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Spring 2017

Seeds of Service

The WPA Area 60 newsletter is published quarterly by the Area Committee. It is for AA members only. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily that of the Area Committee or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

We hope *Seeds of Service* will be a useful reference for GSR reports.

Distribution

Paper copies are distributed to DCMs at each quarterly meeting for redistribution to AA groups through their GSRs. A PDF copy of the newsletter is available at www.wpaarea60.org. It can also be sent electronically to DCMs and GSRs, if the Area Registrar has a correct email address.

Write for SoS

The 2017 theme for the General Service Conference is "Supporting Our Future."

Summer 2017 (deadline 7/20)
"I Am Responsible..."

Fall 2017 (deadline 11/18)
"Self-Support & the Future of AA"

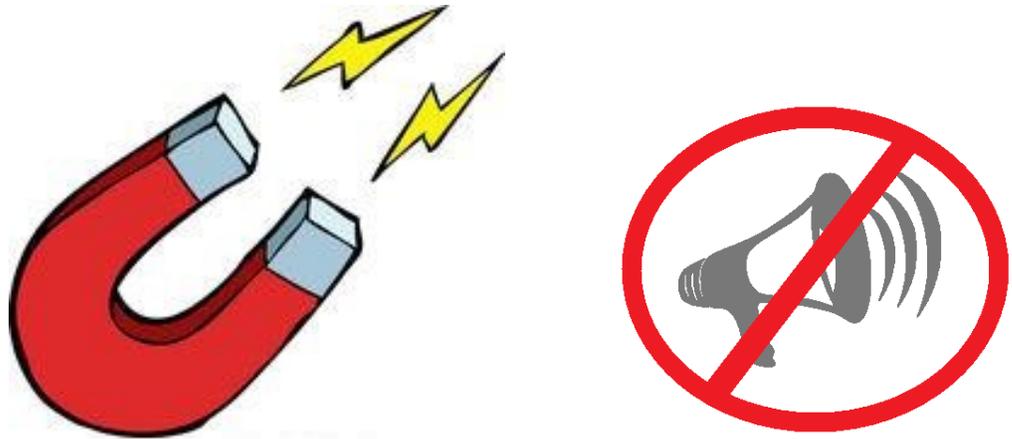
Submission Guidelines

Suggested length is 150 to 350 words. 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 may appear, based on available space. 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 your first name and last initial, district, and home group.

Submissions may be emailed to newsletter@wpaarea60.org.

ATTRACTION, NOT PROMOTION



Don't Talk — *Do!*

Jean M, Area 60 Past Delegate, Panel 61

For me, service personifies "attraction rather than promotion." Or as I like to put it: "don't talk – *do!*" And when I do, it is my responsibility to do the very best that I can.

How do I serve? I serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous by showing up at my home group faithfully (and a little early), so that I can welcome others. I offer to get a cup of coffee for the newcomer. I pass the cookies. I participate in the discussion. I put something (maybe a little extra) in the basket. I serve by being willing and available.

I also serve by practicing (to the best of my ability) these principles in all my affairs. I am mindful that the Traditions are the glue that holds us together. I remember that not only might I be "the only Big Book that someone reads," but that I also might be the only *Service Manual* that someone reads!

I have had the honor and privilege of not just serving at the group, district, and area levels, but also AA as a whole as the Panel 61 Delegate for Area 60.

***Service is my gift back to AA for
the sobriety that I was so freely given.***

Can Efforts to Attract Become Promotion?

Chad U, Area 60 Newsletter Editor

When I apply for a job, I wear a suit. When I'm speaking to my elders, I tone down my profanity. When I go on a date with someone new, I keep an eye on my table-manners and attempt to be witty. All these things are to help me be more attractive to the other person. In essence, these efforts slide into presenting myself as a good candidate, respectful person, or fascinating and sophisticated dude.

However, when do efforts to be as attractive as possible become "try-hard" and desperate – or worse, too "cool" and aloof? When does attention to presentation become promotion?

At some meetings I attend (possibly even including my home group, at times!) we make great efforts to welcome the newcomer. As crazy as it sounds, it's possible we overdo it. Indeed, it often seems like we drunks are scared to drive other drunks out of the rooms by "God-talk"¹ or by calling out flagrant bad behavior or violations of the group's format/conscience.

Sometimes, we're so desperate to be liked (as a group), *we put up with conduct in a meeting that we wouldn't elsewhere*², by people who don't care to be there, on the off-chance that a message will be heard during the meeting... by someone involved in a side-conversation, texting on their cellphone, or any number of other shenanigans. Worse is when our own defects engage, especially of bragging pride and know-it-all-ism, speaking as if from the pulpit or the soapbox to the poor, ignorant fools in the discussion.

Like most issues in my sobriety, it seems like the best ideas for me are to keep it on myself, and to seek a balance. I go back to "How It Works" (page 58): "if you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it..."

Therefore, I should focus more on living by spiritual principles (and thus attracting the drunk who's decided to get sober), and worry less about promoting AA to an undecided, uninterested malingerer.

¹ Big Book, page 68, para 3, and page 77, para 2.

² "...we don't crawl before anyone," page 83.

My NERAASA Experience

Jon C, Area 60 Alt Chair

I did not know what to expect from NERAASA. I had heard members of Area 60 talk about it before, but I figured that was for these "service junkies" who eat, sleep, and breathe the *Service Manual*. Boy, was I in for a surprise.

The whole weekend was very busy with different panels and roundtables, covering different topics for this year's General Service Conference (much like we did at our Get-Away Weekend). I attended the chairperson's roundtable, and heard ideas from area chairs all over the northeast region. Hopefully, some of them could help Area 60 make changes to run more efficiently and effectively in making sure that *your voice is heard*. We serve our members: **you**.

I often get trapped in an "AA bubble," where it's easy to assume most meetings are like the ones I attend. Same with districts and areas. Speaking to members of AA from the entire northeast region shattered that worldview.

While many of us experience a lot of the same problems, fears, and concerns, the way we deal with them can be entirely different. Sometimes I think the only correct way to do something is the way I have been doing it. It was really cool to hear different ideas and approaches the problems that we all experience. *Safety in AA*: here try this. *Bleeding deacons* – here is what we have done that we found to be effective. In the same way that a roundup or convention passes along their experience with the Steps, attendees of service assemblies pass along their experience with *service*.

The one thing that really stood out to me at NERAASA was that all members – young and old, newcomers and longtimers, and even members who didn't speak English – all had one thing in common: AA means a lot to them.

I think of NERAASA as a gathering of people passionate about preserving this wonderful God-given program and fellowship for the next generation.



Rename That Get-Away

Margie S, Area 60 Alternate Delegate, Panel 67

Any Area 60 AA who has ever had the privilege of serving as a GSR, DCM, or Coordinator knows the agony of trying to get funded to attend the Getaway Weekend: “The Struggle is Real...”

Many of us have heard the same old lines over the years, sometimes from the “bleeding deacon,” sometimes from the “elder statesman,” and more often than not from *everyone*. “Why should we pay for you to go away to a hotel and hang out in the hot tub for the weekend?”

All kidding aside, there are obviously districts (and home groups) unable to pay to send someone for the full weekend, or even to subsidize them. That is totally understood. But what of those districts and groups that *can*, but *don't* – or *won't*?

Maybe a new name will help these groups and districts to be able to collect or disburse the necessary funds to help. In an effort to foster more understanding of what the Get-Away Weekend is really about – general service in AA – the Area 60 Officers and Coordinators, after listening to many suggestions from you, have decided it is time for a new name.

If you would like to make a suggestion, please send it to altdelegate@wpaarea60.org, or you may put it in the container labeled “Re-Name that Get-Away,” which will be available at area events and Days of Sharing throughout the summer.

We already had some suggestions that were very good and also some which were submitted in a light-hearted manner (many to cheer me up after the passing of my service sponsor); in that vein, here are a few names *not* to suggest:

- Hot Tub Hoedown
- No Comfort at the Comfort Inn Weekend
- GSR-A-GO-GO

One thing I can truly say, “We are not a glum lot.”

Origin of the Ask-It-Basket

When the 2nd General Service Conference was preparing for a Question & Answer Session, Dennis Manders, GSO's nonalcoholic bookkeeper at the time, was sent out to find a “box with a slit in the top.”

Dennis, who would eventually serve as GSO controller for many years, came back with a fishing creel he had spied in the window of Abercrombie & Fitch.

Thus, it became known as the “Ask-it-Basket” and was used at many future Conferences.

– 2010 Final Report of the 60th General Service Conference, p. 19



I need to be in the middle of the triangle so if I fall, I fall into one of the corners – **recovery, unity, or service.**

– Jon M, Area 60 Webservant

It's Not All About Me: Anonymity Online

Jon M, Area 60 Web Coordinator

Abiding by the 11th Tradition becomes increasingly important – and challenging! – in the modern age. For any of us to appear in any way to represent AA publicly fails to protect our legacy. Technological progress does not have to come at the expense of protection.

Here is the misconception: “when we enter AA, many of us feared what others would think of our membership, and as that fear fades, it seems our anonymity can be spent online freely; it is ours, after all.” The 11th tradition in this context is meant not to protect *me* so much as to protect AA *from me*.

With Facebook and other public social media, we see people posting their anniversary, a group's upcoming event, or on a public forum carrying over into affiliation with AA. These are common daily examples of progress coming before protection.

Why shouldn't I post my anniversary and give thanks to AA? Isn't that a positive endorsement? That's the problem – *it is*. An *endorsement* is a direct synonym for *promotion*, and violates the 11th Tradition. As a result, I unwittingly become a spokesperson for AA as a whole. This can lead to people not just seeing my joy at celebrating my sober time, but also seeing a post I wrote endorsing/disparaging a political figure or a religious belief, or any number of images that (while often hilarious) are certainly not without potential controversy... and associating my opinions with AA's opinions on these outside issues can possibly violate Traditions 6 and 10 as well.

Our anonymity is protection we must provide for others here now, and for those still to come.

A vast communication net now covers the earth, even to its remotest reaches. Granting all its huge public benefits, this limitless world forum is nevertheless a hunting ground for all those who would seek money, acclaim, and power at the expense of society in general. Here the forces of good and evil are locked in struggle. All that is shoddy and destructive contests all that is best.

Therefore nothing can matter more to the future welfare of AA than the manner in which we use this colossus of communication. Used unselfishly and well, the results can surpass our present imagination. Should we handle this great instrument badly, we shall be shattered by the ego demands of our own people – often with the best of intention on their part. Against all this, the sacrificial spirit of AA's anonymity at the top public level is literally our shield and our buckler. Here again we must be confident that love of AA, and of God, will always carry the day.

– Bill W, “Freedom Under God”

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HELP CARRY THE MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS IN NEED

SPONSOR ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS TO GRAPEVINE OR LA VIÑA FOR:

- Correctional and Treatment facilities
- Nursing homes
- Homebound members
- Doctor's offices
- Libraries
- and more

12 STEP WORK IN ACTION!
AA Districts, Groups and individual members can all help spread the message of hope and recovery.

SUPPORT YOUR GRAPEVINE AND LA VIÑA
The international Journals of Alcoholics Anonymous.
To see an example of a Grapevine Area Chair's plan of action to get these magazines into jails, homes and other facilities, please visit our website: www.aagrapevine.org/specialdelivery. You will find useful tips and fliers for downloading.

I'm Attracted...

Gary L, SCI Fayette

I'm attracted to AA for a simple reason: a better life.

I have friends and a family member who are recovering alcoholics with many years of sobriety between them. The main reason for their success is Alcoholics Anonymous. They're happy and they live a good life – a way of life I'm attracted to.

I'm attracted to an honest life, not the life full of selfishness and lies I was living when drinking. I'm attracted to a life free from the bondage of addiction; a life free of guilt, anger, and sadness; a life free of resentments. I'm looking at myself in the mirror, and accepting life on life's terms.

I'm attracted to a life free of jails, hospitals, rehabs, and psych wards. I'm attracted to living a sane life, not repeating the same things over and over, living in total insanity. I'm attracted to a life with purpose and serenity. I'm attracted to helping others struggling with addiction. I'm attracted to the fellowship of AA and to a life centered around family and friends, peace of mind, and self-respect, being happy with the person I see in the mirror.

AA shows me that I can find a way to live without wanting a drink.

GSC 2017 Bullet Points

For those AAs who've heard our current Delegate (John K, Panel 67) speak at the Post-Conference Assembly or another event this summer, here's a quick bullet-point list of topics for when you need a reminder to let your groups know some of what was discussed this year in New York:

- The **theme** for the 2018 General Service Conference will be: *AA – A Solution for All Generations.*
- The **presentation/discussion topics** for the 2018 General Service Conference will be:
 1. *Today's Alcoholic: Inclusion, Not Exclusion*
 2. *Participation in All of AA – Is My Triangle Balanced?*
 3. *A.A. Technology: Where Innovation Meets The Traditions*
 4. *Attraction not Promotion: A.A.'s Relation to the World*
 5. *Group Conscience: The Guiding Force*
- **Retired the pamphlet** "Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W."
- In the spirit of inclusiveness, the General Service Office will strive to **provide Conference background materials in English** (by February 15) **and Spanish and French** (by the first week in March), beginning with the 68th General Service Conference.

SoS will carry a summary article of John's Conference Report in a later issue.

Stay tuned!



What I Was Like = Experience
What Happened = Strength
What I Am Like Now = Hope



Attraction, Not Promotion

Scott A, SCI Fayette

When I think of attraction, not promotion, I can see that was what kept bringing me back to AA early on. It was the people living that clean life without alcohol, who said I could live as they live, too. There are no stipulations: only my choice to join them living sober.

I was attracted to what they were doing and how they achieved it. They worked the 12 Steps and lived by the 12 Traditions of AA, which have been getting alcoholics sober for over 80 years. I started out listening to guys with good clean time, and asked how I could do it. I was attracted to what they had, and they were not pushing anything down my throat.

I started to work the Steps and live the Traditions. I continued to live that way, and people saw what I had. I started to sponsor people: they were attracted to how I managed to turn my life around. I was not promoting AA – I was living it, and they thought I was doing well.

Not everyone in AA is successful, but that is by their choice. I continue to make the choice to stay clean and stay involved. We can't force people to change, or to come to meetings. That is something they need to do on their own. I feel that willingness, open-mindedness, and honest are musts. If I lie about something very small, I'll never make any progress. It is progress and not perfection I seek.

Bottom line: I'm attracted to people living a sober life: they live it, not promote it.

Overheard at GAW 2017

AA is dynamic – you can't just say something one time, and it'll stay that way. It's a living spiritual entity undergoing growth.

– Dr. Peter Luongo, Class A Trustee, "Communication & Cooperation"

How do we reach the African-American community at large? First, I can honestly tell you as a black person, if I was not ordered by the courts, rehab, or some type of intervention, I would not be here. I feel safe in saying that most blacks feel the same concerning any means of recovery.

We have to go into the communities where blacks are at. Are we going to let fear hold us back from reaching out to the African-American alcoholic? Or will we let that fear continue to hold us back? Read page 102 in the chapter "Working with Others."

– Ed S, District 23 DCM, "Diversity – Outreach & Attraction" panel

Anonymity is not a cloak protecting criminal or inappropriate behavior.

– Jill W (quoting SMF-209, "Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare"), District 11, Yinzer Group, "Safety: An Important Consideration" panel

How do you learn about a Tradition? Break it.

– Susan G, Area 60 Alt Literature Coordinator, "Is Your Voice Heard?" panel

The #1 ingredient for attraction is enthusiasm.

– Bob W, Class B Trustee-at-Large US, "DCM Roundtable"

When you have your next resentment, instead of buying a new coffeepot, clean out the one you have and call your sponsor.

– Curt C, Area 59 Treasurer, "Spirituality & Money" panel

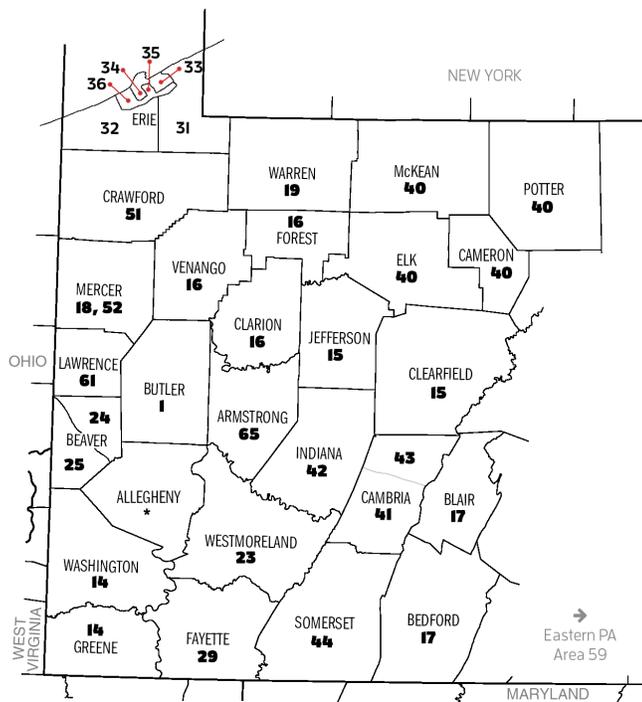
If you don't choose sometime, sometimes stuff chooses you.

– Dr. Peter Luongo, Class A Trustee, "Communication & Cooperation"

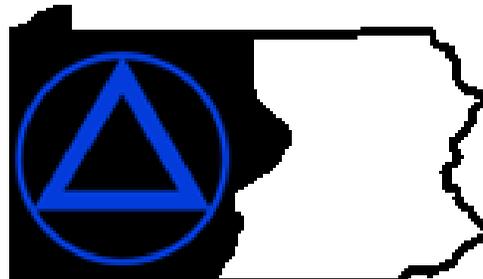


Getaway Weekend Name That Service Weekend!!!

An annual service workshop held in the spring to discuss General Service Conference-related Issues and concerns affecting AA as a whole, as well as pertinent aspects of our **Three Legacies (Recovery, Unity, Service)**.



* Allegheny County: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 70, 71



New Area 60 Web Calendar

Our updated website has an updated online calendar, which lists service events (General Service Conference, Get-Away Weekend, assemblies, etc.) in **green**; Area 60-sponsored events (quarterly meetings, Days of Sharing, etc.) in **blue**, and events of interest to AAs (district-level events, recovery community events, etc.) in **red**.

Check it out at:

<https://www.wpaarea60.org/calendar/>

Two Types of Area Meetings

1. **Quarterly Meeting:** Decides area business. DCMs, Area Officers & Coordinators, past Delegates vote.
2. **Area Assembly:** Elects officers, provides pre-Conference group conscience, hears the Delegate's post-Conference report. GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers & Coordinators, past Delegates vote.

Rules of Order at Area 60 Meetings

- Items for consideration are put on the agenda.
- Items are posed to the meeting in the form of a motion.
- All motions require a second.
- Motions can be amended, tabled, or moved to a vote.
- A vote is taken and the results are announced. The minority vote is allowed to voice its opinion.
- If a member of the majority (those who "won") wishes to change his or her vote, a second vote is held on the motion.
- The result of the second vote stands and the meeting moves to the next item for consideration.

What's the Point of Order?

- ◆ To ensure that all voices that wish to be heard are heard.
- ◆ To ensure that no one voice dominates all others.
- ◆ To ensure that everyone gets to speak once before another speaks twice.
- ◆ To ensure that everyone understands the content of the vote.
- ◆ To ensure that it is clear what actions were taken.
- ◆ To ensure a thorough record of the actions taken.

Motions requiring substantial unanimity of the meeting require a two-third majority for approval. In some cases, the minority opinion (the people who "lost" the vote) may be larger than 50% of the vote.

ALL members of the Fellowship are welcome at meetings and assemblies. GSRs are especially encouraged to attend even when they do not have a vote. **Every GSR is potentially a future DCM.**

2017 Calendar of Events

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

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Jun 2-4	All Weekend	NERF
Sunday, Jun 11	9 am	Officers/Coordinators Meeting GAW Wrap-Up
Sunday, Jun 25	8:30 am Registration 9 am Workshop 10:15 am Meeting	Post-Conference Assembly
Sunday, Jul 9	9 am	Officers/Coordinators Meeting
Sunday, Aug 13	8:30 am Registration 9 am Workshop 10:15 am Meeting	3rd Quarterly Meeting GREENSBURG, Ramada Inn, 100 Ramada Drive
Sunday, Sept 17	9 am	Officers/Coordinators Meeting
Sunday, Oct 15	8:30 am Registration 9 am Workshop 10:15 am Meeting	Fall Assembly
Sunday, Nov 12	9 am	Officers/Coordinators Meeting GAW(?) Planning Meeting
Sunday, Dec 10	8:30 am Registration 9 am Workshop 10:15 am Meeting	4th Quarterly Meeting
Sunday, Dec 17	9 am	Officers/Coordinators Meeting

See All Those _____s to the Right?

Several service opportunities are available throughout Western PA Area 60.

Area Committee members, DCMs, and GSRs are welcome to help **spread the word** to fill open, *needed* positions in our service structure, or to **volunteer** to serve themselves.

For more information on any open position, please feel free to contact secretary@wpaarea60.org or newsletter@wpaarea60.org.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AREA 60

ELECTED OFFICERS:

Delegate: John K delegate@wpaarea60.org
Alt Delegate: Margie S altdelegate@wpaarea60.org
Chairperson: Jody K chairperson@wpaarea60.org
Alt Chair: Jon C altchairperson@wpaarea60.org
Secretary: Jane R secretary@wpaarea60.org
Treasurer: Shelley S treasurer@wpaarea60.org

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AREA 60 WEBSITE

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

DONATIONS TO AREA 60

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

Area 60 Treasurer
P.O. Box 1496
Washington, PA 15301