

AREA 69 NEWS & NOTES

POST CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY MAY 19-21, 2017

VOLUME 2

“WHY DO WE NEED A CONFERENCE?”

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the 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 ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for 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 that brought us back to life.

“We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to

ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing overintegration. 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 ensure 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 ensure that the doors of the 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 ensure 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.”

(Reprinted from The A.A. Service Manual, S20, with permission of A.A. World Services)

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Dear Friends, My name is Renae and I'm an alcoholic. So far, this year has been very exciting and extremely busy - not only at our General Service Office (GSO) in New York - but also here within our local Area 69 (Utah) General Service structure. We began our yearlong General Service Conference (GSC) process at the Area 69 February Committee Meeting where the 67th GSC Final Agenda Items for Fellowship-wide discussion were introduced to the District Committee Members (DCM's) and to the group GSR's (General Service Representatives).

Next came the Area 69 Pre-Conference Assembly held in early April where the full Assembly body (all GSR's, DCM's, Area 69 Standing Committee Chairs, Area Officers, and other interested A.A.s) discussed and shared the collective group conscience of the Utah A.A. Fellowship with the Area 69 Delegate. The Delegate then carries our A.A. voice to the annual General Service Conference held in April in New York. This is when and where the “business” of Alcoholics Anonymous is conducted through our Conference Delegates, the Trustees and Directors of our General Service Board and Corporate Boards, and a number of GSO staff members. The Agenda Items are thoroughly discussed and important decisions are made concerning vital issues to A.A.

(Continued Page 4)

My name is Evan, I am an alcoholic. I wanted to share with you my experience at the Area 69 Pre-Conference Assembly. My experience was unexpected. April 7, Friday evening, I arrived at the hotel. I checked in with Devin C., the Area 69 Registrar - cool guy, and was assigned to work with corrections in a round table fashion. Imagine being assigned to corrections, I had only been in Jail 17 times. We went over the items on the 67th General Service Conference Agenda with John W., the Area 69 Corrections chair. We concluded the evening with the "Responsibility Declaration."

Saturday, April 8th, we began the day with a moment of silence. Our Area Secretary Kurt J., read the minutes from the February Committee Meeting; a financial report by Kristen D., Area 69 Treasurer; then - roll call. This is when I realized the important significance of my presence. To represent my home group and voice their opinion, was an honor. I had a name tag - it was official. Never in my life has anyone asked me to represent any group. I was able to comment on all five of

the agenda items that our group discussed. Information is so important. We do have a voice and it needs to be heard. That day we spoke about Unity, Safety in meetings, Fellowship, Love and Tolerance, the importance of the 7th Tradition, service at any level, working with newcomers and helping them feel welcome. We snuck in Motions to be considered and voted on a few times. The group went through all Agenda items and listened to all opinions without any arguments - it was unreal. I learned how the voting process worked at the group level. I was able to acquire a service sponsor, who explained to me some of the terms and processes we were going through. After dinner we re-convened and listen to a guest speaker. The evening ended with the "Responsibility Declaration".

Sunday, April 9, Matt D., Alternate Delegate, and Devin C., led a GSR school. They reviewed duties, obligations and the importance of the GSR position. We had a sobriety countdown and there was close to a thousand years of sobriety in the room...almost an ice age. Next, our guest

speaker Devin C., shared his experience, strength, and hope. Devin seemed very passionate about the program of alcoholics anonymous. Then the "Ask it Basket", we asked the board questions about either the program or sobriety. It was all from the Heart. We ended the day before noon with the "Responsibility Declaration" once again.

The experience was unexpected - there wasn't a moment where I was uncomfortable, bored, or irritated. It was simple, more was revealed to me, I love service. The opportunity my group provided was just what my program needed...crazy how that works. Rad!!

Sincerely,

Evan J.

District 10 Alt. GSR

Central Office Liaison

"Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect: "Our leaders do not drive by mandate: they lead by example." In effect, we are saying to them, act for us, but don't boss us..."

Please visit our website for more information
about Alcoholics Anonymous in Utah at

www.utahaa.org

Service in Sobriety

By Shilo P.

The three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous--Unity, Service, and Recovery--work in equal conjunction with one another to yield a sustainable program of sobriety. I often liken those legacies to mind, body, and spirit. If my mental, physical, and spiritual well being are not all intact, then my life is not as fulfilling as I prefer it to be. Similarly, the efficacy of Alcoholics Anonymous rests upon each legacy. Being of service to my fellow alcoholics is a tenet of the program my sponsor impressed upon me early in my sobriety. Upon that foundation, I have since become involved with general service, as the GSR of my home group, South Enders.

I recently had the privilege of representing the South Enders group at the pre-conference assembly in Price, Utah, which is the experience I would like to share with you in this letter. As a young person in recovery, I certainly had my reservations as to whether my voice would be taken seriously amid dozens of others who have far more time in the program. After all, there was a collective 994 years and 10 months of sobriety among those of us in attendance. Fortunately--and perhaps slightly to my surprise--my voice

was no more and no less important than that of any other alcoholic. To be sure, our delegate made it a point to recognize and welcome those of us who were new to general service.

The most significant observation I made over that weekend in Price is that Alcoholics Anonymous truly is democracy in its purest form. Consequently, change of any kind is painstakingly slow, as it should be, and a group conscience vote is taken at every stage of the process. Our service structure is not about placating any individual member at the expense of the collective majority. Instead, Alcoholics Anonymous is built around the ultimate goal of carrying our message of recovery to as many still suffering alcoholics as possible. It is also an institution that works from the bottom up, not the top down. In other words, our individual members are the chief executive officers.

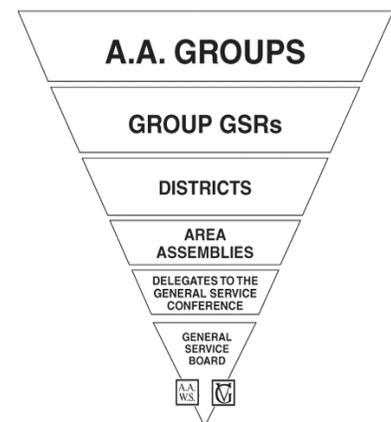
At the risk of sounding trite, being of service at the pre-conference assembly enriched my recovery far more than any contribution I made by simply attending. I can say without question or reservation that Alcoholics Anonymous has a bright future. There is, indeed, a solution to be found in our program. A robust spiritual thread that I cannot describe

other than to say it is something I feel, binds us together as alcoholics in general service. Undoubtedly guided by a higher power, we can disagree--sometimes with visceral differences of opinion--and at the end of the day do what is best for the greatest good. Alone, I get drunk; together, in service, we stay sober.

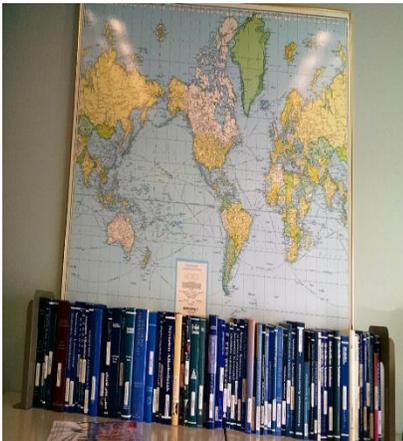
Shilo P.

District 10 GSR

STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE
(U.S. and Canada)



“Our Twelfth Step — carrying the message — is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.” (from A.A.'s Legacy of Service by Bill W.)



(Editor's Comments Continued)

A few weeks following the closed General Service Conference (GSC) in NY, Area 69 reconvenes in May for our Post Conference Assembly where the main purpose is for the Area Delegate to give a full report back on what happened at the GSC. The decisions that were made through deliberation and vote, are known as **"Conference Advisory Actions"**. Agenda items that the Conference decided not to move forward on, are known as **"No Action Taken"** items. Various solutions, ideas, and Conference Committee suggestions that are intended to improve/ support the furtherance/thoroughness of any of the Agenda Items that are presented to the Conference Body, are called **"Additional Committee Considerations"**.

Finally, discussions of any Agenda Items that any Conference Member(s) felt were not fully vetted through the committee system, or even wholly new motions not related to any agenda item -may be brought forth to the Conference Body for possible discussion *after all* the Conference Committees have presented, conducted and concluded in the formal business of the full Conference agenda--- these are known as **"Floor Actions"**.

Following the Post Conference Assembly, the Delegate generally shares a short summary report back of the GSC at the Area 69 District's GSR meetings held throughout the state, providing more opportunity for GSR's to receive this important information to pass on to their groups.

UPCOMING AREA 69 SERVICE EVENT

Area 69's

Bridging

The Gap

Workshop

Hosted by District 11

Come join us for an afternoon full of great discussions and information about Bridging the Gap!

Bridging the Gap is a program through Alcoholics Anonymous to help people leaving a correctional or treatment facility become acquainted with A.A. and attend A.A. meetings in their hometown after they are released. It is an amazing opportunity to pass on the message that has saved our lives.

When: Saturday, June 10th 2017

Where: Clearfield Community Church. Address: 525 E 200 S Clearfield, UT 84015

Time: 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Hotel	Phone Number	Room Type	Room Rate
Fairfield Inn	801-444-1600	Double Queen	\$99.00
LaQuinta Inn	801-776-6700	Double Queen	\$109.00
Best Western	801-896-0271	Double Queen	\$119.00

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact:

Area 69 Corrections Chair

John W. 435-632-0364

Area 69 Treatment Chair

Doug R. 801-419-6527

Hello, my name is Mickey

and I am an alcoholic. I want to share some thoughts I have had recently about service in A.A. and particularly about the Utah Area.

I have been involved in Area Service for over twenty years now, and have seen many changes. I know that change is a part of life and is not necessarily good or bad. This past weekend I attended the Area Pre-Conference Assembly in Price and was excited about some things that happened.

Each year at this Assembly we gather as an Area to discuss the General Conference agenda items, and let our Delegate know how we as an Area think and feel about these matters. The way in which we do this has changed through the years. The Area has for some time now sought to mirror the conference committee structure. This does seem to have resulted in a better understanding of how the conference functions and an effective way to address the agenda items.

One of the major concerns for some of us has been the dwindling number of GSR's attending our assemblies. I was very encouraged by the turnout for this assembly and hope it is indicative of a positive trend within our area. Please share in your groups

and meetings what a positive experience attending an assembly can be.

It appears that the recent re-districting which occurred in the area has had a positive effect on both of the districts involved. I heard enthusiasm expressed by members of both of the districts which have joined and look forward to seeing the newly merged district continue to participate in the service structure.

Another positive item was the decision to change our next Assembly to a date and place where we are once again cooperating with Al-Anon Family Groups. Many of us have spouses or other family members who participate the Al-Anon and in the past we often met the same dates and places, with our family members joining us for dinner and a meeting on Saturday. This can encourage participation in both groups (and make it more economically feasible for both husband and wife to serve in their respective service structures).

I came away from the Assembly with renewed enthusiasm and gratitude. This was my first Area Assembly since the death of my husband. Jim and I were both involved in service to the Utah Area for a number of years, and this was an emotional weekend. I deeply appreciate

the kindness and understanding that was shared with me. Thank you to all of the members of the Utah Area for this gift of the spirit.

Mickey H., Past Delegate
Area 69, Panel 49

**2017 General Service Conference
Presentation/Workshop
Topics**

Growth:

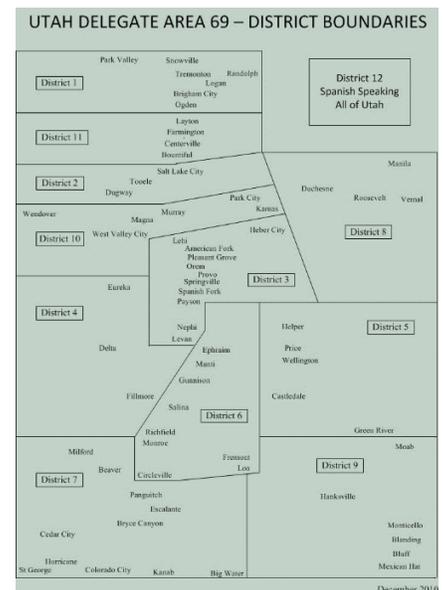
1. Diversity-Outreach and Attraction
2. Safety-An Important Consideration
3. Communication-Today and Tomorrow

Participation:

1. Fellowship vs. Membership
2. Leadership: "I am Responsible..."
3. Is Your Voice Heard?

Contributions:

1. Spirituality and Money
2. Fully Self-Supporting
3. Apathy and Power of the Purse



**2016 AREA 69 RE-DISTRICTING
COMBINED DISTRICTS 4 AND 6
(NOT SHOWN ON MAP)**

WHAT'S YOUR "PERSPECTIVE" ON GENERAL SERVICE?"

"Now these are commonplace observations on drinkers we hear all the time. Back of them is a world of ignorance and misunderstanding. We see that these expressions refer to people whose reactions are very different from ours." -Alcoholics Anonymous, Chapter 2, P. 20.

"It has been well said that 'almost the only scoffers at prayer are those who never tried it enough.'" -Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions P. 96

Like a non-drinker's observations on alcoholics, there is much misunderstanding among non-participants about AA General Service, its purpose, structure and benefits to AA, the still suffering alcoholic and the individual participant in AA General Service. Like the experience noted in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, a few bad experiences in General Service should not color your whole perception of General Service. Neither should you let others sour your perceptions or you sour others' perceptions based on a few bad experiences. I do not think those for whom General Service holds no benefit should be influencing others who may find it beneficial.

I have heard the criticisms that all that happens in General Service is arguing about, and re-hashing the same issues over and over again. I have heard that nothing really gets accomplished and that the politics sours the experience. I have heard any number of criticisms of service in general. General Service is not "pink cloud" land and I am not blind to the real challenges that exist in serving. It can be frustrating, challenging, disheartening and maddening at times. Just like sobriety. Just like life. I'd rather be living sober though, and I'd rather be serving than not. Please allow me to share my perspective with you

"General Service gives me the opportunity to help solve problems and learn to cooperate with people who may think and behave very differently from me."

I will concede to you that I have seen issues brought up more than once at the District, Area and GSO level. I have also seen those issues addressed by those who are hearing about the issue for the first time. They are being addressed by people with, perhaps, a different world view that the people that looked at

the issue in the past. Rather than sit there and think; "Here we go again," perhaps I should be listening to what the newcomer to General Service has to say about the subject. I may hear something I hadn't thought of. That certainly happens to me in sharing meetings. None of us have all of the answers. Besides, we have a concept in AA that deals with the right of participation. I think it is vital that members are given the opportunity to have their say on matters that are important to AA as a whole. Eventually, matters are decided and acted upon. A new pamphlet is produced or changed to address a new demographic or a changing world view. A new version of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* is approved for publication which brings AA's message to alcoholics previously unserved. Matters are decided upon concerning the finances of the Group, District, Area, or *Alcoholics Anonymous World Services*. Things do get accomplished; *"sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly"*. No one can say that, before an action is taken, that everyone with an interest has not had an opportunity to weigh in or that an issue was not thoroughly vetted.

Let me turn to the issue of politics and interpersonal relationships in General

Service. In my program, I practice progress, not perfection. I am constantly facing challenges and growing from learning how to deal with those challenges in an emotionally mature and emotionally sober manner. My experience of growing did not stop when I stopped drinking. I make mistakes and lose sight of the important things in my life in order to win a worthless argument. I sometimes try to run the show. I can be self-centered, vain, petty and obnoxious. I'm human and I screw up. When I was drinking, I did not grow from the experiences. I held resentments and wrote off my own bad behavior to others. Now, I can recover from those experiences and, hopefully, become a better person from the experience. That is my goal.

I serve with many people in General Service who, apart from our common problem and solution, are a very diverse group; "people who would not normally mix." I believe all of them want to do a good job and be helpful. I do not believe they would be a part of General Service otherwise; however, as individuals we often have very different ideas of how to accomplish the same goal. This leads to what we refer to in AA parlance as "loving discussions." Yes, we discuss, cajole, argue and

lobby in an effort to get our point across. Saint Francis may entreat us to try to understand rather than be understood but we are humans in General Service and we will make mistakes. We are not saints. At the end of the day, I think it is important that we treat each other with respect and that does not always happen either. If anything, I would like to see more respect for each other. I believe harshly criticizing others whose intentions are good does little to attract others to serve. It does no good, though, to throw up my hands, say "I don't like this" and walk away without trying to be an agent of that change.

Being in General Service gives me a chance to participate and feel a "part of." That is something that, for years of drinking, I never did. I was never a "joiner" and I never felt like I belonged anywhere. It allows me to be a part of an amazing fellowship that exists for the sole purpose of helping alcoholics solve the drink problem and give to others what I have been given.

Through General Service, I have formed and maintained meaningful and lasting friendships. I get to regularly meet people throughout our area and our region. I get to be exposed to any number of points of view on a number of

subjects. Participation in General Service gives me the opportunity to help solve problems and learn to cooperate with people who may think and behave very differently from me. Serving as your Area 69 Registrar, it is also an opportunity for me to give others a chance to participate and show them the importance of doing so.

I would encourage everyone to give General Service a fair chance. I believe sponsors should always encourage sponsees to join a home group and give General Service a try there. Come and participate rather than take someone else's word for what General Service is or is not. Make up your own mind. If it is not for you, well, you've been objective about it and you are always a member of AA if you say you are. **Devin C.**

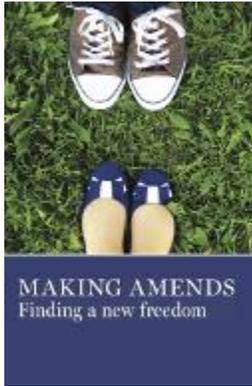
How Do You Give Back What Was Freely Given To You?

How do you spread the message of hope, recovery and unity to those beyond your home group? Are you ready to be of service on an area level? Contributing to the Area 69 News & Notes publication is a rewarding way to be of service and to share with fellow members around the state. Simply contact your newsletter editor, with your article or photo by emailing:

area69immediatepastdelegate@utahaa.org

What's New at the...

A.A. GRAPEVINE

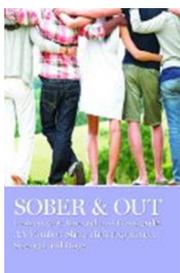
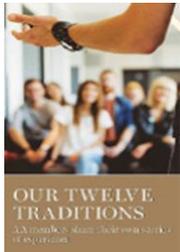


This Month's Featured Book

Making Amends – GV36
Making Amends features

55 candid, firsthand stories from AA Grapevine magazine of members' experiences with Step Nine of the AA program. The book includes chapters on making amends to parents, children, family members, exes, financial institutions, friends and coworkers. These powerful stories illustrate how practicing Step Nine can help us, as AA's co-founder Bill W. wrote, "know a new freedom and a new happiness."

Also available...



Plus much, much more!
Please Visit the Grapevine Online Store at:

www.aagrapevine.org

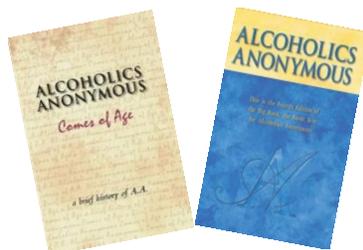
More About Your G.S.O.

The General Service Office in New York serves the A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada as a clearinghouse and exchange point for the wealth of A.A. experience accumulated over the years, coordinates a wide array of activities and services, and oversees the publication, all translations of, and distribution of A.A. Conference-approved literature and service materials. In 1992, G.S.O. moved to 475 Riverside Drive, where both A.A. World Services and Grapevine personnel are now housed on the same floor. For the present membership of over two million, an all-A.A. staff offers the services outlined in this pamphlet. A.A. and non-A.A. employees handle finances; prepare letters and bulletins; note group records, literature orders and contributions; ship material your way; and file incoming letters to add to the rich storehouse of A.A. experience at your G.S.O.



For More Information About Alcoholics Anonymous, or to Purchase A.A. Literature on Line, Please Visit:

www.aa.org



AREA 69 NEWS & NOTES ...

is published by Area 69. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of A.A.W.S., nor does publication of any article imply endorsement or affiliation by A.A.W.S. or Area 69.

Contributions from A.A. members are welcome and will be printed as space allows. Submissions must be e-mailed and include the writers' contact information. Submissions may be signed with first name and last initial. Anonymous submissions will be published but the author's contact information must be included. The editors reserve the right to edit contents for length, clarity, and their relation to the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. An effort will be made to contact the author regarding content changes. This e-mail/newsletter including any attachments are confidential. Please respect the anonymity of others when sharing this publication.