

The WAGSA Handbook

Washington  
Area  
General  
Service  
Assembly

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition  
October 2007

Serving groups in the Washington, DC metropolitan region

Area 13

*Group name:* \_\_\_\_\_

Group number: \_\_\_\_\_

District number: \_\_\_\_\_

D.C.M.: \_\_\_\_\_

D.C.M. phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

D.C.M. email: \_\_\_\_\_

No prior service Committee or Assembly decision, including those that led to the development of this handbook, shall be binding on future Committees or Assemblies. The group conscience has been and continues to be the guiding force in A.A. decision-making.

## **RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION**

**“I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there, and for that, I am responsible.”**

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**WASHINGTON AREA GENERAL SERVICE ASSEMBLY**

**AREA 13**

**THE WAGSA HANDBOOK, THIRD EDITION, OCTOBER 2007**

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## **1.0 Preface**

### **1.1 Organization of Handbook and intended purpose**

This handbook is a basic outline of how our Area operates. The Washington Area General Service Assembly abides by the principles reflected in the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. We also follow the current A.A. Service Manual. However, over the course of our existence, we have developed practices and procedures unique to Area 13. This handbook, therefore, is an effort to describe those practices and procedures presently accepted in the working structure of the Area.

The Washington Area General Service Assembly formally endorsed the handbook in October 2003. The group conscience has been and continues to be the guiding force in A.A. decision-making, however, and no prior Committee or Assembly decision, including those that led to the development of this handbook, shall be binding on future Committees or Assemblies.

The handbook is meant to be used in conjunction with the A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service and pamphlets describing various service units or activities such as

- *Circles of Love and Service.*
- *The 7th Tradition: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.*
- *The A.A. Group.*
- *The D.C.M.*
- *The G.S.R.*
- *The Twelve Concepts Illustrated.*
- *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated.*

For information about the basic terminology used in the handbook (e.g., District, Area, Region, General Service Office), please consult Appendix A of this document.

## **2.0 Area 13 Structure**

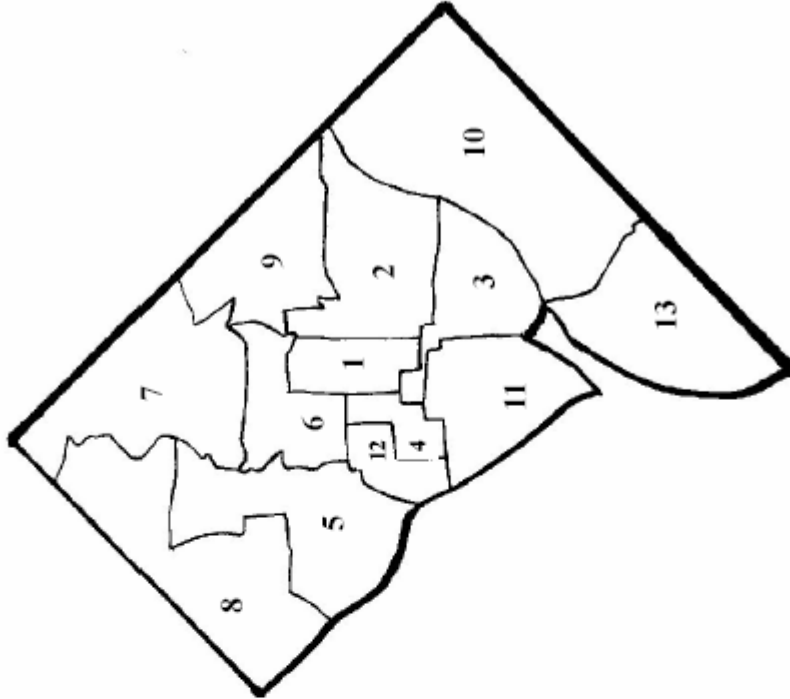
### **2.1 Districts and Groups**

Our Area, known as Area 13 in the A.A. service structure, also is called the Washington Area General Service Assembly (WAGSA). Area 13 encompasses groups in the District of Columbia and Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties in Maryland. It also includes Spanish-language groups in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

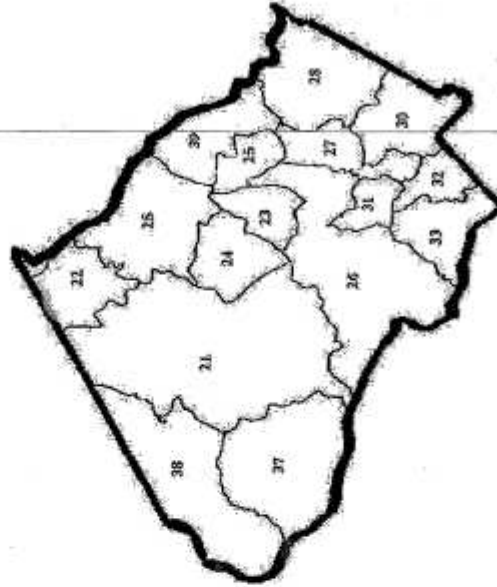
## 2.2 Maps of Area 13 Districts (with most recent redistricted dates)

### Area 13 Districts Washington D.C. April 2005

- District 1 Zip Codes: 20001
  - District 2 Zip Codes: 20002
  - District 3 Zip Codes: 20003, 20004, 20374
  - District 4 Zip Codes: 20005, 20006
  - District 5 Zip Codes: 20007, 20008
  - District 6 Zip Codes: 20009, 20010
  - District 7 Zip Codes: 20011, 20012
  - District 8 Zip Codes: 20015, 20016
  - District 9 Zip Codes: 20017, 20018
  - District 10 Zip Codes: 20019, 20020
  - District 11 Zip Codes: 20024, 20319
  - District 12 Zip Codes: 20036, 20037
  - District 13 Zip Codes: 20032, 20332, 20336, 20375
  - District 61 Spanish Language groups throughout DC
- District numbers 1—20 were reserved for DC; not all are assigned



# Area 13 Montgomery County Districts September 2005

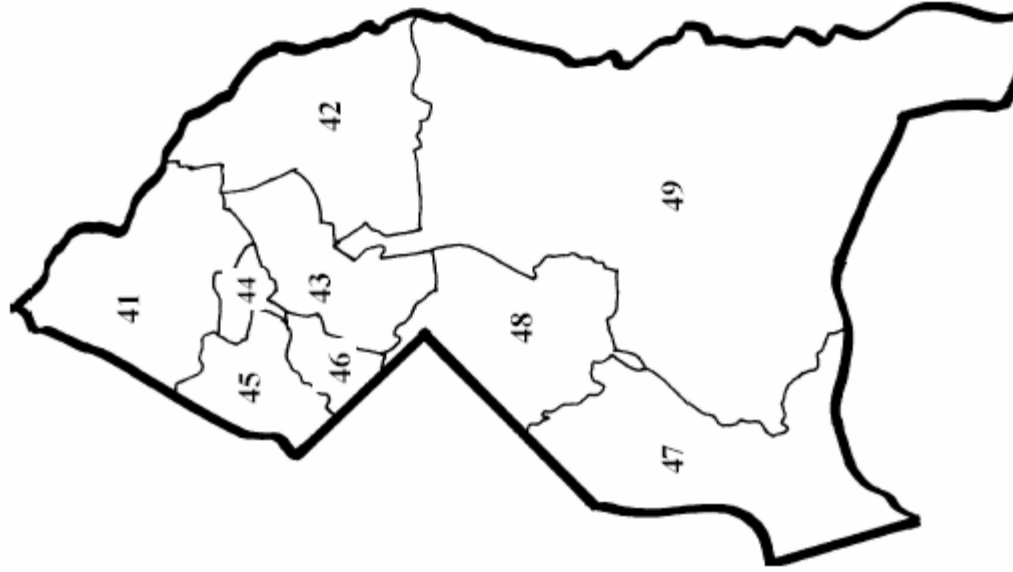


District	Zip Code
District 21	20841, 20871, 20878, 20874, 20876
District 22	20872
District 23	20880
District 24	20850, 20877, 20878, 20880, 20886
District 25	20832, 20882
District 26	20860, 20861, 20853, 20854
District 27	20853, 20802, 20906
District 28	20866, 20868, 20901, 20904, 20905
District 29	20895, 20896
District 30	20901, 20903, 20906, 20910, 20912
District 31	20862
District 32	20814, 20815, 20889, 20892
District 33	20816, 20817, 20818
District 37	20837
District 38	20838, 20839, 20842
District 63	20833, 20860, 20861, 20862

District 63 Spanish language groups in Maryland

## Area 13 Prince George's County Districts December 2004

Town/City	Zip codes
District 41 Beltsville, Laurel, Montpelier	20705, 20707, 20708
District 42 Bowie, Mitchellville	20715, 20716, 20720, 20721
District 43 Glenn Dale, Landover, Landover Hills, Lantham, Seabrook	20706, 20769, 20784, 20785
District 44 Greenbelt	20770, 20771
District 45 Adelphi, College Park, Langley Park	20740, 20742, 20782, 20783
District 46 Blandersburg, Brentwood, Hyattsville, Riverdale, Mount Rainier	20710, 20712, 20722, 20737, 20781
District 47 Accokeek, Fort Washington, Oxon Hill, Waldorf	20601, 20607, 20744, 20745
District 48 Andrews, Capital Heights, District Heights, Suitland, Temple Hills	20743, 20746, 20747, 20748, 20762
District 49 Aquasco, Brandywine, Cheltenham, Clinton, Upper Marlboro	20608, 20613, 20623, 20735, 20772, 20774
District 63 Spanish-language Groups in all of Maryland	All zip codes



### 3.0 Area 13 Officers, Qualifications, and Responsibilities

As described on page 11, the area elects a Delegate, whom we send to the General Service Conference. DCMs, GSRs, and area committee members are invited to share their district and group consciences at committee meetings, area assemblies, and other area activities. At area events, the Delegate informs about activities at the General Service Office, A.A. World Services, Inc., A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and in other areas.

### 3.1 The Third Legacy Election Procedure

- **What is an election?**

Every two years, on the even numbered years, Area 13 elects a panel of officers to serve the Area for two years. Each two-year period is called a panel, numbered from the first one in 1951. The positions up for election are: Delegate, Area Chairperson/Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, and Secretary. Ideally, candidates should be present to stand for elected office. However, in extreme emergency situations, eligible candidates can stand for election but must contact the area chairperson, prior to the election. The spirit of rotation is best. No Area 13 elected officer who has served a full term will be re-elected for a second consecutive term.

- **Election Committee**

The area Past Delegates serve as the election committee, without a personal vote. From time to time, Past Delegates from neighboring Areas may be asked to assist in conducting the election. The Area Chairperson will appoint the Chair of the Election Committee from the list of available Past Delegates from Area 13.

- **Registration – Both types of registration must be completed in order to cast a vote.**

- The first type of registration is with the Area Registrar. All DCMs, Alt DCM'S, GSRs, Alt GSRs of all AA groups, along with committee chairs and officers in Area 13 must be registered **before** the conclusion of the October Area Committee meeting which is held on the second Monday of October. Mailed registration forms must be received by the Registrar prior to the second Monday in October. These forms should be mailed to:

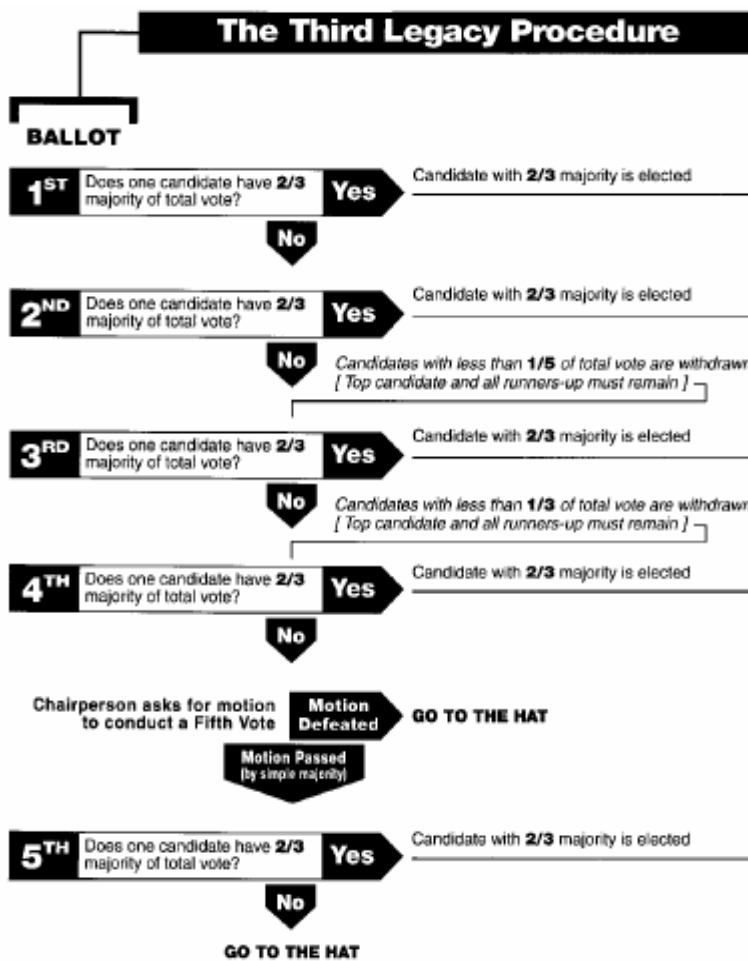
- Washington Area General Service Assembly  
P.O. Box 5673  
Friendship Station  
Washington, D.C. 20016

- The second type of registration is accomplished by signing in at the October election Assembly itself. To be eligible to vote at the Assembly, all attendees must sign in with the Registrar upon arrival. The Assembly sign in will start 90 minutes before the Assembly is scheduled to start.

Alternates will **not** be given their packets until after registration is closed. This will ensure that the individual for whom the person is an alternate has not also registered to vote. **THERE WILL BE NO REGISTRATION ONCE THE ASSEMBLY BEGINS.**

### AA Service Manual

The AA Service Manual is our guidebook for these elections. It sets forth the procedure to be followed and is called “The Third Legacy Procedure”. A diagram of the procedure follows.



- **The Election**

Starting with the position of Delegate, the election procedure is as follows:

- The Election committee Chairperson reads from the AA Service Manual the qualifications for Delegate.
- Only DCMs, past DCMs, and area officers are eligible to stand for the position of Delegate. The election chairperson asks for those who wish to serve to stand.
- The names of those standing are posted on a blackboard.
- Each candidate for the position of Area Delegate is asked to speak for no longer than two (2) minutes on his or her qualifications for the position of Area Delegate.
- All eligible voters (those who have completed the dual registration outlined above) and any alternate GSRs who become eligible because the regular GSR is not present, may proceed to cast a written ballot, one choice to a ballot.
- Ballots will be pre-printed with the office position title and will be different colors for each ballot, e.g., blue for first ballot, green for second ballot, etc.
- No member will have more than one vote. For example, if a member is a DCM or GSR, but is also a Committee Chair or Area Officer, they still cast only one ballot.
- The tally for each candidate is posted on the blackboard.
- The first candidate to receive TWO-THIRDS of the total vote is elected.
- After the second ballot (assuming no candidate receives the necessary two-thirds on the first ballot), any candidate having less than one-fifth of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except that the TWO TOP CANDIDATES remain. If there are ties for second place, the TOP TWO CANDIDATES TIED FOR SECOND PLACE REMAIN.
- After the third ballot, candidates with less than one-third of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except that the TWO TOP CANDIDATES remain. In case there is a tie for second place, the TOP TWO CANDIDATES TIED FOR SECOND PLACE remain.
- A fourth ballot is conducted.
- After the fourth ballot, if no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote, the chairperson asks for a motion, a second, and a simple majority of hands for conducting a fifth and final ballot.
- If this motion is defeated, balloting is over, and we go to the “hat” immediately. In case there are ties for second place, the top candidate and the tied second place candidates remain. If the motion carries, a fifth and final ballot will be conducted.
- If no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote at the end of the fifth and final ballot, the election chairperson announces that the choice will be made by lot (from the “hat”). At this point, balloting usually involves only the top two or three candidates.

- The teller then draws lots, one lot per candidate, and the first one “out of the hat” becomes the delegate.
- This same procedure will be followed for each of the other positions up for election: Area Chairperson/Alternate Delegate, Treasurer, and Secretary. All members of the area committee (DCMs, area committee chairs, and area officers) are eligible to be candidates for these other positions.

### **3.2 Delegate (Elected)**

Responsibilities include

- attends the General Service Conference prepared for discussions
- shares the areas’ group conscience at the General Service Conference.
- provides information about activities at the General Service Office, A.A. World Services, Inc., A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and in other areas.
- cooperates with the G.S.O. in obtaining information (e.g., group contact information, the A.A. survey).
- reminds everyone that the G.S.O. is an information center on A.A. matters.
- attempts to resolve local problems involving traditions.
- co-signs checks from the area bank account.
- represents the area at the Northeast Regional Delegates (NERD) weekend.
- participates in area and regional service meetings including the Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA), the Northeast Regional Forum (NERF), and the Northeast Regional Convention (NERC).
- visits area groups and districts.
- assumes added responsibility if the area chairperson is unable to serve.
- works closely with Committee officers, sharing experience throughout the two-year term.
- keeps the alternate delegate (i.e., area chairperson) fully informed and uses the chairperson's help wherever possible so he or she can replace the delegate in an emergency.
- serves as “immediate past delegate” for the two years subsequent to holding the position of delegate.
- works in conjunction with the mini-conference chair and Past Delegate Advisor to select discussion topics for the mini-conference.

### **3.3 Chairperson/Alternate Delegate (Elected)**

Responsibilities include

- secures sites for area Committee meetings and assemblies.
- develops agendas for Area Committee meetings and Assemblies.
- chairs area Committee meetings and assemblies.
- appoints committee chairs (see pages 19- 25) and the Registrar (see page 14).
- proposes and reviews objectives and goals for standing committees.

- explores possibilities of cooperation with WAIA and the Spanish-language intergroups.
- calls meetings of officers and standing committee chairs for informational and planning purposes.
- requests changes and suggests new programs within the mandate of each committee.
- co-signs checks from area bank account.
- resolves complaints and problems that arise with standing committees and attempts to help in the resolution of difficulties, mediating, where necessary between committees and/or officers.
- attends district or group meetings upon request.
- encourages and supports district (and inter-district) activities.
- keeps the delegate informed of Area concerns through regular discussions.
- attends area and regional functions, including NERAASA, NERC, NERF, and NERD.
- assumes added responsibility if the area delegate is unable to serve.

The area owns a laptop in which the area chair may use.

### **3.4 Secretary (Elected)**

Responsibilities include

- records the minutes of the area committee meetings and assemblies.
- makes copies of the previous meeting's minutes available in both English and Spanish.
- sends copies of committee meeting minutes to the Regional Trustee and GSO.
- works closely with the area chair and the Registrar to notify area members of upcoming events.

Basic word processing skills are helpful, but not required. The area owns a laptop computer and printer that the secretary may use if he or she does not have his or her own computer equipment.

### **3.5 Treasurer (Elected)**

Responsibilities include

- collects and distributes mail from area post office box.
- receives and accounts for all group contributions.
- prepares monthly and quarterly financial statements.
- reconciles the WAGSA bank account.
- works closely with Budget and Finance committee chair.
- dispenses funds in accordance with the annual budget approved by the Assembly.
- maintains full financial records on all transactions.
- prepares and reviews tax returns and filings with official accountants, auditors, and governmental authorities, in consultation with the area chair.

- contributes to GSO in the event of the death of a Past Delegate in an amount determined by the area chairperson, not to exceed \$50.00.

### **3.6 Registrar (Appointed)**

Responsibilities include

- Updates and maintains the area database, which includes distributing and collecting Group Information Change forms and distributing and collecting New Group Information forms.
- Works with GSO to make sure all data is current, which includes notifying GSO of any changes in group information and working with DCMs to verify information received from GSO.
- Distributes announcements of upcoming area events which, includes managing both US Mail and email distribution lists and copying, folding, inserting, labeling, and applying postage to mailings, when they are needed.
- Maintains an adequate supply of GSR welcome packets in both English and Spanish.

The database for group records is maintained through the FNV (Fellowship New Vision) program. It is an on-line Internet program maintained by the General Service Office that allows the Registrar to correspond with GSO in real-time. The Registrar has the authority to reassign any group to the proper district, if the group has been mis-assigned in the past.

### **4.0 District Committee Members (DCMs)**

What D.C.M.s do ...

- Practices the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts.
- Attends area committee meetings and area assemblies.
- Chairs and conducts District meetings.
- Participates in area committees and encourage others to do the same.
- Works closely with the area secretary to ensure that groups receive information from WAGSA and G.S.O.
- Encourages each group to have an active G.S.R. and alternate.
- Brings to the assembly those district problems, solutions, and activities that may help others.
- Are available to help with group inventories, settle traditions questions, and discuss tradition breaks.
- Helps new groups and new G.S.R.s become and stay involved in the General Service Assembly.

### **Some D.C.M.s communicate with their groups by ...**

- Producing newsletters.
- Holding District Committee meetings and service workshops (sometimes in cooperation with other districts).
- Visiting their groups.
- Distributing monthly reports of Area activities.

### **5.0 General Service Representative (GSRs)**

- Practice the 12 Steps.
- Value the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts.
- Regularly attend group meetings, especially business meetings.
- Work with group treasurer to ensure that A.A. is self-supporting through its own contributions, first at the group level, and, once the group conscience has determined that the group has a sufficient prudent reserve, by contributing to Intergroup,<sup>1</sup> WAGSA, General Service Office (G.S.O.), and the District.
- Represent the group conscience at the area assemblies and District meetings.
- Are welcome to attend Area Committee meetings.
- Participate in various Area committees.
- Inform group of district and area activities (e.g., make a brief report during “half-time”, take copies of flyers and minutes back to the group).
- Encourage group members to participate in various service opportunities (e.g., signing up for a CPC committee event, working with the Hospitals and Institutions committee to sponsor a meeting or send Grapevine/La Vina subscriptions to institutions).
- Perform other duties, as determined by the group (e.g., working with the secretary to lead business meetings, maintaining an adequate supply of literature, preparing “welcome packets” for new members).
- Elect the District committee members (D.C.M.s), and participate in district activities.

To better serve their groups, G.S.R.s should become familiar with the A.A. Service Manual, the Twelve Concepts for World Service, and the pamphlets *The A.A. Group* and *The G.S.R.*

Remember, a good servant is not the one that takes more than one service position at a time but the one that does one service job and does it well.

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<sup>1</sup> The Washington Area Intergroup Association (WAIA) serves all of the English-language groups. The Spanish-language groups in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia each have their own intergroup

## **Getting started as a new G.S.R. ...**

- If you are reading this booklet, you probably have already spoken with the WAGSA Registrar and received your new G.S.R. welcome packet and a group information form. Please complete the form and return it to the Registrar, who will make sure that you are sent notices of area assemblies. Since attendance at area assemblies is one of the most important functions of a G.S.R., this notice is fundamental to effective service. If you miss an assembly, your group does not have a voice or know what happened at the assembly.
- The registrar also will forward the form to the G.S.O. G.S.O. will provide additional service materials for your group.
- The registration form asks for your group service number. The registrar can provide the group service numbers for existing groups. The service and district numbers of existing groups also may be found by consulting the Eastern U.S. A.A. Directory, or by asking the G.S.O. New groups will receive their service number directly from G.S.O. after completing and returning a “new group form” available from the registrar.
- Please note that registration with your Intergroup using the form they supply is not enough. The records of WAGSA and the Intergroups are not interchangeable. Each G.S.R. should notify the above record keepers individually.

## **A new G.S.R. asks ...**

### **What have I gotten myself into?**

Probably nothing that you can't handle with help. Please keep reading and keep coming back. Ask your sponsor, your service sponsor, or the person sitting next to you what they do and how they do it.

### **What is a service sponsor?<sup>2</sup>**

- A service sponsor is a person who takes on the role of guide to the person new to service, sharing experience, strength and hope in service. It is a long-term relationship, usually initiated at the request of the person to be sponsored. The relationship is can provide the experience of a shared journey in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic.
- At a workshop held at the 1991 General Service Conference, it was noted that although service sponsorship has "been in existence a long time, 'very little has been addressed to formalize the work of service sponsorship!'"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> From the SENY Service Handbook and Articles of Association and By-Laws, 2001, p. 33.

- In selecting a service sponsor the new G.S.R. should try to find someone whose service attitudes, experience and style s/he admires. It is always helpful to remember that we have three legacies, and that recovery through the Twelve Steps and unity through the Twelve Traditions are equal sides to the A.A. triangle. Service in conformity with the Twelve Concepts should always be seen as closely related to recovery and unity. So, one question to ask in selecting a service sponsor is whether you admire the recovery and adherence to the traditions shown by the prospective sponsor.
- The same attitudes necessary for a G.S.R. should be present in a prospective service sponsor: courage, thick skin, self-humor, and emotional maturity. A service sponsor should be as kind, non-judgmental, and willing to share as a recovery sponsor would be with a newcomer.

#### **What if my group isn't interested in Area news? <sup>4</sup>**

- One common experience shared by new GSRs, particularly those from groups which have not had active GSRs in the past, is a lack of interest in general service. All too frequently, the inactive group has come to focus on personal recovery.
- Information can be conveyed in a number of ways. The GSR can request time for a report at the group's business meeting. Announcements of upcoming events, workshops, etc., can be made in conjunction with the secretary's break at meetings. The GSR can try to develop a report that is interesting, to the point and informative, rather than boring and repetitive. If necessary the report can be a short written summary, distributed at the group's regular meeting.
- The important thing is that an attempt be made. Simply by talking about service in our one-on-one conversations, we can stimulate interest and eventually succeed in bringing the group into the mainstream of A.A. It may be a slow process; it may provide lessons in patience, tolerance and humility; but it does help us to practice these principles in all of our affairs. And, after all, our own continued sobriety is what service is all about.

#### **How can my group make contributions to support A.A. service activities? <sup>5</sup>**

- Many groups have asked about the handling of contributions. How much to contribute, when and to which level of service (Intergroup, district, G.S.O., WAGSA,) is entirely a group decision. Some groups contribute monthly, others quarterly or annually and still others when they feel their prudent reserve has grown too large. In general, however, any amount given at any time is appreciated and helps carry the A.A. message.

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<sup>3</sup> From, *Sponsorship-Gratitude in Action: The Forty- First Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous*, 1991, Final Report, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> From the SENY Service Handbook and Articles of Association and By-Laws, 2001, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> From the SENY Service Handbook and Articles of Association and By-Laws, 2001, p. 33.

- If your group wants its contribution to be distributed among the various A.A. service entities, the treasurer must send separate donations to each entity. Many groups in districts that do not have annual budgets choose to send 60 percent of their excess funds to their Intergroup, 30 percent to the General Service Office, and 10 percent to the Washington Area General Service Assembly. However, as with all issues, the individual group conscience needs to decide how to apportion their contributions. For example, some groups may decide to send some money to their districts.

Additional information concerning finances in A.A. may be found in the following publications available through A.A. World Services (A.A.W.S.) by phone or through its literature catalogue, through your local intergroup, or from the WAGSA treasurer:

- *A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*
- *Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix* (an A.A.W.S. pamphlet)
- G.S.O.'s *A.A. Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) on Finance.
- *The A.A. Group Treasurer* (an A.A.W.S. pamphlet).

After the group decides how to divide the money in its treasury over and above necessary current expenses and a prudent reserve, excess funds may be sent to:

#### **Your Intergroup**

WAIA Central Office<sup>6</sup>  
4530 Connecticut Ave., NW Suite 111  
Washington, DC 20008

Oficina Intergrupala Hispana  
2007 14<sup>th</sup> St., NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20010

Oficina Intergrupala Hispana  
7930 Georgia Avenue – Ste 3  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Oficina Intergrupala Hispana  
P.O. Box 1152  
Alexandria, VA 22041

#### **General Service Office**

P.O. Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, N.Y. 10163

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<sup>6</sup> All English-language groups are served by the WAIA.

## **Washington Area General Service Assembly**

P.O. Box 5673  
Friendship Station  
Washington, DC 20016

### **Why do we need service entities other than the A.A. Group?**

Other service entities are needed within the fellowship to perform the services that the groups cannot perform for themselves (e.g., distributing literature, providing public information about A.A., helping new groups get started, handling pleas for help).

### **How much organization should an A.A. Group have?**

- Because Tradition Four states that each group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, there needs to be a mechanism through which a channel of communication can be established with other groups and the A.A. service structure. Organization of this communication channel begins when group officers and committees are selected or elected within the structure of the group.
- These trusted servants, or “officers,” hold group service/business meetings. In some instances, the officers make up the group “steering committee” that conducts routine business of the group and reports its activities to the group. Other groups conduct their business with input from all members who are in attendance when an issue needs to be addressed.
- As described in the pamphlet *The A.A. Group*, some groups fill a comprehensive slate of service positions. At the opposite end of the spectrum, other groups select one person to make the coffee, another to get speakers or discussion leaders, a treasurer, a WAIA representative, and a G.S.R. In brief, all are as organized as they need to be to make sure that “when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help” the “hand of A.A.” is there.

## **6.0 Area 13 Standing Committees**

### **Standing Committee Chairs (appointed)**

- The area has ten standing committees; of which, the chairs of which are appointed by the area chairperson. Descriptions of the various committees, their activities, and the responsibilities of their respective chairs begin on page 20.
- WAGSA operates by a committee system similar to the system used by the General Service Conference. Committees are created by and responsible to the full Area Committee. They do not set policy or decide issues, but they may make recommendations to the Area Committee by way of reports at Area Committee meetings and Assemblies.

- All committee chairs are encouraged to make sure that members of the committee are broadly representative of the areas' membership. Anyone who is considering chairing a committee should have a solid appreciation for and commitment to the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts.

### **6.1 A.A. Grapevine Committee**

The purpose of the A.A. Grapevine committee is to inform the area about the publication and to acquaint individuals with materials produced by A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

Responsibilities include –

- To disseminate information to the area committee about new Grapevine items
- Staffs Grapevine/La Viña exhibits at group, district, and Area events.
- Reminds G.S.R.s that the exhibits are available for group celebrations and other events.
- Has the A.A. Grapevine table available at all area committee meetings, assembly meetings and WAIA meetings.
- Encourages groups to subscribe to the Grapevine and La Viña and to purchase subscriptions for institutions.
- Ensures that an adequate inventory is maintained and kept in a secure location.
- Works closely with the Area Treasurer to make sure that the area has accurate records of the committee's inventory, income, and expenses.
- Coordinates Grapevine/La Viña exhibits at group, district, and area events

The Grapevine committee chair should be familiar with G.S.O.'s A.A. *Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) about Literature committees and the Guide to the A.A. Grapevine workbook.

### **6.2 Archives Committee**

Responsibilities include –

- Collects and preserves historical data pertinent to WAGSA.
- Shares bits of historical information at area activities.
- Communicates with the Archives committee chair at WAIA to explore opportunities for collaboration and to prevent duplication of efforts.

The Archives committee chair should be familiar with the Archives Workbook, the G.S.O.'s A.A. *Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) on Archives and the A.A.W.S. book *A.A. Comes of Age*.

### **6.3 Bridging the Gap**

The purpose of the Bridging the Gap committee is to “Bridge the Gap” between treatment and A.A. by helping the newcomer attend their first meeting in A.A. Bridging the Gap is a temporary contact program to introduce the newcomer to A.A. books, pamphlets, meeting schedules, the importance of obtaining a sponsor, and introducing them to other A.A.’s.

Responsibilities include –

- Visits treatment facilities to show the film “Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous.”
- Makes contact with treatment facilities to inform them about the temporary contact program.
- Makes direct personal contact with clients before they are released from treatment.
- Keeps a list of volunteers willing to take clients to an A.A. meeting on the day of the client’s release from treatment.
- Explains sponsorship to the newcomer and introduces them to fellow A.A.’s.
- Sets up a contact system for newly released clients.
- Corresponds with AA inmates in correctional facilities.

Committee members should be familiar with G.S.O.’s pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” along with A.A. *Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheets) for Correctional Facilities committees and/or for Treatment Facilities committees. In addition to the *Guidelines*, G.S.O. produces a Correctional Facilities Workbook and a Treatment Facilities Workbook, which provide information about how to run successful presentations in the respective facilities and how to establish positive relations with facility administrators and staff.

### **6.4 Budget and Finance Committee**

Responsibilities include –

- provides fiscal oversight of the area's financial situation.
- assists the Area Treasurer in the maintenance of sound accounting practices.
- drafts the annual Area budget, which is presented to the Assembly for approval.
- advises the Assembly on financial decisions, such as the maintenance of a reasonable prudent reserve.
- encourages self-support for both area needs and those of GSO
- prepares the budget in consultation with the treasurer and other officers (see section on “Money Matters” under “How we do it ...”).
- monitors adherence to budget in consultation with the treasurer.
- communicates discrepancies in budgeted and actual expenditures to the budget and finance committee.

- announces at the August area committee meeting that the budget for the upcoming year will be generated during September and October and that copies will be passed out to all attendees at the October Assembly.
- receives comments during November and December Area Committee meetings and discusses them with the committee.
- presents the proposed budget for approval at the January Assembly.

The Budget and Finance committee chair should be familiar with G.S.O.'s A.A. *Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) on Finance.

#### Membership

- The budget and finance committee consists of the committee chairman, the treasurer, and any member of the assembly willing to participate in the budget and finance process. A background in accounting, finance, or bookkeeping, while helpful, is not a requirement.
- The committee meets as necessary, which means that the committee meets frequently (monthly or more) in the fall during the preparation of the budget and then on an occasional basis throughout the year to address specific financial concerns as they arise.

#### Ongoing activities

- Throughout the year the budget and finance committee chairman works very closely with the treasurer to monitor the actual and budgeted monthly income and expenditures. If a major discrepancy arises at any time during the budget year, the budget and finance committee can recommend an adjustment in the budget to the Area Committee. If approved by the Area Committee meeting or Area Assembly, the budget will be amended.
- During June of each year the chairman of the budget and finance committee conducts a committee meeting to review the status of the actual income and expenditures as compared to the budgeted amounts. If necessary the committee can make adjustments to the budget figures to compensate for any shortfalls of either income or expenses. If adjustments are necessary the changes to the budget are brought to the floor of the Area Committee meeting in August for approval.

### **6.5 Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)**

The purpose of the Cooperation with the Professional Community committee is to inform professionals about A.A. – what we are, where we are, what we can do and what we cannot do. The CPC committee attempts to establish better communication between A.A.'s and professionals, and to find ways of cooperating without affiliating.

Responsibilities include –

- Provides staffing and literature for exhibition at professional meetings, as requested by GSO
- Works closely with the corresponding intergroup committees and G.S.O.
- Contacts professionals that work with alcoholics to give presentations
- Being familiar with CPC materials from G.S.O.

*Membership is open to any A.A. member willing to be of service.*

## **6.6 Gratitude Breakfast**

Each November, the area hosts a breakfast meeting. Tickets are priced such that the Area “breaks even” on the event. Contributions collected by “passing the basket” are donated to the General Service Office.

Responsibilities include –

- solicits volunteers to serve on various sub-committees host/hostess, program and flyer printing, raffle items from Literature and Grapevine, gratis tickets for Treatment Facilities, ticket printing and distribution
- arranges for a speaker for the Breakfast.
- maintains action plan to assure sub-committee assignments are meeting timelines.
- arranges for the taping of the Breakfast Meeting.
- implements a ticket distribution and sales process.
- Ticket Chair works closely with the Treasurer to ensure all receipts for expenditures and monies from tickets sales are recorded timely and accurately.

The Gratitude Breakfast committee chair and co-chairs should be familiar with G.S.O.’s *A.A. Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) on Conferences and Conventions. When appointing co-chairs, the Gratitude Breakfast Chair should make sure that the different populations of Area 13 have representation; for example, if the Gratitude Breakfast Chairperson is from Prince Georges County, he or she should have co-chairs from Montgomery County, the District of Columbia, and one of the Spanish-language districts. The area maintains a workbook of tasks and responsibilities for the GB chair, along with a compilation from previous breakfasts.

## **6.7 Mini-Conference**

Each spring the area hosts a mini-conference to allow groups to exercise their “Right of Participation” in the conference structure of Alcoholics Anonymous. The mini-conference gives our Delegate the conscience of the area to take with him or her to the General Service Conference.

Responsibilities include –

- Along with the area chair, secures a location for the mini-conference.
- works with the delegate and past delegates to identify discussion topics.
- secures volunteers to serve as panelists, recorders, and timers.
- copies background material given by the Delegate and gives to the panelists in sufficient time for them to prepare their presentations.
- prepares flyers and announces and distributes to give notice of the event
- arranges for coffee and donuts and lunch.
- Prepares monthly briefings on the progress of the committee.
- provides a final report on attendance and finances at the next area committee meeting.

The Immediate Past Delegate can be a valuable resource and should be included in all stages of the planning process. G.S.O. publishes a set of *A.A. Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) on Conferences and Conventions. It is essential that the Delegate and Alternate Delegate/Chairperson attend the Mini-Conference. The area maintains a workbook of tasks and responsibilities for the Mini-Conference Chair, along with the history of the mini-conference and a compilation from past conferences.

### **6.8 Policy and Procedure Committee**

The purpose of the Policy and Procedure committee is to identify policy and procedure issues of the area committee and to review the previous election procedures.

Responsibilities include –

- Identifies procedural issues of the Area 13 Committee;
- Proposes decision-making processes to address these issues;
- Establishes the process for the creation, revision, and termination of policies and procedures that represent the work of the Area 13 Committee;
- Maintains the Area 13 Handbook and proposes needed revisions and updates on a regular basis.

### **6.9 Public Information (PI)**

The purpose of the Public Information committee is to carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic by informing the general public about the A.A. program. The committee carries the message by getting in touch with the media, schools, industry and other organizations, which can report on the nature of A.A. and what it can do for alcoholics.

Responsibilities include –

- being familiar with the PI materials from G.S.O.
- working closely with the corresponding intergroup committees and G.S.O.

- responds to requests for speakers from area professional programs and schools.
- responds to media requests, such as television and radio appearances, while keeping in mind A.A.'s Twelve Traditions, most especially the tradition of anonymity at the level of press, radio, television, and film.

## 6.10 Website

1. The purpose of the Area 13 website as a public information tool is:
  - a. To provide accurate and consistent information about Alcoholics Anonymous.
  - b. To facilitate the communication of A.A. services and activities provided in the Washington Area 13.
  - c. To encourage participation of members, groups and committees in A.A. services and activities in Area 13 and the Northeast Region.
  - d. To provide a link to the Area meeting schedules provided by the Washington Area Intergroup Association (WAIA) site at [www.aa-dc.org](http://www.aa-dc.org), and
  - e. To provide links to AAWS at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) and to the AA Grapevine at [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org).
2. The Area 13 website is registered by an Internet Service Provider (ISP) in the name of the Washington Area General Service Assembly, with the domain name of
 

*area13aa.org*
3. The website reflects the principles outlined in the Steps, Traditions and Concepts for World Service of Alcoholics Anonymous. To preserve anonymity, no full personal names will be used.
4. Content will be available in both English and Spanish.
5. The Website Committee, a Standing Committee of the Assembly, will have the following responsibilities:
  - a. To register, establish, maintain, and oversee the website;
  - b. To determine the content for the website;
  - c. To report to the Area Committee and Area Assembly; and
  - d. To operate within the budget established by the Assembly.
6. The Chairperson of the Website Committee, appointed by the Alternate Delegate/Chair, shall serve as Administrative Contact and the Webservant shall serve as the Technical Contact to the ISP account for a two-year period in keeping with the current Panel of service, and may be reappointed. Other members are encouraged to volunteer to serve on the Committee for a two-year period.

## 7.0 Ad Hoc Committees

- Separate from area standing committees, the area chairperson may create an ad hoc committee to examine a specific issue or project that falls outside the scope of any of the standing committees. Ad hoc committees exist for only the period of time in which they are examining the issue or item for which they were created. Generally, an ad hoc committee is charged with carrying out a specific task or gathering information that presents its findings to the area.
- The area chair appoints the chairperson of an ad hoc committee, generally a member of the area committee. Ad hoc committee chairpersons are not voting members of the Assembly by virtue of their position as ad hoc committee chair. Ad hoc committee membership and size is flexible to accommodate the scope or the issue or project. Anyone wanting to participate in an ad hoc committee should contact the ad hoc committee chair.

## 7.1 Hospitality

Responsibilities include –

- makes sure that someone arrives at the Area Assemblies and Committee meetings in sufficient time to have light refreshments (e.g., coffee, tea) ready before most members begin to arrive.
- maintains adequate inventory of supplies (e.g., coffee, tea, creamer, sugar, paper products).
- keeps coffee pots and other Area equipment and supplies in a secure location.

This committee was established in 2003.

## 7.2 Mapping

“A district is a geographical unit containing the right number of groups - right in terms of the committee member’s ability to keep in frequent touch with them...Linguistic districts are made up of groups that conduct meetings in non-English language...Their boundaries may be independent of the conventional geographic district boundaries.”

*From the A.A. Service Manual, page S28*

This committee was established in 2003 because district boundaries in all parts of Area 13 were not clearly identified. As noted in the maps of the districts in Area 13, the most recent redistricting was completed in September 2005.

Responsibilities include –

- Along with the Registrar, prepares current maps of the area according to zip codes.

## **8.0 WAIA Liaison**

Responsibilities include –

- Attends WAIA monthly meetings, area assemblies, and area committee meetings.
- Informs WAGSA and WAIA of the other's activities and opportunities for cooperation.
- Coordinates the sale of conference-approved literature at WAGSA events.

A new WAIA Liaison may find the G.S.O.'s *A.A. Guidelines* (i.e., the yellow sheet) on Central or Intergroup Offices to be a useful resource.

## **9.0 Area 13 Committee Meetings**

- Area Committee meetings are held the second Monday of every month, with the exception of July, at Silver Spring Presbyterian Church (580 University Boulevard East, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910). Meetings begin at 7:30, although individual committees often meet earlier. All interested A.A. members are welcome. If Montgomery County schools are closed due to inclement weather, the meeting will not be held. At these meetings, D.C.M.s or their alternates, committee chairs, and area officers may vote.

## **10.0 Area 13 Assemblies**

### **10.1 Winter (January) Assembly**

#### **Topics**

- In January, the chair of the Budget and Finance committee presents the Area budget for the upcoming year. Committees present their goals and objectives for the coming year, and other area business is brought to the floor.

#### **Participation**

- All A.A. members are welcome. However, only D.C.M.s or their alternates, G.S.R.s or their alternates, committee chairs, and area officers may vote.

### **10.2 Spring (May) Assembly**

#### **Topics**

- The delegate gives a report of the conference, and other business is brought to the floor for discussion.

### **Participation**

- All A.A. members are welcome. However, only D.C.M.s or their alternates, G.S.R.s or their alternates, committee chairs, and area officers may vote.

### **10.3 Fall (October) Assembly, Area Elections (Even Years)**

#### **Participation**

- In fall of even-numbered years, the DCMs, GSRs, area officers, and committee chairs gather to elect the next panel of trusted servants (i.e., the Delegate, Chair/Alternate Delegate, Secretary, Treasurer, – see pages 12 and 13 for position descriptions). This process is described in detail on pages 9 – 12.

#### **Elected Positions**

- All members who are considering standing for an elected service position should have a solid appreciation for and commitment to the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts. Suggested qualifications for each position are outlined in the A.A. Service Manual.

### **10.4 Fall (October) Assembly (Odd Years)**

- Historically, the Fall Assembly in odd-numbered years has been reserved for approval of the Area Handbook and discussion of any Area business.
- In 2001, the Area held its first Area Inventory. Responses were not recorded verbatim, but the Secretary took copious notes that were given to the Chair.

#### **Participation**

- All A.A. members are welcome. However, only DCMs or their alternates, GSRs or their alternates, committee chairs, and area officers may vote.

### **11.0 Area Activities**

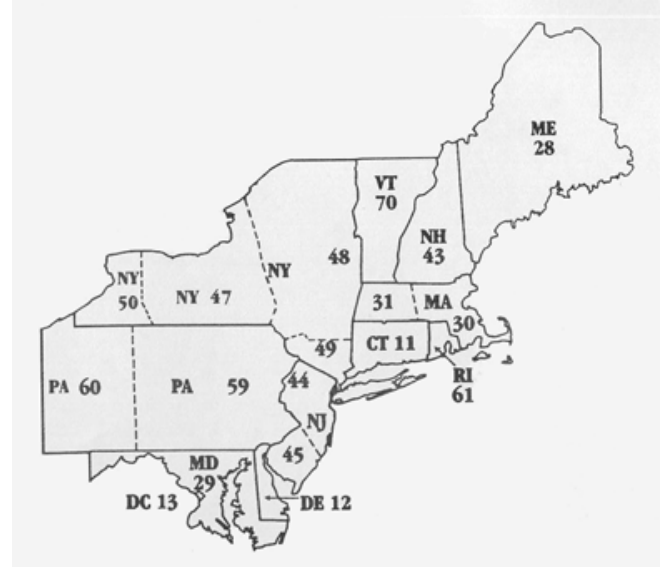
- From time to time, the Area hosts workshops on various service topics (e.g., “the G.S.R.” or “the group treasurer”). Often, workshops are held immediately before area assemblies. The area chair leads the workshop or selects the leader. For example, the area chair and Past Delegates may facilitate “G.S.R. Workshops”. The Area Treasurer has led a workshop for group treasurers. Groups and Districts may also consider hosting workshops on various service topics.

## 12.0 Regional Activities

Area 13 is one of 18 Areas in the Northeast Region, consisting of Washington, D.C., Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland and the Hispanic groups in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia.

The other Areas in the Northeast Region are:

- ❖ Area 11 (Connecticut)
- ❖ Area 12 (Delaware)
- ❖ Area 28 (Maine)
- ❖ Area 29 (Maryland, with the exception of Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties)
- ❖ Area 30 (Eastern Massachusetts)
- ❖ Area 31 (Western Massachusetts)
- ❖ Area 43 (New Hampshire)
- ❖ Area 44 (Northern New Jersey)
- ❖ Area 45 (Southern New Jersey)
- ❖ Area 47 (Central New York)
- ❖ Area 48 (Hudson, Mohawk, Berkshire New York, HMB)
- ❖ Area 49 (South Eastern New York, SENY)
- ❖ Area 50 (Western New York)
- ❖ Area 59 (Eastern Pennsylvania)
- ❖ Area 60 (Western Pennsylvania)
- ❖ Area 61 (Rhode Island)
- ❖ Area 70 (Vermont)



### 12.1 NERAASA

- The Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA) is held every year during the last full weekend in February. At NERAASA, you will be able to interact with others who have your same service positions (e.g., G.S.R., D.C.M., committee chair, area officer) through round-table discussions. It is a wonderful training opportunity.

### 12.2 NERC

- The Northeast Regional Convention (NERC) is an A.A. convention that is held every autumn. It is an opportunity to meet A.A. members from other Areas in the northeast region.

### **12.3 NERF**

- The Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) is sponsored by G.S.O., led by G.S.O staff members, and held every other summer in odd numbered years. At the Forum, interested A.A.'s can meet the G.S.O. staff and Board of Trustees, learn about the A.A. service structure, and find out firsthand what activities are going on at the G.S.O. and elsewhere in A.A.

### **12.4 NERD**

- The North East Regional Delegates weekend is generally held during the summer months and rotates throughout the northeast region. All Delegates and their Alternates and Past Delegates from their respective areas usually attend.

### **13.0 Financial Matters**

#### **Where our money comes from ...**

- Our money comes from you, through the generous contributions of the groups you support. In accordance with the seventh tradition, A.A. accepts no outside contributions at any level.

#### **Where our money goes ...**

- In accordance with the sixth tradition, A.A. makes no monetary contributions to any outside organization or cause, no matter how worthy.

#### **Supporting our delegate**

- Much of our income goes to support our delegate. For example, we contribute money to G.S.O. to defray the cost of the general service conference; we reimburse our delegate for expenses incurred at the Conference and other meetings (e.g., NERAASA, NERF, NERC, and the Northeast Regional Delegates [NERD] meeting). The Area hosts the Mini-Conference and welcomes participation by all groups, regardless of their ability to contribute. We also support our Area officers in attending regional events.

#### **Carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic**

- Your contributions also go to support the work of the Area's standing and ad hoc committees. Other line items in the Area budget include literature and service workshops. Money collected at the annual Gratitude Breakfast is contributed to the General Service Office in New York.

#### **Operating expenses**

- Other items that are considered when creating the budget include the costs of holding 11 Area Committee meetings and 3 Assemblies (e.g., rent, refreshments, copying, and postage) and the expense associated with engaging the legal and accounting services as required by law.

## Appendix A. Abbreviations and Definitions of Terms

- **A.A.W.S.** — Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., one of the two operating corporations of the General Service Board; oversees the operations of the General Service Office and serves as the publishing company for Conference-approved and service literature.
- **Alternate** — A service worker who, at group, district, or area level, assists, supports, and participates in service responsibilities, and stands ready to step into the service position if the person occupying it is no longer able to serve.
- **Appointed committee member** — An A.A. member who serves on a specific trustees' committee (for example, public information or correctional facilities) because of his or her knowledge and experience in the field.
- **Area** — A geographical division within a state or province. A Conference delegate comes from an area. Normally there is one area to a state or province, except in heavily A.A.-populated places, where there may be two, three, or more areas in a state or province. Some areas include portions of more than one state or province.
- **Area assembly** — A meeting of G.S.R.s and committee members to discuss area affairs and, every other year, to elect a delegate and committee officers.
- **Area committee** — A committee made up of district committee members (elected by the G.S.R.s in each district) and area committee officers. The area committee generally serves as a “steering committee” for the area.
- **Conference** — The General Service Conference; this can mean the structure involving committee members, G.S.R.s and delegates in an area, or the annual meeting of Conference delegates each April in New York.
- **Conference-approved literature, videos, and films** — Pamphlets, books, videos, and films, produced under the auspices of various Conference and trustees' committees, which the appropriate Conference committees have reviewed and recommended to the Conference for its approval, and which have been approved by the Conference.
- **C.P.C. — Cooperation with the Professional Community.** C.P.C. committees at the district, area, trustee, and Conference level help carry the message to professionals who work with alcoholics.
- **Delegate** — The man or woman elected every other year to represent the area at the annual Conference meeting in New York and to bring back to the area the results of that meeting.
- **Director (nontrustee)** — An A.A. member who serves on the corporate board of either A.A.W.S. or the Grapevine; directors are selected for business or professional experience that relates to the activities of the corporation. (The directorate of both corporate boards also includes trustees and A.A. staff.)
- **District** — A division within an area, represented by committee member(s).
- **D.C.M.** — District committee member. An experienced G.S.R. elected by other G.S.R.s to represent the groups of their district in area committee meetings and to coordinate service activities in the district.
- **District meetings** — Meetings of the DCMs and GSRs of groups in a district.

- **General services** — Movement-wide services, performed by anyone in the general service structure
- **G.S.O. — The General Service Office**, which provides services to groups in the U.S. and Canada and publishes A.A. literature.
- **G.S.R. — General Service Representative**. The group contact with the General Service Office; voting member of the area assembly.
- **Grapevine (G.V.)** — The A.A. Grapevine, the international monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous. The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. is one of the two operating corporations of the General Service Board and is responsible for Grapevine operations and finances.
- **GvR — Grapevine representative**: the group or district contact with the Grapevine office.
- **La Viña** — Bimonthly Spanish-language magazine published by the A.A. Grapevine.
- **P.I. — Public information**. P.I. committees at the district, area, trustee, and Conference level help carry the message by working with the media.
- **Region** — A grouping of several areas from which a regional trustee comes to the board of trustees. There are six regions in the U.S., two in Canada.
- **RLV** — La Viña representative; the group or district contact with the Grapevine office.
- **Sharing session** — A group, district, area, or Conference meeting in which everyone is invited to contribute ideas and comments on A.A. matters, and during which no actions are taken.
- **Third Legacy** — A.A.'s Third Legacy is Service, the sum total of all A.A. services, from a Twelfth Step call to coast-to-coast and worldwide service activities. The first two Legacies are Recovery and Unity.
- **Trustee** — A member of A.A.'s General Service Board. Fourteen trustees are A.A. members (Class B); seven are nonalcoholic (Class A).

*FROM THE AA SERVICE MANUAL*

**Appendix B. Summary of Parliamentary Procedure**

- The Area Assembly *generally* follows Robert's Rules of Order.
- Items of business to be voted on by the Area Assembly are brought to the floor in the form of a motion. The Chairperson will ask for a second to the motion. If a second to the motion is made, discussion will follow. A simple majority vote is required to approve the motion in most cases. Election voting is a separate procedure and requires more than a simple majority.
- All GSRs (or their alternates), DCMs (or their alternates), area officers, and chairpersons of area committees are eligible to vote.

## **Appendix C. Role of Past Delegates**

### **The role of past delegates...**

- Keep the institutional memory of Area 13.
- Serve as Past Delegate Advisors to various committees
- Help the current panel of trusted servants by being a living example of 12 Step and all Traditions specially the 1<sup>st</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Traditions.
- Act as “good old timers, not bleeding deacons.”

## **Appendix D. Spiritual Basis of WAGSA**

The purpose of the Washington Area General Service Area Assembly is the same as the purpose of an A.A. group, to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. With this objective in mind, WAGSA strives to:

- Stimulate A.A. group involvement and participation in the assembly.
- Allow for free, open and unrestricted dialogue among A.A. groups in Area 13.
- Guarantee that the voice of the A.A. groups is heard within the A.A. service structure.
- Protect against "railroading" and "log rolling" of one individual's or group's specific agenda or course of action.
- Ensure the right of the minority to be heard.
- Make sure that the area assembly does not act as a governing body over anyone.
- Protect the Twelve Traditions of A.A.
- Be knowledgeable in service matters by studying the A.A. Service Manual, *A.A. Comes of Age* and the *Language of the Heart*.
- Foster awareness and understanding of the Twelve Concepts of World Service.