

A note from the editor

Well, we made it to issue 2!! The first Newsletter attracted a lot of attention from all over Australia: 99% of it was positive. We will always try keep to the literature as much as possible to avoid controversy.

In this issue we have an article from a recent Area G (NSW) Newsletter which we thought deserved reprinting. The questions would be a

valuable part of your next Group Inventory.

The information about being self supporting is taken from AA pamphlets and is suggested only—each Group is of course autonomous!

We have also included a stand-alone page at the back that you can print off & use at service meetings to demystify some of the AA acronyms that so confuse us.

Remember that this is YOUR fellowship, make sure you and your group have your say through participating in the structure.

The deadline for any articles/ reports for the July 2010 edition is 16th June.

Subscribe or get in touch with the editor at areadnewsletter@gmail.com

Is Your Group in the Loop?

To be 'in the loop' simply means that you are connected to all of the other members through our AA Service Structure—this underpins the Fellowship of AA stretching from the individual to the National Conference and even carries the message internationally.

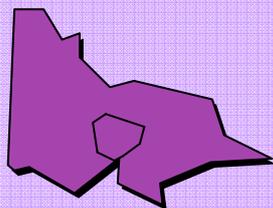
This is how the loop works:

- ◆ you are an active member of an AA Group;
- ◆ that Group elects a General Service Representative who attends Area Assembly where Groups collectively extend their ability to carry the message. The GSRs act as a conduit of information both to and from their Groups;
- ◆ Area Assembly elects a Delegate who, along with other Delegates from all over Australia, attends the National Conference each year. These Delegates, plus the General Service Board members and National Office staff discuss 'Topics' which are requests and suggestions from AA Groups as to how our recovery message may best be carried to all of our members across the Nation and the world.
- ◆ The outcomes of the National Conference are reported back by the Delegate to the Groups via the Area Assembly and by NOAA on the AA Service Website.
- ◆ GSRs report back to the Group.

Is your Group an active participant in this loop? Is your Group supporting you to take your turn in doing this Twelfth Step service? The following twelve questions can help guide your Group taking inventory on whether it is in the loop:

1. Is my home Group structured with all service positions filled?
2. Do we encourage members to be involved in service as part of their recovery?
3. Do we provide a working knowledge of the Traditions & Concepts to newer members before they go into service positions?
4. Is there service literature available for Group members?
5. Does our Group offer service sponsorship?
6. Does my home Group understand what an informed group Conscience is?
7. Does my home Group make decisions based on the Traditions & Concepts (or on opinions & personalities)?
8. Is my home Group informed about AA as a whole, or are we isolated from the wider world of the Fellowship?
9. Do members of my home Group know the AA Service structure?
10. Are the members of my home Group active in service beyond the Group?
11. Does my home Group understand its responsibility to be part of the decision making process in Area D and our local Central Service Office?
12. Does our Group dispel the myth that service is politics?

Is your Group in the loop?



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Self-support - where spirituality & money mix...



The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each

group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise.

Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

—Tradition Seven (long form)

How can groups participate?

To help support A.A.'s essential services, the General Service Conference (NY) suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience,* adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group's financial situation.

Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, local meeting lists, G.S.R. travel expenses to attend service functions), and a "prudent reserve" has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following A.A. service entities:

- The local district**, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies, and serving as a link between the area delegates and the GSRs.
- The area committee**, which coordinates vital A.A. activities over a broad geographic area; sends a delegate to the annual General Service Conference; holds area assemblies to

determine the needs of the Fellowship; and provides information at all levels of service.

- The local intergroup or central office**, which may provide phone service for Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries; coordination of group activities; A.A. literature sales; institutions work; public information and cooperation with the professional community activities.
- A.A.'s National [General] Service Office**, which functions as a storehouse of A.A. information, communicating with members and groups around the world; publishes A.A.'s literature; and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in A.A.

Each A.A. entity — group, district, area, central office and G.S.O. — provides a specific service and is autonomous. Each is separate to each other. Since a CSO Delegate's meeting decision in February 2007, CSO in Richmond does not forward money to either National Office or Areas, or vice versa, so groups need to forward money directly to each entity. If you want contributions to be distributed to each of the service arms, your group will need to do that yourselves.

How is the National Office funded?

- Contributions from groups (At present only 36% of groups in Australia contribute in any year, with less than 10% contributing on a regular monthly basis).
- Literature sales

- Personal donations from members
- Donations from members via the [Action Club](#) and [Birthday Club](#)

Public liability insurance policy

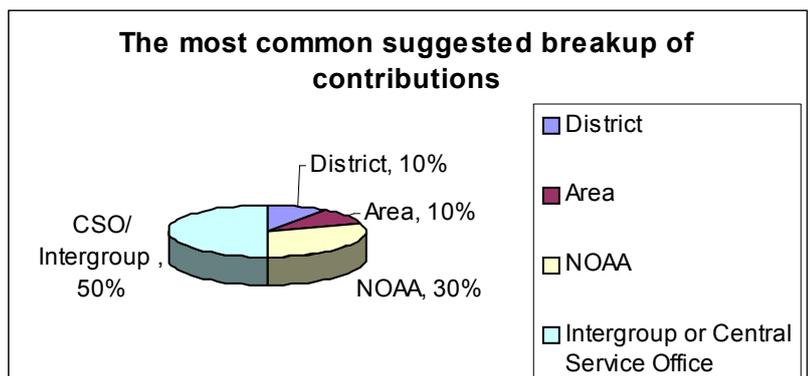
A public liability insurance policy is taken out by the General Service Board, to protect organisers of AA meetings in the event of a claim against them. Most groups would be unable to obtain premises to hold their meetings without evidence of this insurance policy. A form for Group Registration & Public Liability Insurance can be found in the section on the AA Group in the Service Manual which can be found at the AA Service Website at <http://aaservice.org.au/members/welcome> A donation to NOAA to assist with the payment of the premium is recommended.



Note: Excerpts for this article have been reprinted from the pamphlets *Self Support—Where Money and Spirituality Mix (04U-27)* and *Group Donation Plans to Support the AA Service Structure* with permission of AA World Services Inc.

Both pamphlets are available from NOAA.

* the definition of an 'informed group conscience' can be found on page 33 of the 2009 Version of the AA Group Handbook



District News...

An AA District is a geographical unit within an Area containing a number of AA Groups, the number being dependent on the ability of the General Service Representatives (GSRs) to communicate between each other and to meet regularly together with comparative ease.

A metropolitan District may cover a small area but contain hundreds of Groups, while a rural District may cover many square kilometres but include as few as 3 or 4 Groups. As the number of Groups in an Area increases more Districts are formed, each new one then electing another District

Each District has a Committee Member (DCM) on the Area Committee.

Experience has shown that the answer to growth rests in the setting up of more Districts to meet the Fellowship's expansion in size and activities.

Extract from *Australian AA Service Manual 7th Edition 2007 ~ Section 4 The District &*

"Because of the closer communication links within the District, the Groups are able to share together and to carry their message more effectively."

Prison District



Until his death in 2008, Dave S from Werribee Group was passionate about making sure that AA was available to those who had been incarcerated. Unfortunately, since his death, the Prison District has become desperately in need of support.

As a possible solution, at the 21 February meeting, a motion was put to the Assembly that Area D establish a Committee Portfolio called Correctional Facilities accountable to the Area. This motion was passed.

As most of the metropolitan prisons fall within Area D, members in this Area need to step up to our responsibilities with visiting rosters & distributing literature.

A workshop on carrying the message into prisons will be held as part of the next Area Assembly on 16th May and further action will be planned.



Ballarat District



Ballarat District is in a period of transition and will include a report in the next Newsletter.

In the meantime, for any information on what's going on in

the region, check out their website:

<http://aaballarat.roxer.com/>

East Coast District (Tasmania)

Firstly, many thanks to members of the Committee for their warm welcome and continued support of the East Coast District here in Tassie.

I have just returned from the 4th East Coast Rally held in beautiful St Helens. Thanks must go to the organisers for hosting a great weekend. The event included participation from Al Anon and over 42 members from around the country. 17 groups were represented.

The weekend's programme included: ID, Spiritual Concepts, Al Anon, Big

Book Study, Daily Reflections, Public Information, Sobriety Countdown and Speaker meetings.

We also held the latest District meeting with all GSRs and the Area Delegate present. Our great friend and DCM, Dave M, has recently moved to South Australia. He will be greatly missed in person but with us always in spirit and by the wonders of modern technology (Skype). I would like to wish Dave every happiness in his new adventure on the mainland and we all look forward to catching up with him soon.

I have the privilege of taking on the role of DCM and look forward to being of service.

Our Saturday afternoon speaker meeting in Launceston has changed format and is now operating as a beginners meeting; all other groups are going well with attendance remaining steady across the District.

In love and Service

Chris H. DCM, East Coast

Calder District

Calder District members recently ran a stall at the Moonee Valley Festival and handed out literature to people who approached the stall. In a spirit of co-operation, Al-Anon also

provided literature to be handed out if needed.

Kevin H. has been elected to the position of District Committee Member. We look forward to his

reports of Calder District activities in future.



Geelong District

Geelong District now has fully-functioning phone and 12 step rosters, thanks to our new coordinator Mary, who is nurturing this along. She is also assisting organising a 12 step workshop to be held on the 17th April, as hopefully with a greater understanding of this valuable service, other members will offer their services. The District expressed much gratitude to Carolyn who rotated off this position after 3 years service.

Our PI Committee is busy organising stickers & business cards to distribute, as well as laminating AA posters with tear-off Geelong District phone numbers along the bottom – these will also be strategically distributed around.

Treatment facility rosters are functioning reasonably well at both Swanston & Geelong Withdrawal Units.

Positions are due for rotation and we

are seeking a new secretary and treasurer.

Planning for the 2010 Geelong Anniversary is now underway.

Yours in service

Sue T Geelong District DCM

Land of Plenty Intergroup



The Land of Plenty Intergroup is supported by a number of groups in the North East of Melbourne.

Its sole purpose is the distribution of literature among the participating groups and to rehab and detox units in the District.

Contact can be made through the editor of the Newsletter at areadnewsletter@gmail.com

Western Suburbs District

Upon visiting most groups within the District, I have found that all are going well. At the last District Committee meeting, we had 4 GSRs in attendance & the Area Delegate. We realise that in most groups there are newer members who have taken on the role of GSR without fully realising what the role of the GSR entails. The District Committee has decided to have a fundraiser within the Area. - Keep your eyes out for the flyer. We are going to increase our District

meetings to seven per year to keep the ball rolling. We are in the process of rebuilding & with the help of all groups the District will be able to progress & fulfill its primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. In service

**Barry D DCM
Western Suburbs District.**

District Meeting Dates for 2010

11th May
22nd June
3rd August
7th September
23rd November

Venue please phone Barry D for venue information.

Snippet: Bill writing about modern communication

“Nothing matters more to A.A.’s future welfare than the manner in which we use the colossus of modern communication. Used unselfishly and well, it can produce results surpassing our present imagination.

Should we handle this great instrument badly, we shall be shattered by the ego manifestations of our own people. Against this peril, AA members’ anonymity before the general public is our shield and buckler.”

Bill W. writing in the *Grapevine*, November 1960

Southern Regional Forum 2010



The Southern Region Forum will be held later this year (October) in Melbourne, with the theme "Service is the Heart of AA".

The purpose of Regional Forums is to meet a need in our ever-growing Fellowship and provide a special opportunity of direct communication and personal contact between AA members in a Region and service personnel such as Board members, Conference members and GSO staff. These forums are intended simply as a way of providing better communication between AA service workers and their General Service Board and Office. They are really sharing sessions and in no sense affect the role of the annual General Service Conference, which remains the decision-making body within AA. The forums air many feelings, voice many opinions, answer many questions and make many suggestions, but no decisions. Naturally, ideas expressed at the forums can be presented to the General Service Conference for consideration.

Program, location, format, etc. are worked out jointly by the Regional Trustee, the Area Delegates and the General Service Office.

If you are interested in volunteering for service by participating in the planning committee or offering service on the day, talk to your GSR or Area Delegate (Barry H.)

Public Information News...

Service - the Heart of AA

The Area held a workshop at the last assembly to identify the areas that we could be of most help in passing the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Public Information is just that, the passing of information to those who still suffer and don't know there is a way out. It is also letting members of the public know that AA exists. Like most things, it can be as complicated or as simple as we chose to make it. Sometimes the simple approach can be just as effective as the more detailed endeavours.

The following are examples of PI in which every member of the Fellowship is capable of being involved.

- ◆ As an individual we can inform our Health Professional.
- ◆ Take a copy of the "News" or Area Newsletter & ask to leave it in the waiting room
- ◆ As a group we can make sure that the local council community website has our meeting details.
- ◆ The Group can ask the local rag to advertise its meeting in the community pages

These are all effective PI & CPC tools to pass the message of recovery.

The third legacy of AA is service - put plainly; we take a simple principal & put it into action. In cooperating with the professional community we need to remember that no one person ever represents AA, we are just members who have found a way to recover & we are happy to share it with those who want it.

In Love & Service **Sharon R**



Service Opportunities!

"... an AA service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer, ranging all the way from the *Twelfth Step* itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to AA's General [National] Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our *Third Legacy of Service*." Australian AA Service Manual 7th Edition 2007 ~ Section 1 *The Conference Plan* . <http://aaservice.org.au/members/ServiceManual>

There are many service opportunities available at the Area, District and Group level. Filling an alternate position is a good way to start in service, as it provides an opportunity to learn the ropes without having sole responsibility. It also gives the office holder some support and backup. The *AA Group Handbook* (latest edition published in 2009) and the *AA Service Manual* describe what various positions do. Check them out and talk to members already in service to see how you can get involved in this vital part of your recovery. Watch this space for vacancies in Area D.

Coming Events ... dates to put in your calendar

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We're on the web!

See us at
www.aread.org.au

Disclaimer:

Except for material identified as being taken directly from AA Conference Approved Literature, articles published in this Newsletter are the experience and opinion of the author, and are not necessarily the opinion of AA.

- Next Area D Assembly:**
Sunday 16th May 2010
 1pm (Workshop 11am—Carrying the message into prisons)
 Ballarat: Eastwood St. Leisure Centre,
 (Behind Safeway) [map](#)
 (hosted by [Ballarat District](#))
- Deer Park 34th Anniversary**
April 7th
 The White House Westvale Community Centre,
 45 Kings Rd St Albans Please bring a plate
- Glenroy Twilight 1st Anniversary**
April 7th
 Glenroy Neighbourhood Centre
 5B Cromwell St, Glenroy Please bring a plate
- Reservoir 28th Anniversary**
April 8th
 St Gabriel's School Hall, Cnr Spring & Viola Sts (Enter via
 Viola St) Please bring a plate
- Spotswood Anniversary**
May 23rd
 Yarraville Senior Citizens Centre, 48 Fehon St Yarraville
 Please bring a plate
- Hall's Gap Weekend**
 with Al-Anon Participation
Friday to Sunday 11-14th June 2010
 Acacia Camp, Hall's Gap
- 2010 International AA Convention**
 With Al-Anon and Alateen participation
Thursday 1st to Sunday 4 July 2010
[San Antonio, Texas U.S.A.](#)

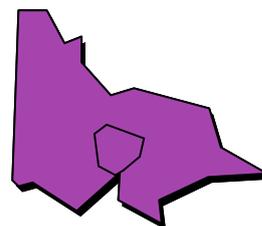
About Area D

Area D Southern Region is a part of the Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference Structure of Australia.

As such we fully participate in the Australian General Service Conference.

We also support the AA National Office in any way we are able.

Bordered by the Yarra river, the Area includes the Western and Northern suburbs of Melbourne and extends to include other major cities such as Geelong and Ballarat, and regional centres such as Daylesford.



ACRONYMS & TERMS COMMONLY USED IN

- AA** = Alcoholics Anonymous (sometimes term used to mean a Member of AA eg “AAs say x ...”)
- AA Grapevine Inc** nearest Aust. equivalent ≡ AA Around Australia
- AA World Services Inc (North America)** ≡ Alcoholics Anonymous (Ltd) (Australia)
- AAAA** = AA Around Australia (news sheet)
- AGM** = Annual General Meeting
- ASM** = Australian AA Service Manual
- AOSM** = Asia-Oceania Service Meeting
- ASIC** = Australian Securities & Investments Commission
- ATO** = Australian Taxation Office
- CAL** = Conference-Approved Literature
- CPC** = Cooperation with the Professional Community
- CSO** = Central Service Office
- DCM** = District Committee Member
- ‘Delegate’** can refer to Area, CSO/‘quarterly’/‘Group’ or World Service Delegate
- Family Groups:** Al-Anon (sister Fellowship started by our founder Bill W’s wife: cooperates but not part of AA)
- GL** = AA Guidelines (an extension of the ASM, currently published separately)
- GSB** = General Service Board = ‘The Trustees’
- GS Conference** = General Service Conference
- GSO** = General Service Office (North America); Australian equivalent is National Office (Sydney)
- GSR** = General Service Representative
- GSS** = General Service Structure
- GV** = Grapevine (North American AA’s international magazine) = AA Grapevine
- Intergroup** ≡ Central Service Office
- ISF** = International Sponsorship Fund
- NOAA** = National Office of AA Australia
- OSM** = older sober member
- PI** = Public Information (& Cooperation with the Professional Community)
- PI&CPC** = Public Information & Cooperation with the Professional Community
- PIAA** = PI Around Australia (news sheet that comes out with AAAA)
- PIF/ PI Forum** = Public Information Forum
- Three Legacies:** Recovery, Unity & Service
- Traditional Legacy Documents:** 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts, Conference Charter (& 3rd Legacy Procedure)
- T&CF** = Treatment & Correctional Facilities
- T&CFAA** = Treatment & Corrections Around Australia (news sheet)
- World Service** (North America) ≡ General Service (Australia)
- WSD** = World Service Delegate
- WSM** = World Service Meeting