

# AREA 31 FALL ASSEMBLY MINUTES 22 OCTOBER 2017

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Area Chair opened the meeting at 1:00 PM with the Serenity Prayer, and a reading from chapter 5 of the service manual.

### Quorum call

51 voting members in attendance.

### Secretary's Report

Secretary read old and new business from Spring Assembly 2016 and a motion was made to accept the report, seconded and passed unanimously.

### Treasurer's Report

This report will capture 6 months activity from the Spring Assembly 2017 to Fall Assembly 2017

Opening balance for April 2017 was **\$6,977.36**. Contributions for the past six months totaled **\$15,713.33**. Area expenses totaled **\$15,483.20**. The closing balance was **\$7,207.49** plus Prudent Reserve: **\$8,500 = \$15,707.49** Total funds available.

Our contributions have increased over the last 6 months from Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. However, our contributions have decreased compared to the same 6 month period of 2016. Our expenses have decreased compared to the prior 6 month period (Fall '16 → Spring 2017). Our expenses have increased from the same 6 month time period (Spring 2016 → Fall 2016). Given where we are in the calendar year, we will not meet our projected goal (\$31,000) for contributions this year (We are currently \$22,292.35 – Donations Jan 1<sup>st</sup> → Sept 30<sup>th</sup>). We continue to educate our fellowship about the importance of the seventh tradition and the service that is being done at the District/Area and GSO levels.

**\*\*Some of the higher expenses this year was due to our increasing contributions to GSO for our delegate and increasing NERAASA reimbursements.**

### **Over the last 6 months:**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • District 1 has 27 active groups. | 10 groups made contributions for a total of \$ 939.10  |
| • District 2 has 43 active groups. | 23 groups made contributions for a total of \$3,628.98 |
| • District 3 has 69 active groups. | 20 groups made contributions for a total of \$2,115.66 |
| • District 4 has 62 active groups. | 20 groups made contributions for a total of \$2,970.49 |
| • District 5 has 59 active groups. | 26 groups made contributions for a total of \$3,345.08 |
| • District 6 has 42 active groups. | 16 groups made contributions for a total of \$2,155.87 |

**\*\***(The Registrar can give more detail with regards to pending active and pending inactive groups in Area 31)

Contributions from anonymous donors - partially or unidentified groups = \$458.15

**\*\*Attached to this report is the 6 month financial report and a list of contributions to the Area for the last 6 months.**

Thank you for your continued support/contributions to Area 31, and thank you for this opportunity to serve Area 31

Respectfully submitted,

Treasurer Area 31

### **Registrar's Report**

Unfortunately I am unable to attend this assembly as work has taken me out of the area. Here is the registrar's report for the Fall Assembly.

Area 31 currently has 323 groups listed as "active" (an increase of 11 since the Spring 2017 assembly). Eight of which are registered groups in correctional facilities.

There are also still 13 groups listed as "Unknown". This is due to the fact that the group doesn't have a contact or the contact's mailing information is incorrect.

Since the spring assembly I have met with the DCM's from each district prior to the Area meeting to share best practices and experience. I believe that this has been a valuable practice for the DCM's and have enjoyed sharing my experience with them.

As always, I am ready to accept group information change forms and enter them in. Keep in mind, that I need the group number (or at least the name and meeting date/time) full contact information including mailing address, phone number and e-mail (if they have one). The best method at this point is via e-mail or by phone. My e-mail address is [registrar@area31aa.org](mailto:registrar@area31aa.org) and my phone number is (xxx)xxx-xxxx.

Respectfully submitted,

Area 31 Registrar

### **Archivist's Report**

Once again "Thank You" for the opportunity to be of service to Area 31 as your Archivist.

Since the Spring Assembly organizing has been really slow or extremely busy. With the format of our agenda yesterday it was a great opportunity to refurbish our Area 31 District Group History Binders. It can be a daunting task because the groups are listed differently on the Registrars spreadsheet, the When and Where and on the group history forms themselves. The binders have been completed. There is one set of six; one for each district and one large binder that contains all the group histories. The larger binder stays in the archives office. The district binders are available with the archives boards for group anniversaries. In January all the district committee chairs will be given a binder with a list of the groups that we do have and the groups that we need a history of.

I have been looking for a better way to store our grapevine collection and I finally found it. The new storage containers are more secure and will take up less space in the archives room. Before and after pictures will follow.

In the near future all of the area 31 archival documents that are on our web site are going to be put onto a usb drive. This will eliminate excessive paper in our archives. As much I like paper this method will be more effective for the space we have.

We have started scanning early archival documents, but that is an arduous task that will take time. Please continue to forward your monthly District and Committee Meeting minutes to me at [archivist@area31aa.org](mailto:archivist@area31aa.org).

Once again please make sure **who, what, when, where and why** is noted on all documents being saved in our Archives.

Take Care & God Bless

Archivist Area 31

### **Webmaster's Report**

The general goals for 2017 include:

- Increasing the number of committees and groups that are actively participating in the area 31 website.
- Encouraging committee's to take ownership of their page on the website; it's not just posting minutes.
- Contributing to wider area and regional discussions about AA online.

Since the last area Assembly we have:

- Visited several committees and districts to spread the word about the area 31 website.
- Continued to attend the Intergroup meeting and inform the members there about area 31's website.
- Created a new e-mail address for posting minutes, flyers, calendar updates, etc. It is [webpost@area31aa.org](mailto:webpost@area31aa.org). This was created so that other members of the website committee can assist the webmaster in posting these items.

We continue to discuss:

- Making our section of the website, as well as our brochure, accessible to the Spanish-speaking community.
- Supporting and advising our Webmaster as he continues to work on transitioning the site to the latest version of our content management system Drupal 8).

Join us:

The website committee **warmly welcomes group reps and committee chairs**. Our meetings have a few to none attending. Groups may not be aware that the Website Committee exists and Committees might not think about attending. Technical expertise is not required and our meetings are generally not technical. We welcome the new ideas and thoughts you bring when you join us for our discussions about AA Steps & Traditions, how anonymity and other principles work in the online world. As well as how Committees can take charge of their page on the Area Website. We look forward to seeing you on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month, 7:00 pm at 474 Pleasant St. in Holyoke.

In service,

Area 31 Webmaster.

### **Accessibilities Report**

While there are no special AA members, there are many members who have special needs. This would include those who may be hearing, visually or speech impaired; those who are homebound, chronically ill, those who use wheelchairs, walkers and crutches and those who are developmentally disabled or who suffer from brain damage, stroke etc. whatever their disability may be it is hoped that they would never be excluded from AA meetings, twelve step work or AA service. (This excerpt was taken from the accessibility Workbook).

I would like to ask for a moment for silence to remember a committee member who was an integral part of our commitment at the Mt Marie Nursing home and whose sudden passing last week is a great loss to his family and the AA community. His humble service and gentle spirit will be missed. God bless you.

During the past 6 months the committee has fielded numerous requests from AA members for assistance but has struggled to make significant progress reconnecting the large group of detached alcoholics with accessibility issues.

When we do connect someone back with the fellowship, a deep feeling of gratitude and humility fills both the individual and those involved in the process.

We work on small scales, putting time and energy on an individual by individual basis, going to any lengths to help facilitate or bring people to AA meetings.

We continued to help the Area coordinate Spanish translation and adult sign language services at area and state assemblies with the help of the active deaf community and the professional interpreters that are associated with the committee and are presently updating the handicap accessibility meeting list to insure that meetings are completely accessible for those bound to wheelchairs.

Moving forward the committee will continue to help break down the barriers that prohibit alcoholics from participation and service in AA by first identifying a need and then attracting people to be part of the process of reconnecting the detached.

Being active in the service committee has freed me from the fear of connecting deeply with people and that byproduct is humility, gratitude, and ego deflation and a deeper sense of connection to the fellowship. If these spiritual gifts are attractive and if, like me, your self absorbed existence needs balance, then come be part of this wonderful committee and help us help others.

Thank you for allowing me to serve the Area.

Area 31 Accessibilities Chair

### **Archives Report**

- Since the Spring Assembly the committee has refurbished the 6 boards that we bring to anniversary meetings. We have also attended 11 group anniversaries, 3 District workshops and the Round-up.
- We hosted a bus trip to the Wilson House at East Dorsett Vermont and 2 committee members were the chairs of the meeting that afternoon.
- We are making plans to create new boards that will be Area 31 history only.
- We are in the process of updating Area 31 AA history flyers from 2014 that will be available at anniversaries, assemblies, the state convention and workshops.
- We are planning 2 2018 bus trips one to stepping stones and one to the GSO.

### **C.P.C. Report**

April:

- Visited District 1.
- Commitment at the Elms College.(It is my understanding that Fr.Stelzers course on alcoholism will now be on line).

May:

- Participated in mass state Convention planning committee. The west will host the convention this year and CPC will have their boards on display.
- Met with the past Police Chief from the Southwick police Dept.

June:

- Kicked off the round-Up on the Friday night and had a table with our boards and pamphlets.
- Visited District 3.
- Presented at the Springfield Deanery.

July:

- Visited District 2.
- Presented at Care 1 in Northampton.

August:

- Visited district 6
- Co-Chair stepped down and a member from the Committee stepped up to serve.

September:

- Participated in the Berkshires Workshop.
- Had a table at the Springfield recovery day.
- Presented Amedysis in Agawam.

October:

- Visited District 4 and now have visited all districts.

- We also have commitment at the Chicopee/Ludlow deanery and the Court Tenancy program coming up in the next few weeks.

Gratefully Submitted,

CPC Chair.

### **Grapevine Report**

May-October 2017

- A member from intergroup made a donation that paid for 2 subscriptions of the Grapevine for the contest winners of guess the grapes and photo winner at the workshop.
- New book out "Voices of Women in AA"
- Attended the round-up and chaired the workshop "Topic read around the world" and the time slot was not a conflict with lunch this year. We had a discussion that included how to include our Spanish speakers and promoting La Vina. We had awesome participation by our reps and a successful Roundup.
- Had the first grapevine workshop in years. We had the flyers translated into Spanish and put on the website. History, audio project, la vina history, 2 published speakers a raffle and photo contest with a guess the amount of grapes as well. Great participation by reps and well attended.
- Redesigned boards for the State Convention.
- We continue to cooperate with our website committee to improve the appearance of the grapevine page on our website. Thanks to the website committee for their help.

Thank you,

Grapevine Chair.

### **P.I Report.**

- Current commitments are The radio show, Bay state Hospital,
- We have a workshop on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 474 pleasant St.
- We put Q/R scanning posters around and they have received only 2 hits so far. They are at STCC and HCC and WSU as of right now.
- We are working on putting some at the bus station at UMass
- We purchased a table cloth for fairs and commitments and have begun boards as well.
- The committee has 15-30 commitments that it regularly does and from talking to other PI committees it looks like we are doing very well in this area.
- We are working on commitments in Greenfield and more IOP's since it is said that 60% of our membership comes through those places.
- We use the intergroup website for the scanner since it is more user friendly and the meeting list is there also.

Thank you.

Pi Chair.

## Website Committee Report

The general goals for 2017.

- Increasing the number of committees and groups that are actively participating in the Area 31 website.
- Encouraging committee's to take ownership of their pages on the website. It's not just posting minutes.
- Contributing to wider area and regional discussions about AA on line.

Since our last Area Assembly we have:

- We have visited several committees and districts to spread the word about the area 31 website.
- We continue to attend the Intergroup meeting and inform the members about the Area 31 website.
- We have created a new email address for the posting of minutes, flyers, calendar updates etc. It is [webpost@area31aa.org](mailto:webpost@area31aa.org). We created this so the webmaster would not have to address all changes and that members of the committee can review the posts prior to posting.

We continue to discuss.

- Making our sections of the website, as well as our brochure, accessible to the Spanish speaking community.
- Supporting and advising our Webmaster as he works on transitioning the site to the latest version of our content management system(Drupal 8).

Join us.

The Website committee **warmly welcomes group reps.** Our meetings have had as few to none attending. Groups may not know that the Website Committee exists and committees might not think about attending. Technical expertise is not required and our meetings are generally not technical. We welcome the new ideas and thoughts you bring when you join us for our discussions about AA Steps and Traditions and about how anonymity and other principles work in the online world as well as how committees can take charge of their page on the site. We look forward to seeing you on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 474 Pleasant St at 7pm in Holyoke.

Thank You,

Website Chair.

## **Round-Up Report**

- The 2017 Round-Up information.
- 270 individual registrations
- 40 CD's were ordered and sold.
- 76 people attended the Cpc/Alanon kick off meeting not sure how many professionals no number was taken.
- 39 surveys where received very positive.
- Some glitches noted: the dinner time for the banquet was wrong and we refunded 2 people who asked. One individual stated that the hospitality room on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor was inconvenient and the remainder of comments where related to the program and will be talked about at the meetings.
- The 2018 Round-Up committee has begun to meet. There are 30 members on the committee. Most subcommittees have more than one person to work together.
- We have a new chair and co-chair.
- The round-up in 2018 will be May 11,12 and 13 at the La Quinta Hotel in Springfield.
- The save the date flyer is available and will be posted on the Area's and intergroup websites.
- We will be accepting donations from groups of books, coffee and cash. Please contact the chair if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Round-up chair.

## **Institutions Report**

- 421 meetings a month in 45 facilities.
- In May we had a new librarian.
- New floor at Providence was added and we started meetings there.
- The Ad-hoc committee created for the distribution of books decided to recommend no change to the current system.
- Added a furlough program from Cybulski prison in Connecticut to take inmates to men's meetings in Connecticut only.
- Asking for people who are doing meetings at institutions not going through the Institutions committee to consider coming to it.
- Donations from the last 6 months are about the same at 11,503.26.
- BTG is doing well.
- New liaison reported that they are always continuing to contact facilities and keep meeting list updated.
- The secretary emails the minutes to the Institutions reps.

### **Western Mass Intergroup Report**

- We continue to provide 24 hour phone coverage and over the last 6 months the responsiveness has increased translating into 12 step calls being answered quicker. Thank you to the groups for their help with this.
- We had a new printing of the when and where in the last 6 months and our online version is updated as the changes happen. You can get and copy a PDF online if you wish.
- We held our annual picnic this past August at the Moose family center in Chicopee. It was a beautiful day and many family and friends attended to make it another success. Thank you to all the groups and people who helped and donated to the raffle as well.
- We continue to support the groups with flyers and announcements on our website and at the office.
- We participated at the Round-up with a meeting and we sold literature as well.
- Next month we will be selecting Christmas alcathon slots and a rep from your group needs to be in attendance. Also, the Christmas kids party is going to be on December 16th from 1-3pm at 474 Pleasant.

Thank you!

### **Berkshire Intergroup Report**

Thank you for this excellent opportunity to be a part of one of the invited committees for Area 31. Berkshire Intergroup has been able to have good success with increased attendance of Intergroup rep , steady influx of contributions especially for literature sales, fluctuations in volunteer however currently fully staffed Mon - Fri at this time . Berkshire Intergroup continues to struggle with volunteerism for position of Office Manager. Standing positions for upcoming elections continue to be for BIG Chairperson/ and Co-Chairperson. BIG voted in new secretary for 2017 - 2018 year. Treasurers report has been simplified. Plans to establish new process for literature tally and inventory. New PDF meeting change forms are now available on the Berkshire Intergroup website, along twelve step call list . Excellent service day partnering with District 3  
Again want to thank you for allowing me to serve alongside of the members of Area 31 of Western Mass.  
Yours in Service

BIG Intergroup Chair

### **WMYPAA Report**

- We have a new chair for the committee.
- We now meet on the second Saturday at the serenity club
- We attended the round-up and put on a meeting.
- The chair is also on the round-up committee.

- Our events this past 6 months were a pajama jam in April, a meditation hike in June, a beach party in July and a bonfire in October.
- We have between 15 and 20 members showing up at the meetings.
- Our main focus is a New England Young Peoples conference bid.
- Having a corn hole tournament at the heritage park 3pm in east Longmaedow.
- Posters are going out.
- We will be renting a van to attend necypa in Portland this year.

### **District 1 Report**

- We have a variable attendance of GSR's at the monthly district meeting, but we also have 2 new GSR's regularly attending.
- We had our yearly workshop in July and the archives boards were brought and it was a great time and well attended. Thank you to all who attended.
- Thank you to the area committee members who rotated through each month keeping us informed and thank you to the other members for their support as well.
- Thank you to the committee for getting the district involved with the Mass State Convention helping to bring us together.

Thank you,  
District 1 Co-Dcm.

### **District 2 Report**

- Averaging about 10-15 GSR's and Alt's at the meetings.
- GSR volunteers summarize the concept and service manual chapter of the month at each meeting.
- Our round-up commitment went very well.
- We discussed at our meetings the past 6 months the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition, safety in AA and the yellow card, getting group members involved in the assemblies and neraasa's.
- Had a ad-hoc committee to put together a workshop with district 4 with topics of 3 legacies, unity and service and recovery.
- We had elections and we have a new DCM,Co-DCM ,LCM, And Secretary.

Thank you

DCM District 2.

### **District 3 Report**

- We have had 12-18 GSR's attending the monthly district meeting.
- We read the tradition and concept for the month.
- We have had some lively discussions regarding group concerns, the group conscious seems to prevail.
- Some groups have trouble filling service positions
- We have elected a new CO-DCM and our LCM continues to get to groups and let them know we are here for them and bring new GSR's to the meeting.
- We attended and chaired a meeting at the Round-up.
- We put on a workshop with Berkshire intergroup in September and it went very well. The topics of what is the message and participation in all of AA, is my triangle balanced?
- We had great speakers and then round tables discussions afterwards that the attendees found very interesting and inclusive.

Thank you.

District 3 DCM

### **District 4 Report**

After reviewing the District 4 report I gave at the Spring Assembly and comparing goals set to goals achieved it looks as though district 4 is moving forward as God sees fit.

I spoke in the spring about changes to our meeting format to be more inclusive and encourage more participation from the GSR's as it is their meeting. We began by asking GSR's to volunteer to prepare a short talk on the tradition of the month, reading the GSR responsibilities every month, and asking GSR's to be active in visiting unrepresented groups in the District. We began sharing the DCM duties between the 2 DCM's at the District meeting and at the area meeting as well.

While some changes remain, others are still a work in progress. We have seen more consistent participation from a core group of GSR's, many of whom are new GSR's from previously un represented groups. The district has also seen a many new GSR's coming from Franklin County which has been great to see.

I received a text from a group member voicing concerns about the District meeting being inaccessible to those with mobility issues. While I was relaying to the GSR's the need for groups to review the accessibility check list from the GSO, I had neglected to do so for the District. This text from a member of AA set in motion a plan of action to resolve this issue and with the help of the Area, the district could move to a new location that is fully accessible and an all-around nicer location. The move has been very smooth and hasn't affected attendance in any negative way.

Another very positive development in the district was the cooperation of districts 2 and 4 to put on a joint workshop. This came about because of topic and scheduling issues that seemed to be our higher power telling us that we should unite. The district 2 ad-hoc committee brought in GSR's from district 4 and they worked hard to put on a great workshop.

Finally we have elected a new Co-DCM, LCM and secretary for the district.

I would like to thank the district for letting me be of service for the past 2 years as it has been an honor and a privilege to serve the district.

Thank you!

DCM district 4

### **District 5 Report**

- Typically have 12 GSR's in attendance
- New group women only celebrated their 1 year anniversary.
- After continuous conversations at the district groups have increased their contributions.
- The district will be co-chairing the hospitality room at the Mass State Convention.
- Upcoming workshop November 18<sup>th</sup> 1-4 at 474 Pleasant St. safety in AA and AA slogans are the topics. It is our second workshop of the year.
- One group was asked to obtain liability insurance by their church and after working with the church it was decided that the church would not require it.
- Another group in the same town at a later time on the same night is having trouble making their bills and are being held afloat by group members.
- We have new GSR's attending the district meeting
- We have a new LCM who will be visiting groups to seek more GSR's from the groups that do not send them.
- Have had many groups participate in inventories this past 6 months and have had the area service commitments as well.

Thank you  
District 5 DCM.

### **District 6 Report**

- We had elections and had someone stand for all.
- We moved our district meeting location to the Western Mass Hospital. It is in our district and is fully accessible.
- We had a workshop in Enfield and we will be having another on December 16<sup>th</sup> on safety in AA and the yellow card.

Thank you for allowing me to serve.  
Co-DCM District 6.

### **Delegates Report**

- The conference report is on the back table , so please take a copy with you and DCM's please take back to your districts for the GSR's who may not be here.
- 37% of groups from Area 31 contributed to GSO about the same as last year.
- Please talk to your groups to contribute and observe the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition

- 2017 conference, solutions for all generations and multiple workshops and themes, today's alcoholic, triangle, attraction not promotion, getting the message out,
- Proposed items for 2018. Consider the library of congress and the big book, living sober addition, consider the aaws service boards re-structuring, 3 legacies, agnostics chapter considering a change, Is there an alcoholic in your life. New pamphlet being considered for the God word
- Neraasa registration forms on the back table as well as box 459.  
We won't understand the position until we have done it so, getting involved and getting active has made me grateful and thank you all for my sobriety and the opportunity to serve.

### **Alternate Delegate Report**

- Counting on the opportunity to grow more as this position has brought me to all the committees and districts and I have been able to learn and grow.
- Attended Nerf and I attended a dinner the evening before the Conference in NY with the Delegate and met people who do their work for the love of AA who are not alcoholics.
- As the program chair for this year's Mass State Convention I ask that you all attend and help us make it a success. The program is up on the site now. This is our year to host so bring your committees boards.

### **Area Chair Report**

Acknowledged and thanked the Districts and Committees for all their hard work and service to the area and AA the past 6 months.

Not having an inventory this year and doing the service fair was a success and thank you all for the participation and enthusiasm that you showed.

We are having a DCM meeting prior to the Area meeting in November.

Thank you to the helpers this weekend and thank you for my sobriety.

Recount for voting =68

### **Old Business**

- None

### **New Business**

- Motion to replace the monthly traditions meeting with a AA service manual meeting passed.
- The Area elected new officers for Delegate, Alternate delegate, Area Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

The Assembly ended with the "I am responsible" pledge at 4:10pm.