DELEGATE’S CORNER

Greetings Area 09

I would like to use this month’s article to pass along some information. After I provide some information, I would then like to pass along something I wrote.

First, here is a call for stories to update the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.”: In response to the 2016 General Service Conference recommendation that the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.” be revised to “better reflect the experiences of young people in A.A. today,” the trustees’ literature committee is seeking current sharing from young people in A.A.

Please encourage young members in your area to write their personal stories for possible inclusion in the revised pamphlet “Young People and A.A.” Stories should reflect “in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now.”

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced, in 12-point typeface. The words “Young People and A.A.” should appear on the top of the first page of the manuscript. The author’s complete name, address and email/telephone information should be included with the submission.

UPCOMING AREA EVENTS

September 11—Sunday
ASSEMBLY
District 20

October 9—Sunday
Area Service Committee
District 9

November 13—Saturday
SERVATHON
District 11

December 11—Sunday
Area Service Committee

If you have any story to share in General Service or if you want to share on any Concept or Tradition, please write, send it to my email; cfmsca09@yahoo.com suggestions are welcome (submit your article in English or Spanish) 
Sincerely,
Cesar F. Area 09 Newsletter Editor
Delegate’s corner

Submissions can be emailed to: Literature@aa.org with “Young People and A.A.” inserted in the subject line of the message. Alternatively, submissions can be mailed to: Literature Coordinator, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. The deadline for all submissions is December 30, 2016. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not his or her story is selected for publication. Thank you for your participation in this process.

I know many of us have expressed an interest on the topic of safety in A.A. I learned that the Trustees’ Literature committee recently discussed several requests for the development of literature and/or language regarding safety in A.A. They were advised that AAWS is in the process of developing service material that would address a broad spectrum of issues related to this subject. The committee will ask for a progress report from AAWS on the work that it is doing and continue its own discussion of the issue at its October meeting.

I learned that the Trustees received a request to forward an agenda item to the 2017 General Service Conference. The request was to reconsider the 2010 Conference advisory action related to La Viña and allow the AA Grapevine and La Viña the right of decision in how each magazine is published. After discussion that focused on spiritual parity, recent Conference agenda items on similar issues, and the intent behind the current proposal (which appeared to be to give them freedom as a publisher, not necessarily to make any radical changes to the publications at the moment), they agreed to forward this item to next year’s Conference. So, please be expecting this as a topic of discussion.

I was asked to provide some remarks at a Traditions workshop in Anaheim recently and wanted to share what I said: I am here to provide some opening remarks about the Traditions. Part of my commitment as Delegate is to be a guardian of the Traditions. It’s well to remember that our Traditions are not hard and fast rules. Instead, they are a set of spiritual principles learned through shared experience to help ensure our unity as a fellowship. As a guardian, I am not an enforcer, but rather an educator and, in many cases, a mediator where I find that I do more listening than talking.

June 10th 1935, Dr. Bob had his last drink and Alcoholics Anonymous was born.

We, as individuals have experienced a last gasp at life. At the very moment of weakness, a strength was discovered. The grace of a higher power grew within us and gave us meaning and purpose to our lives. We discovered that together, through shared experience that we could continue to forge a future greater than our imaginations had prepared us for. We began to repay our debts to society and walk freely within it. For we A.A.’s this is our first of three legacies – The Legacy of Recovery.

In November 1937, Dr. Bob and Bill W. met in Akron, OH and began to tally their results. 40 cases sober. This is when they first began to realize success; that it might be possible for alcoholics to get sober in large numbers. And this is when they began to think about the notion of us working together as a society – the very beginnings of our second legacy, the Legacy of Unity, which is what we are here to talk about today; our 12 Traditions.
Delegate's corner

Our 12 steps were written in December 1938. In 1939 our membership reached 100 and our Big Book was first published. Then, two years later, in March 1941, The Saturday Evening Post published an in-depth article about Alcoholics Anonymous. Many attempts were made to make public our message of hope and recovery, but it wasn’t until this article was published, that the mainstream public saw its first glimpse into A.A. Over the course of the next few months, our membership grew exponentially to 8,000 members, resultant of this article. And you know the rest of the story regarding our membership growth.

The very real question of whether or not we could survive as an entire fellowship was very real. An early non-alcoholic friend, a psychologist said, “This fellowship of alcoholics is emotional dynamite. Its neurotic content can blow it to bits.”

Since the Jack Alexander article was published in the Saturday Evening Post in 1941, and under the wisdom and watchful eye of our founders, 5 years of growth had passed. 5 years of trial and error of groups and members working together in this emotional dynamite. Lessons were learned, many of them painful. Then, in 1946 our 12 Traditions were first formulated and published – a vision for our continued unity. Much like our 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions are paradoxal. Where in our 12 Steps we saw the need for surrender, self-honesty, restitution, and passing it on, in our 12 Traditions we see a spirit of self-sacrifice, courage, and a reliance upon our higher power. For example, we cannot keep any member out. Anyone who has a desire to recover is afforded the opportunity. We cannot charge any fees for membership. They are a member if they say they are, regardless of who they are or what they are or what they might be going through. While we have leaders, no one is in charge. We rely upon our higher power to present himself through our group conscience. This is our only governor. We remain poor as money is concerned. After all, we do not have any real expenses. All we really need is a place to meet. The core of our program is in a message, not a material product. Our General Service office in NY only requires a little over $7 per member per year in order to operate. That is almost nothing. And contributions are completely voluntary at that. At the public level we should remain anonymous. It is better for our friends to recommend us rather than blowing our own horn of success at the public level. This is perhaps one of today’s greatest talking points with the advent of social media. We need to place our principles in front of our personalities – a feat difficult for the ego driven individuals that we are.

So we are here to talk about our second legacy of recovery, the legacy of unity. When discussing and learning about our Traditions, please keep in the forefront in your minds the spirit of self-sacrifice for the betterment of the group. I believe a group can be defined as 2 or 3 alcoholics, a group of groups, a district, an area, or A.A. as a whole.

In sincerest love and service,

Joe C

Panel 66 Delegate

Mid-Southern CA Area 09
Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders of AA, must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This Concept applies to ALL LEVELS of A.A.: Sponsorship, coffee making, chairing and leading meetings, being a group member, Grapevine Reps, answering phones, serving as Intergroup or General Service reps, serving on committees, treasurers, greeters, conference delegates, trustees...all of us!!! This one is really worth reading in the Service Manual...if you don't read a single other part, please...look this one up and read it...it's good for the heart, soul, and head...

Linda C.,
Home Group: Noontime Recovery, Costa Mesa;
District: 18;
Area: Mid-So. Calif. 09;
Region: Pacific

Bill W. points out: “No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, ..... our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work....”

“With leadership we shall have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity. It is therefore a problem that in its very nature cannot be permanently solved.”

I was incapable of being aware of the structure that protected me as I began to come back to life in AA. My sponsor was my leader; my group was my model...I couldn't absorb more.

As I became more able to hear, I thought I heard: “There is no president of AA,” “AA should never be organized,” “No body's better than sober,” and “General Service is nothing but politics.” It sounded to me as if, somehow, AA was hanging together as a sort of anarchy in which a beneficent deity kept us in line.

That made me nervous....and, as it turned out, the folks who said such things didn’t (and don’t) know much about the “real” structure of AA! And many of them are unwilling to contribute to the ongoing challenge of being or choosing good leaders to protect, preserve and serve this precious structure that surrounds and shelters us. If we don't have good leaders, is it because of apathy, ignorance, or just plain laziness?

The first part of Concept Nine applies to ALL of us!

I have taken the liberty of drafting the following, based on ideas Bill included in his essay on Concept Nine

Twelve Reminders for Choosing and Serving in a position of AA Leadership:

1. Cast aside personal ambitions; forget feuds and controversy.

2. Select leaders (servants) with dedication and ability to do the job. “Who are the best qualified people that we can name?” This should be the thought of all.

3. Take care in selecting GSRs; hit and miss methods should be avoided. Groups who name no GSRs should be encouraged to do so.

4. Seek out those who are dedicated, stable, visionary, and skilled and trust them to
serve. Tell them, “Act for us, but don’t boss us.”

5. A fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Good leaders will listen, discuss, and give credit to the source.

6. Never pass the buck.

7. Sometimes prideful or angry people can be right and the calm and more humble are quite mistaken. Leaders must try to recognize the difference.

8. Exercise careful discrimination and soul-searching in every leadership position; neither a thoughtless majority nor a vocal minority are necessarily right (or wrong).

9. Compromise cheerfully when compromise is called for.

10. Remember that “one day at a time” refers to our mental and emotional lives and means that we are not to repine over the past or wishfully day-dream about the future. It does not mean that we should not make plans, exercise foresight, recognize fantasy, and use our powers of thoughtful estimate. Remember that we shall surely suffer if we cast the whole job of planning for tomorrow onto a fatuous idea of Providence.

11. Vision is the very essence of prudence.

12. Leadership attributes to look for at all levels of AA: tolerance, responsibility, flexibility and vision.

**A.A. HISTORY SEPTEMBER**

**September 1 1939** - First AA group founded in Chicago.

**September 12 1942** - U.S. Assist. Surgeon General Kolb speaks at dinner for Bill and Dr. Bob.

**September 13 1937** - Florence R, first female in AA in NY. 1941 - WHJP in Jacksonville, FL airs a Spotlight on AA.

**September 17 1954** - Bill D, alcoholic no. 3 dies. September 18 1947 - Dallas Central Office opens its doors.


**September 21 1938** - Bill W. and Hank P. form Works Publishing Co.

**September 24 1940** - Bill twelve-steps Bobbie V., who later replaces Ruth Hock as his secretary.

**September 30 1939** - Liberty magazine, “Alcoholics and God” by Morris Markey.

**September without specific dates: 1930** - Bill wrote 4th (last) promise in family Bible to quit drinking 1939 - Group started by Earl T. in Chicago. 1940 - AA group started in Toledo by Duke P. and others. 1940 - Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases gives Big Book unfavorable review. 1946 - Bill and Dr. Bob both publicly endorsed National Committee Education Alcoholism founded by Marty M.

**1946** - First A.A. group in Mexico.

**1948** - Bob writes article for Grapevine on AA, "Fundamentals in Retrospect”.

**1949** - First issue of A.A. Grapevine was published in "pocketbook” size.
SEVENTH TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS
Carrying Our Message beyond Your Home Group

When you or your home group contributes to the General Service Office (G.S.O.) your contribution helps an alcoholic around the corner or around the world. Here are some of the ways that happens:

1 The G.S.O. Publishing Department has coordinated translations of the Big Book in 68 languages and translations of other A.A. literature in more than 80 languages. Further translations are constantly in process.

2 Each year G.S.O. staff responds to over 90,000 emails, letters, and phone calls from A.A. members, suffering alcoholics, professionals, students, the press and others interested in A.A. Thus accurate and consistent information about A.A. is provided.

3 Staff communications often help someone find local A.A. meetings, link members in service, and support the start of A.A. in countries where there are no A.A. meetings.

4 G.S.O. maintains and updates the aa.org website that averages over 30,000 visits per day. The website provides information about A.A., including how to find A.A. in their community, and provides help to members and those seeking help with their drinking problem, as well as to families and friends of problem drinkers, and professionals.

5 G.S.O.’s Publishing Department publishes and distributes all A.A. Conference-approved literature. Approximately 8 million books, pamphlets, video and audio products are distributed annually. Some of this literature is specifically designed for sight- or hearing-impaired members. Box 4-5-9, news and notes from G.S.O., is published four times a year in English, French and Spanish.

6 G.S.O. coordinates the Loners-Internationalists Meeting Correspondence Service (LIM), which is often the only link to A.A. for many A.A. members in remote areas, homebound, or deployed in active military service.

7 The Corrections coordinator at G.S.O. responds to over 6,500
letters a year, primarily from incarcerated alcoholics. Letters often request literature and many express gratitude for a Big Book supplied or a link to an outside member who can take a soon-to-be released alcoholic to his or her first meeting on the outside.

8 G.S.O. "S" Corrections staff member also coordinates a Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS), which each year connects over 1,000 alcoholics behind the walls with outside members in order to share A.A. recovery by mail. Sharing From Behind the Walls, containing excerpts from inmate letters to G.S.O., is printed four times a year.

9 The G.S.O. Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities desk responds to letters and communications from residents or patients in treatment centers and connects them with local committees. The staff member on this assignment supports groups and members in making the A.A. message receivable to alcoholics with special needs.

10 Professionals are frequently the first contact for an alcoholic seeking help. The Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) staff member at G.S.O. provides information about A.A. to hundreds of professionals each year, often sending them basic literature. This assignment also coordinates A.A. exhibits at over 25 national conferences of professionals in various fields each year and publishes the newsletter About A.A. for professionals.

11 The Public Information desk coordinates the production and broadcast of audio and video Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to help reach the still-suffering alcoholics. Each year PSAs produced by Public Information are broadcast on television and radio. The most recent PSA, Tengo Esperanza (I Have Hope), was viewed approximately 30,000 times the first year of its release. The Public Information staff member also responds to approximately 600 emails per month from the press and other media, A.A. members and the general public.

12 G.S.O.'s Archives documents the activities of Alcoholics Anonymous for the future and makes the history of the Fellowship accessible to A.A. members and other researchers. Each year the Archives staff responds to over 1,500 requests for information and research. Markings: Your Archives eNewsletter, an electronic newsletter, is published three times a year.

General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 • www.aa.org