one of the lucky ones that made it back to the rooms of AA. There are so many that don't. And why not? I feel one reason is that folks don't feel "a part of."

When I came back into AA this time, 10 plus years ago, I was so afraid of messing this thing up again. I felt as if I had to hold my breath so I wouldn't drink. I attended a ton of meetings, did



everything my sponsor told me, read the Big Book and prayed a lot. But fear was still there and I knew it.

However, I knew this was life or death for me, so I walked through it. I am ever so grateful to those that extended their hands in welcome, to the women who willingly gave me their numbers, and to the ones that remembered my name when I returned to a meeting.

It were those small, seemingly insignificant, things that kept me from running away. I have had experiences where I didn't feel welcomed at an AA meeting—not by my looks or attire, but by how I identified myself in the meeting. Being told "your not welcome and not to come back" does not help anyone to feel included.

So I have to ask myself am I being welcoming to the newcomer—and also, do I feel included in AA? You betcha. I continue learning how to apply the steps and traditions in my daily life, the concepts I am still learning. There is always something more to learn and grow from in AA. I've heard that you truly belong when you complete your fifth step. For me I know I could breath a little easier

(Continued on page 10)

ON MY BOOKSHELF

Jean M., Past Delegate, Panel 61 Area 60 WPA

Now, about those other books and articles. Anybody who reads probably has at least one other book about our program from a source other than Alcoholics Anonymous. Even someone who does not read possibly has a daily meditation book from a source other than AA. I was really surprised to learn that our own “Daily Reflections” was first published in 1990. The *other* book, “24 Hours A Day”, was published in 1954. For 36 years, Hazeldon published the only daily meditation book for our Fellowship. The Grapevine magazine just published a Daily Quote book in 2014.

I read books. I have all of the Conference Approved books published by AAWS, and all of the Grapevine Books. I also have three different biographies of Bill W., in addition to the Conference Approved “Pass It On”; I have Lois Wilson’s biography, “Lois Remembers”, an Al-Anon Book. And my bookshelf is divided into three sections: AAWS, AA Grapevine and “Other”.

So, what’s the difference? According to the Conference-Approved Literature Service Piece, SMF-29 “Conference Approved Literature”: *The term “Conference-approved” describes written or audiovisual material approved by the Conference for publication by G.S.O. This process assures that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A.*



principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the A.A. Fellowship.

The term has no relation to material not published by G.S.O. It does not imply Conference disapproval of other material about A.A. A great deal of literature helpful to alcoholics is published by others, and A.A. does not try to tell any individual member what he or she may or may not read.

Conference approval assures us that a piece of literature represents solid A.A. experience. Any Conference-approved booklet or pamphlet goes through a lengthy and painstaking process, during which a variety of A.A.’s from all over the United States and Canada read and express opinions at every stage of production.

The Service piece goes on to state that: **Not All “A.A. Literature” Is Conference-Approved**

Central offices and intergroups do write and distribute pamphlets or

booklets that are not Conference-approved. If such pieces meet the needs of the local membership, they may be legitimately classified as “A.A. literature.” There is no conflict between A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S. — publishers of Conference-approved literature), and central offices or intergroups — rather they complement each other. The Conference does not disapprove of such material.

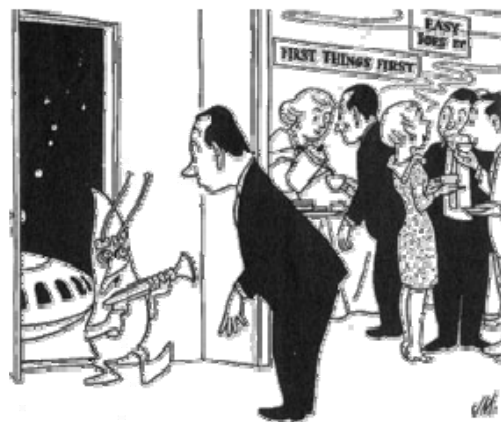
G.S.O. does develop some literature that does not have to be approved by the Conference, such as service material, Guidelines and bulletins.

A.A. co-founder Bill W., who often called the influence of A.A. literature “incalculable,” wrote in the May 1964 issue of the Grapevine, “Suppose, for instance, that during the last twenty-five years A.A. had never published any standard literature...no books, no pamphlets. We need little imagination to see that by now our message would be hopelessly garbled. Our relations with medicine and religion would have become a shambles. To alcoholics generally we would today be a joke and the public would have thought us a riddle. Without its literature, A.A. would certainly have bogged down in a welter of controversy and disunity.” (*The Language of the Heart*, p. 348) Bill’s words ring just as true today. Excerpt from MG-09, AA Guidelines on Literature Committees. ▲

Thank You!

With the New Year also comes rotation for our “trusted servants” in Area 60. As our Panel 65 Officers and Coordinators take the helm of service in Area 60, I am reminded of how grateful I am to have had the opportunity to be of service to Area 60 and to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, most recently as your Area 60 Alternate Treasure. It has been an honor and a privilege to be a part of the Area 60 Committee, and I look forward to wherever my journey takes me as I “trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.”

~ Jean M., Past Delegate Panel 61



“My drinking has me feeling a little alienated.”

Grapevine Cartoon Contest Winner
March 2014—Stephen S., Exeter, N.H.

A Difference of Ages

Erik K. Area 60 Alternate CPCPI Coordinator

When I first came into AA, I remember feeling a rash of various emotions. I had no idea what was up or down, or even that fact that I had no idea, about having no idea. However, immediately as I walked into the meeting, there was one thing I noticed, a massive age difference. When I came into AA, I was 16 years old at the time. I remember thinking, "boy I have to be the youngest one here by 20 years!" I thought I would never fit in, that I was too young to be in Alcoholics Anonymous. The problem was I felt as if I never fit in anywhere, and I most certainly would not fit in AA. There was such a

massive gap, and diversity in age that I was afraid of AA before I even gave it a chance. Despite my first impressions, I was welcomed into the rooms with open arms. My future homegroup to be explained to me, that age has no prejudice here. Alcoholism can affect anybody, of any age, and that I was welcome, and encouraged to keep coming to meetings. The age diversity was broken at that moment, and I felt as if I did belong. I am now 23 years old; and approaching 7 years of sobriety, god willing. I was



able to find a sponsor, who is significantly older than I, and share my story with him. When we share, there is no age barrier, because to us both, age is irrelevant. We are just fellow alcoholics.

Once, I understood this, the sky was the limit. It has allowed me to help younger newcomers, letting them know that you can be sober when you're young. In AA, the majority of my closest friends are the very diversity in age that encouraged me to stay. ▲

Why Do We Need A Conference?

From The AA Service Manual 2009-2010 Edition Pg S20

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairman of our board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting: "We may not need a General Service Conference to insure our own recovery. We do need it to insure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to insure recovery of a child being born tonight, destined to alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth which brought us back to life.

"We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effects of the human urge for power and prestige which we must insure can never invade A.A. We need it to insure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.

"We need it to insure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to insure that the doors of halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to insure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is." (Emphasis added) ▲

Statistics On the Delegates

Excerpt from the Delegate's Report on the 61st General Service Conference, June 2011

Submitted by Jean M. Past Delegate Panel 61

There were 60 men and 33 women; the youngest was 33, the oldest was 74; the longest sobriety in years was 40, the shortest 8. We spoke English, Spanish and French; there were two observers from Peru who spoke no English, and two from Great Britain who spoke "the King's English." There is a delegate who is a Buddhist Monk and a trustee who is full-blooded Navajo. There was a delegate from Puerto Rico and one from Hawaii; the Cayman Islands, Alaska, sunny California and the Arctic Circle were all represented; it really brought home the First Tradition. ▲



What a perfect example of "Diversity in A.A. - Our Heritage of Inclusion!"

Stimulating Interest in General Service

Excerpted from The AA Service Manual 2009-2010 Edition Pg S23

A. A. has its own idiom—full of axioms, acronyms and metaphors. Two of my favorites are “More will be revealed” and “Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.” I’ve been involved in some kind of service since my second year, but like many of us, I can be a slow learner. It occurred to me just recently that “more will be revealed” — only if I work for it. Insights will not fall from the sky. I realized it was time for a service sponsor and a large-format ☺ copy of our service manual. I am making my way at a modest speed through the pages—and wanted to share one of the sections that rang true for me. Enjoy your journey. Barb G., Area 60 Newsletter Editor

Most A.A. members are primarily interested in their groups, in their own sobriety, and in helping other drunks one-on-one. And that is as it should be. While the work of general service has precisely the same objective—carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers—the connection is not always direct or obvious. Some stimulators are usually needed to get the attention of A.A. members—to show them that service can add a rich dimension to their sober lives and Twelfth Step work, and that their participation is vital to the future of A.A.

Good communication is of vital importance. In personal Twelfth Step work, there is no end to communication. The sponsor talks with the drunk; speakers share their

experience; we share with each other. But when it comes to general service work, communication has a tendency to break down. It can take hard work to get the attention of alcoholics, but with a creative approach, they can be encouraged to take time out from the nuts and bolts of recovery to think about another phase of their new lives. Once A.A. members are well informed about service, they often want to become involved and to take on their own service responsibilities. In many areas, the delegate and area committee members make themselves available to visit groups or district meetings and talk about general service. Workshops on the Traditions, Concepts, or other aspects of service are often an effective way of spreading the word of service. ▲

Our Third Legacy is Service 12 Ways To Be Active in 2015

Adapted from Southeast Texas Area (SETA) <http://aa-seta.org/>

1. Make your voice count—participate in your group, district or area.
2. Serve on a District or Area Committee, or as a Coordinator or Alternate Coordinator.
3. Sponsor a member into service at the group, District or Area level.
4. Share your experience, strength and hope with an inmate by letter.
5. Send a Grapevine or La Vina gift subscription to a friend.
6. Purchase an AAWS eBook at www.aa.org.
7. Participate in the Area 60 Get Away Weekend in April.
8. Participate in the NERAASA 2015 in Somerset, NJ.
9. Attend an Area 60 Quarterly Meeting or Assembly.
10. Visit, support and be active in your local Intergroup office.
11. Attend the International AA Convention in Atlanta, GA this July.
12. Attend the International AA Conference of Young People in AA in Miami this September. ▲

G.S.O. BEGINS SEARCH FOR NEW GENERAL MANAGER

At the October 2014 meeting of the General Service Board, Phyllis Halliday announced her wish to retire by October 2015. We are beginning the search process with the hope that the new General Manager will be brought on board prior to her departure to ensure an effective transfer of responsibility. Following are qualifications for the position.

1. Ten years minimum sobriety.
2. Demonstrated leadership ability in A.A.
3. Proven general management experience, preferably as a General Manager of a multi-function organization; understanding of organizational issues, planning and controls, financial reporting and human resource practices, and information technology applications and trends.
4. A.A. service experience; knowledge of General Service structure and history and A.A. history.
5. Effective communications skills, both verbal and written; ability to report clearly and concisely on G.S.O. operations to the appropriate boards, the General Service Conference and the Fellowship at large.
6. Demonstrated understanding of the unique nature of A.A. the structural limitations and balances of authority in A.A. services, and the ability to work with and resolve conflicting viewpoints.

A resume form is available online at www.aa.org and should be filled out and sent along with a professional resume to Terry Bedient, Search Committee Chair, G.S.O. 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 3400, New York, NY 10015. **The deadline for submission is April 15, 2015.** The Search Committee suggests that applicants may be found among current and past trustees and delegates; as well as other A.A. members with substantial area and service backgrounds. All applicants will be considered by the Search Committee of the General Service Board. All applications will be treated with the utmost confidence. ▲

A.A.'s Acceptance of All

Jan H. Past Delegate, Panel 57

Through the Twelve Steps we develop true kinship with man and God. We learn to live with others. We learn the extreme importance of an open mind and peace of mind. We do inventory as a daily reprieve from anger, resentment, jealousy, envy, self-pity and hurtful pride.

Through the Twelve Traditions we learn that *"our common welfare should come first. Without unity, AA dies."* We learn how to live and work together as groups. In the history of AA, early intolerance was based on fear. *"We worried a lot about membership. In fact, when heavy publicity first came our way, we were scared witless. We said to ourselves: 'Won't all kinds of odd people show up? Complications, you know; alcohol mixed with other things.' ...Mixed with a certain amount of snobbishness and smugness, this was downright fear. We simply did not know what or who would turn up."* (AA Comes of Age)

It took many struggles to establish the practice of membership, and very broad inclusiveness of today: *"You are an AA member if you say so. You can declare yourself in; nobody can keep you out."* In Tradition Three, you can read about the history of early AA, the fears, intolerance, the 'protective regulations' and the eventual abandonment of these for the sake of inclusiveness and diversity.

Through these early experiences, the Twelve Traditions were written and



accepted at the first International Conference in Cleveland in 1950.

The foreword to the First Edition of our book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, says "... We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word....[Note: Dictionary definition of organization: an administrative or functional structure characterized by complete conformity to its standards and requirements.] *The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect, or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted."*

As fears subsided in the early days, we finally said to ourselves, *"Who are we to keep anybody out?"* [AA Comes of Age] AA today is universal. Since that early time, literally all kinds of people have found their way to Alcoholics Anonymous. Our inclusiveness is now very broad. The Big Book says: *"We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful."*

What a privilege I feel to be a part of such a truly accepting group of people who have found a common solution to a new way of life. ▲

From AA Grapevine Forum

www.aagrapevine.org/forum

July 21, 2013

The Traditions are a set of interrelated principles which all combine in the spirit of Tradition One *"Our common welfare should come first..."* Other Traditions are each a specific application of Tradition One.



2015 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

JULY 2-5, 2015 ATLANTA, GEORGIA
"80 Years – Happy, Joyous and Free."

It's not too soon for GSR's to begin announcing the International Convention during their regular GSR reports.



A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 80th year on July 2-5 in Atlanta Georgia. Preregistration is \$100 USD; and \$110 after May 12, 2015. Your registration badge entitles you to attend all Convention events, including:

- Thursday night Party in the Park
- Stadium meetings on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in the Georgia Dome
- All of the marathons, panels, workshops, and topic, special interest and other meetings at the Georgia World Congress Center and nearby hotels

Varied meeting topics will excite many A.A.s who look forward to hearing the experience of members from other locales, and as Convention-goers partake in the many meetings and workshops scheduled, more than a few will find their imaginations fired and their enthusiasm for carrying A.A.'s message renewed.

Housing reservation information, including the Housing Bureau's contact information, will be included with your registration confirmation, and will be on a first-come, first-served basis; however, you must be registered for the Convention before you can make your reservations.

Area 60 Archives Needs You!

Western Pennsylvania Area 60 is proud of its Archives collection. With the help of many involved and dedicated volunteers, our archives have grown into an interesting and enjoyable collection of memorabilia reflecting the growth of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in Western Pennsylvania.

Many hours of labor have been invested in cataloging and preserving our history for the education and delight of members of our fellowship. We now have traveling displays that the Archives Coordinator will exhibit at Area 60 events, (*Quarterly Meetings, Assemblies and Days of Sharing*) and group anniversaries when asked, schedule permitting.

The Archives aim is to give the fellowship a sense of its own past, lest we forget from whence we came. The Area Committee welcomes a program, a tape, a booklet or a memory. The archives coordinator seeks out and maintains items

The Archives aim is to give the fellowship a sense of its own past, lest we forget from whence we came.

and memorabilia, i.e., programs, correspondence, news clippings, etc. He/she also collects tapes and arranges taped interviews of long-timers (30 or more years of sobriety) and is responsible for the collection of histories of Area 60 groups. Whether your group was started 5 years ago or 55 years ago, it has a history. Share that information with the Archives by following the link to the Group History Form. Do you know a long-timer? I can guarantee that they have a story, or two, to tell.

To strengthen the Area 60 link to AA as a whole, the archives coordinator maintains communication with the GSO Archivist and preserves the Area 60 Archives subscription to the AA Grapevine.

For questions, comments or compliments, please contact the Archives Coordinator at archives@wpaarea60.org. ▲

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT A.A. HISTORY

Reprinted with permission from www.aa.org

Q. Who wrote AA's Preamble? Also, when was the word "honest" dropped and why? (i.e. "*honest desire to stop drinking*")

A. The Preamble first appeared in the Grapevine in June 1947, and was written by Tom Y., the Grapevine Editor serving at that time. Its intent was to inform the public as to what A.A. is and what it is not. Shortly thereafter, the Preamble began appearing in each monthly issue of the Grapevine, and later on in much of our A.A. Conference-approved literature. In 1992 the Grapevine published a short history of the Preamble.

In the 1947 version of the Preamble, it contained the wording, "...*an honest desire to stop drinking...*" as printed in the foreword to the first edition of the Big Book. However, since the adoption of the short form of the Traditions in 1950, the Third Tradition has always read, "*The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking*" and this form was used by Bill in writing the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

In 1958 the expression "honest desire" was discussed at great length at the General Service Conference. It was felt that it was impossible to determine what constitutes an "honest" desire to stop drinking, thus the word was dropped. The "new" version of the Preamble, without the word "honest," first appeared in the September 1958 issue of the Grapevine.

There have been other versions of the Preamble, written by AA members for their local groups' use, which were then circulated around AA; for example: the "Texas Preamble," the "Wilmington Preamble," etc. Many AA members find these interesting, but they have never been adopted by the Fellowship as a whole. ▲

GRAPEVINE Quote of the Day

August, 1982

"Today's sobriety cannot be chugalugged ... It has to be sipped, one taste at a time, so that each drop of serenity can be fully savored."

North Hollywood, Calif.,
"Savoring Our Sobriety,"
Emotional Sobriety

March 1988

"It's only when I stop thinking about it, stop trying to run the show that my life may become as God intends."

Tucson, Ariz.,
"The Work at Hand,"
Emotional Sobriety

GRAPEVINE NEWS What's New for January 2015



WHAT IS IT?

A state, province and territory-wide challenge to increase new* GRAPEVINE and La Viña subscriptions in 2015.

HOW IT WORKS?

Any new paid subscription between January 26 - December 20, 2015 qualifies, including: Grapevine or a La Viña Print Subscriptions, Grapevine Digital Subscriptions, Grapevine Complete Subscriptions Or Subscription Gift Certificates.

THE PRIZE!

A special section in a 2016 issue of GRAPEVINE or La Viña featuring member's stories from the state, province or territory with the greatest percentage growth in new*, paid subscriptions or subscription gift certificates.

Watch for details in late January



23RD ANNUAL AREA 60 GET AWAY WEEKEND MINI-CONFERENCE

March 27-29, 2015

*“Celebrating 80 Years of Recovery, Unity and Service -
The Foundation for Our Future”*

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of the Get Away Weekend is for GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers and Coordinators and A.A. members of Area 60 Western Pennsylvania to discuss General Service Conference related issues and concerns affecting A.A. as a whole as well, as pertinent aspects of Recovery, Unity and Service.

Highlights

Committee Workshops & Presentations
Panel Presentations
Saturday Night Banquet & Speaker Meeting
Red Ball Alkathon Meetings

Location

Comfort Inn & Conference Center
699 Rodi Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15235 (412) 244-1600

Onsite Registration & Hospitality Room

Opens @ 3:00PM Friday, March 27, 2015
Program Begins @ 4:00PM Friday, March 27, 2015

Room Rates

\$79.00 + \$11.06 tax = \$90.06 per night

Includes: Complimentary Breakfast Buffet, use of indoor pool, hot tub, exercise facility, and wireless internet.

Contact Information

Any questions please contact...
John K. 814-688-3219
Mario D. 412-952-8397
E-mail gaw@wpaarea60.org

*Please make reservations directly with the hotel directly **BY MARCH 7TH, 2015** and mention the Area 60 Get Away Weekend.*

* Restaurants are available locally if you prefer not to purchase your meals through the conference.



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY (or use address label)

Name: _____	q Registration	\$20.00	What is your District?
Address: _____	q Friday Dinner	\$18.00	_____
City, State, Zip: _____	q Saturday Lunch	\$10.00	Service Position?
Phone: _____	q Saturday Banquet	\$25.00	_____
Email: _____	Total Enclosed:	\$ _____	
I would like to volunteer _____			

PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 20, 2015

Make check payable to:

Area 60 Treasurer, P.O. Box 266, Monroeville, Pa. 15146

(write GAW on memo line of the check.)

Registration and meals are transferable BUT NOT refundable.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HOSPITALITY ROOM WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Tentative Schedule of Events

Registration

Friday, March 27 3:00PM - 8:30PM
Saturday, March 28 8:00AM - 1:00PM

Hospitality Room (#126) (Hosted by members of PENNSCYPAA)

Friday March 27 3:00 PM through Sunday March 29 12:00 noon

Alkathons

Hourly from midnight—5:00AM on Friday and Saturday nights

Presentations / Workshops

Friday, March 27 4:00PM—5:00PM
7:00PM—10:00PM

Saturday, March 28 9:00AM—12:00 noon
1:30PM—5:00PM
7:30PM—10:00PM

Sunday, March 29 8:00AM—8:45AM

Directions to the Comfort Inn, 699 Rodi Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

- From PA Turnpike, take Exit 57 and follow I-376 West to Exit 81. Turn right at the first traffic light. Follow signs to hotel on top of hill.
- From U.S. Route 22, follow I-376 Exit 81.
- From Business 22 West to 791 North (Rodi Road)



Two New A.A.'s Join GSO Staff

From Box 459 Spring 2014—News and Notes from the General Service Office of A.A.®

The General Service Office recently welcomed two new staff members: Racy J., of Brooklyn, New York, and Clement C., of St. Louis, Missouri.

Racy comes to G.S.O. with a background in education, where most recently she was teaching pre-K early education at a private school in New York City; Clement, also in the education field, comes to G.S.O. with a background in educational television, having worked as a producer, director and manager for the St. Louis Public Schools Television Station. Racy is currently serving on the Cooperation

With the Professional Community assignment and Clement is handling the Corrections assignment. A graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, Racy earned a B.F.A. in Acting, with an additional four years of voice, speech, movement and dance training at the Stella Adler Conservatory before shifting into the field of education once she came into the rooms and got sober in March 2002.

"My original background was that of an actor," says Racy. "For many years, during my alcoholism, before A.A., I had a long stretch where I didn't work,

and when I came into the rooms I had no skills. I started out doing odd jobs that people in A.A. would throw my way. When people say they learned everything they know in the rooms of A.A., I identify. Getting involved in local service helped Racy settle into her early sobriety. "When I started out doing service," she says, "it created a sense of usefulness and esteem that I couldn't get anyplace else. ▲"

Editor's Note: Racy J. will be the featured speaker at this year's Get Away Weekend, Saturday evening banquet.

22ND ANNUAL AA PA STATE CONVENTION

July 31, August 1, 2 of 2015

We Are Not a Glum Lot!

Holiday Inn East
4751 Lindle Rd., Harrisburg, PA 17111
www.aapastateconvention.com

800.637.4817

The purpose of the Pennsylvania State Convention is to enable members throughout the state to meet, to get to know each other, to work together to carry the A.A. message of recovery and to enjoy their mutual sobriety.

Registration

- Before July 15—\$22 and \$60 for Weekend Package
- After July 15—\$28 and \$65 for Weekend Package
- Room rate \$102 per night
- Scholarship requests must be made in advance by a third-party.

PA Hospitality Suite Co-Hosted at 2015 International Convention

Areas 59 (Eastern PA) and 60 (Western PA) will co-host a Hospitality Suite at the 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in Atlanta, GA July 2-5, 2015.

Both Area Committees are grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate. Please consider:

- **Making a monetary contribution.** Make checks to "E.P.G.S.A." and mark clearly in the memo section: "Hospitality Suite 2015" Mail to: Treasurer, E.P.G.S.A., P.O. Box 576, Unionville, PA 19375
- **Sign up to be a volunteer** at the hospitality suite in Atlanta. (*You should register for the convention on your own – go to www.aa.org for current details.*)
- **Help get the word out.** Announce this in your home group meetings, district meetings, Intergroup newsletters and web sites.

For more information contact:
dennikenni@gmail.com

Needed: Area 60 Corrections Coordinator

The Area still needs people to fill the Corrections Coordinator and Alternate positions. Together, they recruit AA contacts to bridge the gap between inside and outside meetings by introducing newly released alcoholics to local meetings; encourages AA members to participate in AA's Correctional Correspondence Program; and offers assistance in the work of those members who carry the message through AA meetings in correctional facilities. They can sometimes work closely with the Treatment/Special Needs Coordinator to provide a temporary contact upon release so that he/she will feel more at home in AA. Contact John R. Chairperson at chairperson@wpaarea60.org.

The Laugh's on Us

Submit a caption for this cartoon at:
www.aagrapevine.org



OR vote on last month's captions
and view previous winners!

DEFINITIONS RELATED TO NEWSLETTER THEME

Editor's Note: Studying the Big Book has usually involved looking up words in the Dictionary. Here are interesting definitions related to this edition of the *Seeds of Service*! Thanks to Past Delegate, Jan H. for this contribution.

DIVERSITY – Variety inclusion of diverse people (as people of different races, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences) in a group or organization.

DIVERSE – Differing from one another.

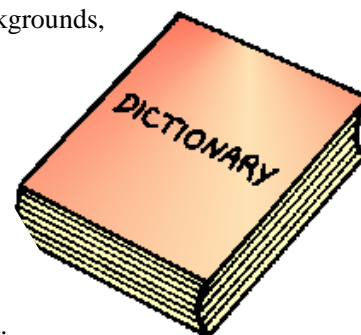
INCLUSIVE – Comprehending stated limits or extremes.

INCLUSION – The act of including.

INCLUDE – To take in or comprise as a part of a whole or group.

Synonyms of include: Comprehend, embrace, involve

- **Include** suggests the containment of something or someone as a constituent or component.
- **Comprehend** implies that something or someone comes within the scope of a statement or definition.
- **Embrace** implies the gathering of separate items or people within a whole.
- **Involve** suggests inclusion by virtue of the nature of the whole.



Hello Everybody!

Jody K., Area 60 Secretary
(Continued from page 1)

Now, when I sit in on or participate in the planning of an event, the question is invariably asked: "Is the facility accessible?" I've wondered if the Gift of Desperation that drove me to AA helped others in my district to consider these things.

I've seen others with special needs find their home in AA. Though I've lost touch with my friends at the Tuesday night Edgewood Speaker Meeting (*I lived nearby and part-time some years ago*), I won't forget the first time I attended. I was greeted by several members, and the second or third person who shook my hand then took my arm to trace his name on my skin.

I'm saddened to realize my tired old brain has not retained that name. It has, however, retained the impact he had on me. He was the Grapevine Representative for the group and signed his report from the podium, his hands moving through the air while his interpreter translated his signs into speech for the rest of us. I looked forward to seeing him each time I went back. During the speaker, the interpreter signed the whole lead to him. I can still sign, "Hello, everybody!" thanks to him.

I am struck by the beauty I experienced in these two instances. In the first, I saw people go above and beyond to ensure that I was included. Over the years, I've witnessed that spirit as the norm rather than the exception I thought they were making for me.

In the Edgewood group, I witnessed the Language of the Heart in a different way. It is a message and a solution for everyone who wants it. Our guidelines tell us that, "While there are no special A.A. members, many members have special needs." It is our responsibility to make sure that those who want it know that we'll help find a way to make sure they are able to get it. ▲

Diversity in AA: Our History of Inclusion

Teresa K., Area 60 Alternate Chairperson
(Continued from page 1)

when I completed a thorough 4th. My "anda" took care if it self, and I no longer felt separate from all of you. I felt that I had something to give, especially to the folks that come back in, and us "anda's" out there.

I also felt like I really belonged when I started into service. First just as a greeter in my home group, then on to GSR. It opened a whole other world to me. Frankly I didn't know anything about the Area or GSO. My first Getaway weekend really opened my eyes. I didn't know I had a voice or that my vote meant something. I had no clue about any of it.

And now I want to do more and give back as much as I can. I understand — that from GSO all the way up to the home group — that the service we give helps keeps the doors open for the next suffering alcoholic. The contributions help GSO give literature for free to new groups GSR's, DCM's etc... We list our selves as contacts in our directories to help the newcomers and travelers. I have thought about what inclusion means to me, and hope that I'm doing all I can to be inclusive. Some days are better than



others, especially when I let my Higher power handle my day.

For a long time I used to give away big books to newcomers only because I stole my first one, and it was part of my amends to AA. In California back in the eighties (when I first came in) they used to say "read the Big book and if you can't afford one steal it and make amends in your ninth step Huh!?" I understand why folks don't say that anymore, But I am diverting now.

My home group is a women's literature study. Occasionally, men attend; but we never ask them to leave (it breaks traditions, mainly 3rd and 5th). We also have women that bring their children; and every now and then even a dog or cat will attend — and we don't ask them to leave either ☺. On one occasion we had to ask a man to leave because it was effecting the safety of the group, but for no other reason. We welcome all who want recovery, sober or not. Besides isn't that what were here for — to help others and to carry the message of AA.

Do I embrace diversity? I sure hope so. To me it doesn't matter who or what you are — if you want sobriety and I can help I will be there. ▲

HEARD AT MEETINGS



HUMOR

If you want to quit drinking, you are going to have to quit drinking.

INSIGHTS

Honesty brought us into this program. Tolerance keeps us here.

SLIPS

AA is like a carousel. The closer you are to the middle, the harder it is to fall off.

THOUGHTS

The most important person in the room is the still-suffering alcoholic.

Inclusiveness- It's About More Than Diversity

Yvette N., Past Delegate Panel 63

I would be remiss if I didn't say just a few words of thanks to the fellowship of Area 60 for the immense privilege of serving as your Panel 63 Delegate to the General Service Conference for the past two years.

You have had a pivotal role in proving me wrong. You see I was sure I would never belong anywhere; in fact I felt like a stranger in my own family and alcohol provided the means for me to fit in since I was a young girl.

Alcoholics Anonymous has changed all that. Tradition Three assures that I am a member if I say I am, that *"our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. [] we may refuse none who wish to recover,"* not even *"beggars, tramps, asylum inmates, prisoners, queers, plain crackpots,"* and thank God, even fallen women!

Sometimes when I wander into one of my usual meetings I run into someone I know from another area and I jokingly say, *"Man, they'll let anybody in here."* Yes, Alcoholics Anonymous will let anybody in here. In fact you will be welcomed with open arms. All people are welcome.

Tradition Three developed in AA's formative years as a result of fear of anyone other than that hypothetical class of people we termed 'pure alcoholics.' Turns out *"these frightening people were to make astonishing recoveries and become our greatest WORKERS and intimate friends."* These troublesome ones *"oblige us to cultivate patience, tolerance, and humility."*

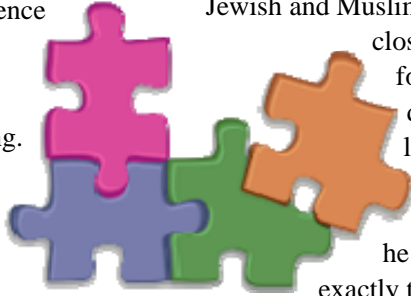
So what does diversity look like in the 21st century? Well look around,

look to your left and to your right, look in the mirror. He is young, he is old. He is rich or poor. He is gay or trans-gender. He is mentally ill. He is Mexican, French, Native American, Jewish and Muslim. I personally have close fellowship with folks that fit all these descriptions. He looks like you, and he looks like me, and no matter what he looks like, he is exactly the same as in the 20th century. Nothing's changed folks, he is sick and scared and alone. And welcome him we will! Why? Because we need him as much as he needs us.

Ok great, so I'm in, now let me take it a step further. When I attended my first Get Away Weekend it was the first year that Area 60 had implemented the familiar Mock Conference Committee format that we currently use. I was about three months sober. I registered and was told to select a packet with the information I would need to participate in the Saturday afternoon session. "Huh? Who me?," I thought. Well, yes me. It was then that I discovered through experience that not only am I a member, but that I am an equal member.

I sat in on one of the Committees — I honestly can't recall which one. What I do remember is the incredible sense of belonging, I was even asked to take some notes to report back — my first secretary position. Yes, I was wrong. Not only do I belong, but *"I am responsible..."* The rest, as they say, is history. ▲

WANTED—Articles for the next issue of the Seeds of Service on the theme "Safety and Respect – Practicing the Principles Begins in our Home Group. Deadline May 1, 2015.



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The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

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Newsletter Themes & Submission Dates: The SOS follows the General Service Conference annual theme. For 2015, this is "Celebrating 80 Years of Recovery, Unity and Service – The Foundation for Our Future."

Due	Theme:
05/01	Safety and Respect – Practicing the Principles Begins in our Home Group
3rd Q	Safeguarding our Traditions through the Evolution of Technology
4th Q	Inventory – Looking Back to Move Ahead

Website: There are a variety of resources for you and your group on the Area 60 website, including: back issues of the newsletter, flyers for Days of Sharing, the Area 60 calendar, pamphlets, service documentation, and more. Direct questions or suggestions the Website Coordinator at website@wpaarea60.org

DONATIONS TO AREA 60

Support from groups and individuals is always welcome and appreciated!
 Make check payable to:

AREA 60 TREASURER
 P.O. Box 266, Monroeville, PA 15146

2015 Calendar of Events

Area 60 meetings are held at the Comfort Inn, 699 Rodi Road Penn Hills, PA

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sunday, Jan 11	9:00 AM	Area 60 GAW Planning Meeting
Sunday, Jan 18	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Meeting	AREA 60 1ST QUARTERLY MEETING
Sunday, Feb 8	9:00 AM	Area 60 Officer Coordinator and GAW Planning Meeting
Feb. 20-22, 2015	Noon 2/20 Registration	24th North East Regional AA Service Assembly (NERAASA) Somerset, NJ
Sunday, Mar 15	9:00 AM	Area 60 GAW Planning Meeting
Mar 27 –28	Registration 3:00-8:30 PM Friday 8:00-1:00 PM Saturday	Area 60 Get Away Weekend
Sunday Mar 29	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Meeting	AREA 60 PRE-CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY
Sunday April 12	9:00 AM	Area 60 Officer Coordinator Meeting
April 19-25	All Week	General Service Conference New York, NY
Sunday, May 17	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Meeting	AREA 60 2ND QUARTERLY MEETING
May 29-31	All Day	Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) Albany, NY
June 7, 2015	9:00 AM	Area 60 Officer Coordinator Meeting
June 28	8:30 AM - Registration 9:00 AM - Workshop 10:15 AM - Meeting	2ND QUARTERLY MEETING/ Post-Conference Assembly Comfort Inn, Penn Hills
July 2-5, 2015		2015 International AA Convention Atlanta, Georgia

Seeds of Service. The WPA Area 60 newsletter is published quarterly by the Area Committee. It is for A. A. members only. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily that of the Area Committee or AA as a whole. The newsletter is a useful reference for GSRs reports.

Newsletter Distribution. Paper copies are distributed to DCM's at each quarterly meeting for redistribution to A.A. groups through their GSRs. A digital copy (PDF) of the newsletter is available at www.wpaarea60.org; and *will also be sent to DCMs and GSRs, if the Registrar has a correct email address.*

Newsletter Submission Guidelines. Suggested length is 500 words or less. Material should be generally relevant to the theme, and may be edited for clarity and length. All material submitted on time is reviewed, selected by topic and appears on a space available basis. The newsletter does not publish song lyrics, tributes to individuals, prayers, plays, or anything unrelated to AA or that violates the principles of AA. Please include first name/last initial, home group and district. Submissions may be emailed to newsletter@wpaarea60.org.