

Area 31 Committee Meeting - May 15, 2013

The Area Chair, Mark N., opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer and a reading from Chapter 5 of the Service Manual (p. S 44).

Secretary's Report:

- ⌚ Secretary read the old and new business from the 4/14/2013 Spring Assembly minutes.
- ⌚ Motion to accept: passes.

Treasurer's Report:

- ⌚ Beginning April Balance: \$3,700.93; Group Contributions: \$1,212.27; Other Deposits: \$0; Total Area Expenses: (\$2,489.03); Closing April Balance: \$2,489.03 plus Prudent Reserve: \$6,000 = \$8,424.17 Total Funds Available.
- ⌚ Motion to accept: passes.
- ⌚ Further comments:
 - ⌚ Comparing first 4 months of 2012 to same period in 2013 revealed
 - an increase of \$1,033.12 in contributions
 - an increase in the amount of the average group contribution from \$54 to \$58
 - and an increase in the number of groups contributing from 117 to 127.
 - ⌚ Reminder to Districts and Committees to use the budget they were allocated for activities that "carry the message". Consult DCMs of other districts as well as other Area Committee members for ideas.

Registrar's Report:

- ⌚ Received a lot of change forms at the Spring Assembly and applied changes to the data base
- ⌚ Will distribute updated District Sheets to the DCMs at the Roundup
- ⌚ Transfer of group records from Area 48 to District 3 in Area 31 is still in process. Registrar is working with GSO staff to make it happen.

Area Archivist Report:

- ⌚ I had a request for an item that a member from North Adams had seen on the Area 31 Archives Boards, when they were on display at the Mini Conference and Spring Assembly. I found the original item in the archives files and sent a copy of it to him.
- ⌚ Filing and organizing is an ongoing project.
- ⌚ The Archives room itself, really should be rearranged. There are filing cabinets way to close to the heating system.
- ⌚ I also believe there should be a lock on the door leading to the archives room. There is a lot of traffic that goes in and out of the Area Office. I'm really not afraid of theft but the archives room should not be used for Area 31 storage.

ADHOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Handbook Committee: Nothing to report

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Accessibility:

- ⌚ 7 people in attendance
- ⌚ Discussed phone number – how to promote its use
- ⌚ Had a roundtable discussion of future plans for the committee

Archives:

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- ⌚ The mini boards were brought to the Valley gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender group anniversary in Northampton on April 26th and the Holyoke group on April 28th for their anniversary.
- ⌚ The group discussed the upcoming open house on Sat 6/15/13 and a new flyer was passed out. The event was also added to the area web site.
- ⌚ It was also reported that Tom has continued to transfer many of the archives tapes to CD's. The group began some discussion about how to get the CD's out to interested AA members and how this could benefit the accessibility committee. We will discuss this again at a future meeting
- ⌚ The group then listened to an archives tape that was taped around 1980 by our first archivist who interviewed 5 early members of AA from our area. All the people on the tape got sober in the 1940's and it was very interesting. After about 25 minutes each member commented on the tape and we all agreed to listen to the rest of the tape next month.
- ⌚ The next Archives committee meeting will be held on June 4th 2013. At this meeting we plan to discuss developing guidelines around which tapes should be copied e.g. regular speakers versus actual history/archives info.

CPC:

- ⌚ 7 representatives present – 1 new
- ⌚ Filled commitments for Radio show, Intergroup and Institutions
- ⌚ Discussed contacting agencies where presentations were made in the past to see if they would like CPC to return to make another presentation
- ⌚ Given the difficulty of getting consistent attendance at monthly CPC meetings as well as no prospects responding to recent outreach efforts, Co-Chair suggested the Area Committee consider combining the CPC and PI committees.

Grapevine:

- ⌚ 8 GVRs, Chair and Co-Chair in attendance. There were no new GVRs.
- ⌚ Discussed how to promote Grapevine subscriptions and how to respond to arguments that Grapevine is not AA.
- ⌚ Distributed back issues of GV to GVRs for them to bring to Home Group in hopes that this will encourage new subscriptions.
- ⌚ June issue feature article is "My Big Fat Sober Wedding"
- ⌚ Books available for sale
 - One on One – the topic is sponsorship
 - Language of the Heart – 25th anniversary edition. This contains every Grapevine article Bill W. ever wrote
- ⌚ Wall calendars and day planners are also for sale
- ⌚ Check out the Audio project on www.aagrapevine.org

Public Information:

- ⌚ Discussion was had explaining role of PI. Group agreed that topics such as Tradition 11 and media anonymity were the responsibility of the group members of their own groups, and these topics should be brought back to home groups for discussion. It is not the role of PI to carry this message, but the role of the group member
- ⌚ Steve gave a mock presentation of speaking at school. Dan W. shared his experience as a long standing member of PI and gave the group some guidelines and suggestions. He also shared some personal experiences with commitments and the group appreciated his feedback.

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🕒 Round Up Assignments: **Sunday May 19, 10 am Chairing Meeting on Willingness**

Group elected Jim W. to chair the meeting and group discussed having Jim take excerpts from literature concerning willingness (*Big Book, As Bill Sees It, 12&12*). He will write these on paper and have members of the meeting pick them out of hat and discuss on what they have picked. This should make the meeting very interactive.

🕒 Jim W. spoke on most recent Somers Commitment and ways to reach new schools

🕒 Paul P. gave a quick demonstration of a how a speaking commitment to a school is done.

Website Committee:

🕒 The meeting was spent re-evaluating materials that were sent to the Handbook/Guidelines Ad-hoc committee. We are clarifying definitions of the web-site, web-master, committee, and committee chair. Carl will type up a 1st draft of the definitions for the site, and web-master for review at next month's committee meeting. Some thought that evolved during our discussion, was that the roles/responsibilities of committee chairs are not offered within the handbook and that this may be helpful guidance for new committee chairs. We are planning to offer that direction to the handbook committee for consideration of inclusion for the web-site section.

🕒 Our next committee meeting will be May 22, 2013 7pm 474 Pleasant St. Holyoke, Ma

Round Up:

🕒 Event to be held 5-18 and 5-19 at the Clarion Hotel in West Springfield

🕒 20 people attended the 5-15 meeting

🕒 Set up will take place on Friday 5-17. Volunteers will set up the hospitality suite and stuff registration envelopes.

🕒 Next meeting on June 12th will discuss how the event went.

Webmaster:

🕒 Summary of the last two weeks - 01 May to 15 May 2013

- Unique visitors 617
- Number of visits 1,118 (1.81 visits/visitor)
- Pages 3,516 (3.14 Pages/Visit)

🕒 Full report with color graphics will be posted on the Website

🕒 If you notice a document you requested webmaster to post is not yet on the website, email him at webmaster@area31aa.org

Invited Committees

Institutions:

🕒 \$\$ Available for A.A. General Conference Approved Literature \$962.85

🕒 BTG - Total # of calls 10 3 Men 3 Women (4 from Counselors/Staff). The # of calls is dramatically increasing = a direct result of the BTG coordinator asking for help and the committee members responding with action.

🕒 Regarding last month's discussion - "prioritizing" the Institution's Committee's Open meetings; favoring those whose "clients" are not allowed to leave the premises. It was suggested that all IGR's discuss and share with their Home Group members and return next month for more discussion.

- The IGR's reported back: Sharing Session summary:

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- Some Groups will concentrate on carrying the AA message of recovery to those Open Meetings which the client is unable to leave. i.e. Jails, Detox and/or Treatment facilities, and Psychiatric units.
 - Some Groups will fulfill the need of carrying the AA message of recovery to any of the Open Meetings.
- 🕒 The Liaison position has not been filled - Two members of the committee answered the request for help: Reports expected back from Chicopee Women's Jail and Providence Hospital. We are continuing to work together and provide an accurate Master List
 - 🕒 Opportunities for Service:
 - "LIP Service" - Literature In Prisons - Flyer available. Members of AA can help by donating new or slightly used A.A. Conference - approved literature to the "Lip Service."
 - Support your Home Group's IGR. They are an enthusiastic and committed group of individuals providing service to the sick and suffering alcoholic.

Western Mass Intergroup:

- 🕒 The Ad Hoc committee to review Western Mass Intergroup Guidelines and Job Descriptions is in full force and is reviewing among other issues
 - Incorporating WMI as a 501c3 nonprofit organization
 - Job Descriptions of Intergroup positions
 - Composition of the Steering Committee
- 🕒 Steering Committee has a couple of new members.
- 🕒 WMI will have a table set up at the Roundup to offer some literature for sale
- 🕒 Planning for the picnic has started in cooperation with WMYPAA. Will be looking for seed money from WMI budget.
- 🕒 WMI will Host the Literature table at the Mass State Convention

Berkshire Intergroup (BIG):

- 🕒 Thirteen people in attendance, eleven voting with six groups represented.
- 🕒 All BIG days were covered; however, volunteers are needed for Wednesdays 1:30 PM to 5 PM and Saturdays 11:30 AM to 2 PM. Volunteers to have six months of sobriety.
- 🕒 Discussed Round-Up commitment on 5/19/13 at 9 AM. Subject: Concepts
- 🕒 Discussed Birthday Plan and handed out plan envelopes.
- 🕒 Brian (Area Delegate) gave basic Conference report.
- 🕒 Committee formed to review groups that contribute and/or attend the committee meeting in order to determine groups to visit. Meeting will be scheduled for Thursdays.
- 🕒 Information flier about BIG's purpose and thanks for group support is in final draft for review.
- 🕒 Mark (BIG Co-Chair) to further contact the three North Adams Hospital groups to hand out Group Treasurer Info.
- 🕒 Eric (BIG Treasurer) will start presenting WMYPAA Committee info.
- 🕒 Service Workshop formal final report next month. Over budget by under 10 dollars.
- 🕒 11th Step Group at North Adams Hospital visited by Joan (DCM District 3). Positive meeting well attended with good sobriety.
- 🕒 12 & 12 and Daily Reflections donated to the Round-Up.

WMYPAA:

- 🕒 Hot dogs and beans 3rd legacy workshop will be held June 2nd from 5 to 8pm at 474 Pleasant St. Donations will be accepted to keep the event self-supporting.
- 🕒 WMYPAA and NECYPAA Connecticut Bid Committee are hosting a bonfire event on July 6th (rain date is July 13th). There will be 2 bands and 2 speakers. It's potluck, starts at 4pm (speaker meeting

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begins at 7pm). Event will take place at 65 East Street, Easthampton, MA. Parking at Manhan Rail Trail. Donations will be accepted to keep the event self-supporting.

DISTRICT REPORTS:

District 1:

- ⌚ 7 GSRs, 1 Alternate, DCM and Co DCM in attendance
- ⌚ Group reports were given
- ⌚ Better Life Group is having space issues, May need to hold 2 meetings at the same time in separate rooms since the current meeting has to limit attendance to abide by Fire Laws.
- ⌚ After Dinner Group is experiencing a decline in membership and fluctuating attendance at meetings. The District members suggested a group inventory be conducted, facilitated by a past delegate.

District 2:

- ⌚ 24 people in attendance including 2 new GSRs.
- ⌚ Discussed holding a workshop on the topic of Self Support.
- ⌚ Visited 3 inactive group (don't want to use the term "dark groups").
- ⌚ Discussed groups having problems with the use of vulgar language before, during and after meetings.
- ⌚ Also discussed holding quarterly meetings to encourage District Service Unity.

District 3:

- ⌚ 7 GSRs in attendance
- ⌚ DCM and Co DCM visited 11th Step Group at N. A. Regional Hospital and found it well attended and well run.
- ⌚ Group reports were made and good problem solving feedback was given.
- ⌚ Reviewed District Inventory Talking Points at the end of 2011. Pleased to find that action had been taken on all points discussed in inventory.
- ⌚ Discussed possibility of holding a Fellowship Picnic in North County before the end of the summer.
- ⌚ Reported that Bridging the Gap in District 3 has added more volunteer names and is doing a good job of reaching out to newly sober alcoholics.

District 4:

- ⌚ 14 GSRS in attendance
- ⌚ GSRs all reported that groups are doing well. No concerns or issues were raised.
- ⌚ Decided that District 4 would hold a workshop on Carrying the Message. Date and place TBD.
- ⌚ Melissa announced that she would need to step down as Co-DCM. Election of new Co-DCM was deferred to the May 16th meeting.

District 5:

- ⌚ 16 groups represented at the last meeting
- ⌚ District 5 continues discussion of the Service Manual/Tradition, which is taking place monthly at our meetings based on a 2 yr. rotation schedule. Chapter 9 (The General Service Board) and Tradition 5 were May's topics. Co-DCM Pauline led that discussion. Service Manuals continue to be provided to new GSR's along with our beginner's packet.
- ⌚ Chicopee No Nonsense Nooner will be celebrating its 14th Anniversary on Memorial Day @ Noon.
- ⌚ Chicopee Beginners Step Group will be celebrating its 26th Anniversary on June 6th.
- ⌚ South Hadley Group can keep its meeting place ~ renting to a different church and it's going to be OK for them to stay ~ they will Group Inventory soon.

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- ⌚ The Here and Now group will have its Anniversary in June ~ no date yet, but would like to use the Grapevine and Archives Boards for that event ~ please contact Chris (413)575-9266.
- ⌚ The Last Way Group is interested in an Institutions Commitment ~ they will be discussing it at their next business meeting and will elect an Institutions Rep.
- ⌚ GSR's are preparing for their Round-Up meeting commitments (Third Legacy, Step 2, and Step 12). GSR's are enthused, motivated, and some are consistently showing up at the Concepts meeting to gain a better understanding of the service structure.
- ⌚ We have begun to reach out to our District's dark groups, updating information and planning on visiting some of their business meetings.

District 6:

- ⌚ 12 GSRs in attendance
- ⌚ Voted to allow a GSR to bring child to the meeting when a babysitter cannot be found.
- ⌚ Discussed
 - distinction between "group conscience" and "group inventory"
 - problem some well attended meetings are having with getting more than 6 or 7 people to attend business meetings. Cannot fill all service positions.
 - the issue of some groups that report all service positions filled when the only positions that are filled are those the group deems "important"
 - role of the sponsor in getting service positions filled.
 - possibility of creating new comer packages.

Delegate's Remarks:

- ⌚ NERF to be held @ the Crowne Plaza in Cromwell, CT on 7, 8 & 9 June. The toll free number to make reservations @ the hotel is 1-888-233-9527. Be sure to mention your affiliation with NERF for the preferred rates. The cost of the Forum is \$ZERO, it's free but you are encouraged to register. The easiest way is to go online at www.aa.org
- ⌚ Next planning committee meeting for the 50th MA State AA Convention (which is 8, 9 & 10 Nov.) will be Tuesday 28 May @ the Sheraton Framingham. We car pool from the Plantation Inn in Chicopee around 5:00-5:15 PM.
- ⌚ Am fresh back from the 63rd Annual AA Conference which was in New York City the last week of April and will give a complete Report Back @ The Roundup which is 18-19 May @ The Clarion Hotel on Riverdale St. W. Spfld. The Delegate's Report will be at 2:45 PM Saturday the 18th. I will share with you a few highlights since. Area 31 bid on and was awarded to host NERAASA 2016! We'll have it at the Sheraton in Springfield with the overflow hotel the Marriott which is an air walk across the street away. A planning committee is taking shape – all interested in being a part of the most exciting event in your life can see me after the meeting to get on the list. Or call me @ 413-297-5969 or email BFOShea@aol.com. Actual planning meetings will start after the summer.
- ⌚ Alcoholics Anonymous has a new Trustee At Large/ US and his name is Bob W. It's an exciting role as the person that occupies that position is an AA ambassador – attending all the Forums in the US and events outside the country. We won't see much of him the next four years so take one good last look of him. We wish him well.
- ⌚ The theme of the 2014 General Service Conference will be "Communicating Our Legacies – Vital in a Changing World." The presentation/discussion topics will be:

- a. Recovery, Unity and Service – Our Responsibility

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- b. Passing It on Through Sponsorship
- c. Participating in Our Common Welfare Through Contributions
- d. Inventory – A Guiding Tool to Our Future

- 🕒 The 75th Commemorative Edition of the First Edition, First Printing of the Big Book passed after more debate than I anticipated. It'll be out in April 2014 and be for sale through the International Convention in Atlanta which is July 2015.
- 🕒 The Archives Committee will host an Open House on Sat. 15 June from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM @ 474 Pleasant St. Holyoke, MA on the first floor.
- 🕒 WMASS Intergroup Free Family Picnic will be @ The Moose Family Center 244 Fuller Road Chicopee, MA on Sunday 18 August rain or shine. Free admission – reasonable charges for food. Fun, live music, games for adults and children. Family and friends invited.
- 🕒 WMYPAA with WMASS Intergroup is sponsoring a GSO Bus trip into NYC on 6 September. Leaving Holyoke @ 6:00 AM and arriving back around 9:00 PM. Cost is \$35 per ticket. Bring your own lunch.
- 🕒 Concepts Meeting first Thursday of every month on the first floor of 474 Pleasant St. Holyoke, MA. Meeting starts @ 7:00 and usually lasts an hour or so.
- 🕒 Don't forget the Area 31 Roundup 18 & 19 May @ The Clarion Hotel on Riverdale St. (Rt. 5) West Springfield. Sat.: 8:00 AM – 12:00 Midnight and Sunday 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Alternate Delegate Remarks:

- 🕒 50th MA State Convention coming up in November. Planning Meeting 5/28.
- 🕒 Themes reflect those of the 2014 General Service Conference.

Area Chair Remarks:

- 🕒 Service Commitments: 5-23 Green Street Group in Monson at 7:30pm; 7-22 Young at Heart Group in Dalton at 8pm.
- 🕒 Reminder: on the odd years Area 31 brings committee boards to the MA State Convention.

Old Business: none

New Business:

- 🕒 Fall Assembly dates: Oct 12th and 13th. Chair expressed concern that the election of officers will take longer this year when we begin using 3rd legacy voting procedure. For that reason he suggested that elections be held on Sat and in time remaining, conduct workshops. Two members expressed concern that the workshops generate enthusiasm for service since we only meet twice a year we should not shorten the time we spend in workshops. Chair asked that committees bring this issue back to their members for feedback. He reported that if we go over the time allotted on Sunday, we will have to pay more for use of the space.
- 🕒 Delegate asked how people felt about having Regional Hospitality Rooms at the International Conference in 2015 instead of each Area hosting their own. He wanted to give the people organizing the 2015 convention an idea of the reaction to the idea. A few people expressed positive feelings – expression of unity, allow small Areas with low budgets to participate. Delegate asked for a Straw Poll.
 - Motion was made to take a Straw Poll on whether Area 31 is interested or not interested in having a Regional Hospitality Room at the 2015 International Convention.
 - Discussion:
 - This is an issue that should be brought back to the groups.

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- A straw poll will not commit Area 31 to a particular position and there is plenty of time to get feedback on the issue and bring back to the Delegate.
- Vote was taken to allow a Straw Poll.
- Straw Poll resulted in a majority were in favor of a Regional Hospitality Room.

Meeting closed at 9:17 pm with the Responsibility Declaration.