

AREA 31

FALL ASSEMBLY MINUTES

14 OCTOBER 2018

Area Chair opened the meeting at 1:08 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 2018 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 2018 to Fall Assembly 2018

Opening balance for April 2018 was **\$2,107.05**. Contributions for the past six months totaled **\$11,547.16**. Area expenses totaled **\$9,074.69**. The closing balance was **\$4,579.52** plus Prudent Reserve: **\$8,500 = \$13,079.52** Total funds available.

Our contributions have decreased compared to the same 6 month period of 2017(\$15,713.19). Our expenses have decreased compared to the same 6 month period of 2017(\$15,483.20). Given where we are in the calendar year, we will not meet our projected goal (\$29,000) for contributions this year (We are currently \$23,187.49 – Donations Jan 1st → Sept 30th). 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.

Over the last 6 months:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| • District 1 | 9 groups made contributions for a total of \$ 939.10 |
| • District 2 | 18 groups made contributions for a total of \$3,628.98 |
| • District 3 | 13 groups made contributions for a total of \$2,115.66 |
| • District 4 | 20 groups made contributions for a total of \$2,970.49 |
| • District 5 | 17 groups made contributions for a total of \$3,345.08 |
| • District 6 | 14 groups made contributions for a total of \$2,155.87 |

Contributions from anonymous donors - partially or unidentified groups = \$465.05

****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

Please excuse my absence today. I am with you in spirit and here is my report. I have been settling into my position as Registrar. I have been visiting districts, introducing myself and talking about my position. I appreciate and am honored to be a trusted servant and always bring my best to serve the area. I continue to help problem solve issues with GSR packets and am open to hearing how I can be of any other help. I am looking forward to the new data system GSO is implementing. We have 11 unknown groups and I will be handing out those group forms to the respective DCMs next month. There are currently 304 active groups in Area 31. Gratefully serving as registrar.

Area 31 registrar

Archivist's Report

Once again "Thank You" for the opportunity to serve Area 31 as your Archivist. The past six months have been less productive than usual. There has been an overload of items from Past Delegates given to Archives and the task of sorting it all is huge. Carl and I are meeting this Tuesday evening to start the process. Duplicate documents need to be eliminated. I have not decided which documents should be archived and those that will not. Prior to the past few years the only extensive records we have from Past Delegates are those given by Margaret C. She saved everything.

Please continue to forward your District and Committee Meeting Reports to archivist@area31aa.org. Once again please make sure who, what, when, where and why is on all documents being saved in our Archives.

Respectfully Submitted
Take Care & God Bless
Archivist Area 31

Webmaster's Report

Issues addressed or investigated in the last 6 months:

WIFI for the Area meeting rooms

There has been some discussion about having WIFI available for the Area offices and the monthly Area meeting. I have had a conversation with Kevin from Intergroup about how it works for them. Kevin stated that even though his two computers in the Intergroup office are separated by only one wall he cannot get WIFI to work reliably, the construction of the building is such that the signal does not carry. I suspected this would be the case and so we would need a wired connection to a WIFI hub in any room that we would want to cover. Expense-wise the cost of additional hardware is not great but physically

securing it is another issue. The larger expense would be the cost of a broadband account, Comcast sees 474 Pleasant as a business address with the attendant higher prices. I have not asked for a quote from them.

Online contributions

I also spoke with Kevin about Intergroups' experience with online contributions. He stated that it has not drawn any activity as of the date that we spoke. It is none the less the way of the future and we need to make it available on the Area website. I believe this is worth at least an experiment, it has no down side. I have given Karl, the treasurer, a more detailed report about the setup and expenses involved.

Meeting Guide participation

While speaking with Kevin I also believe I have come up with a workable plan to get our Area 31 meeting schedule on the new 'Meeting Guide' app. I plan to create the database and make it accessible to the app and Kevin is willing to keep it updated provided we give him the access. This is an area where having a good working relationship with Intergroup should pay off. There will be a fair amount of programming and testing involved with achieving this goal.

Website update to responsive design

There are still issues with moving to a 'responsive' (mobile friendly) design for our website. I continue to work on this.

Security Certificate purchase

The security certificate is in process but there are, as always, some details to be ironed out before implementation.

Thank you for letting me serve.

Respectfully submitted

Area 31 Webmaster

Accessibilities Report

- The co-chair has stepped in the position nicely including filling in for the chairperson as necessary
- The committee has remained relatively unchanged with the same small but devoted group consistently showing up
- The Accessibilities hot line has received several calls from members looking for assistance in connecting to AA
- Some of the needs the committee have met have been bringing meetings into nursing homes and giving members with physical disabilities rides to meetings
- The committee decided to discontinue bringing meetings to a woman in a nursing home who was not a willing participant

- The committee has continued to compile a list of AA members who are willing to assist with rides and other services when members call for help
- The committee has been attending the Mass State Convention planning meetings and has been working to make the event accessible to deaf members and Spanish speaking members
- The final program for the weekend was just submitted for translation into Spanish
- The meetings for Betty at Mt Marie have resumed and she celebrated her 44th anniversary with cake and a facetime call to a friend

Area 31 Accessibilities Chair

Archives Report

Looking back at previous assembly reports and committee minutes available I will try to fill in this report as best I can. I was asked to chair this committee this past June through the remainder of this year. I served this committee in 2009-2011 as a group representative as well as committee chair.

First, I cleaned up the committee e-mail account which had 129 messages some dating back to 2014. I cannot report specifically the number of times the archive display boards have gone to group anniversaries, or district workshops, but can simply say that they have been actively going out on a regular basis.

As of June, the committee has assessed on-going projects, and the ability to fulfill the goals of completing them.

Some of these have been abandoned, or tabled as there is a need for group participation to complete them.

We decided that there would be cessation of the conversion of tapes to digital media at this time.

One of the items was discussion of an old timer's speaker / pot luck dinner event that has been cancelled for now and could possibly occur next year.

Other projects that have been left active but are tabled are:

1. Checking master list of registered groups with groups that have group histories then outreach to those groups that don't have histories on file.
2. Creation of a banner depicting imaging of a tree that will represent the area roots, branches (districts) and leaves (groups)

Active projects are the development of an Archive pamphlet which is a renewed version of an older pamphlet which will be updated and entirely revised.

Some things that we have done include the purchase of a copier/ scanner.

Submitted revisions to the Archive Committees web page on the Area website to include an image of the display boards and some corresponding text. Please, check it out.

We have provided a copy of a group history to a group that lost theirs as well as given some information to our Area Delegate for some research for an on-going topic that we will be discussing at this assembly.

As many of you already know, I have been reaching out to the area groups for support of this committee, as well as the area service in general through attending all of the Area District meetings as well as at the invited time slot at the Western Mass Intergroup meeting.

(There have been 2 group representatives attending the committee meeting on two separate occasions to date).

Thank you for the opportunity to serve

C.P.C. Report

CPC put on a presentation at the Berkshire House of Corrections and put on a joint presentation at the round up with AL-anon. We also made presentations to the Timbelyn Heights Neuro-Behavioral Nursing facility in Great Barrington and the Telecommunications Skilled Nursing Facility in Pittsfield. Chaula H was very instrumental in the setting up of these meetings. Chaula has set up some recurring meetings at Hillcrest in Pittsfield. CPC also spoke at District 3 in Lee. CPC also set up boards and attended District 6 workshop in Enfield and the anniversary meeting at Westfield East Mountain Group. CPC also attended the Springfield District probation court and attended the court supervised treatment session (CAST). We are in the processing of making a presentation to the staff and the judge. We also attended two addiction fairs put on by the Department of Child and Family and the department of Children and Families in Springfield. Both of these events were attended by social workers, case workers, supervisors and other staff workers. It was very successful, we spoke to and gave literature to over one hundred people. They deal with substance problems and treatment for all ages. I want to thank Renee, district 5 DCM, for these opportunities. She suggested contacting AA and CPC. These additional fairs for employees will become annual, there will be two in Springfield and one in Greenfield and Pittsfield. We will be available for about two hundred professional staff of people who work with addiction. We also attended the Recovery graduation held Holy Name social center. Questions? We did attend the addiction fair in Pittsfield, it went very well, Chaula H was available. She is very helpful in her knowledge of Berkshire county.

CPC Chair 2018

Grapevine Report

Attendance: Between two and 12 reps attending each monthly meeting.

49th Western Mass Round UP Committee chair reached out with hospitality for invited keynote speaker GV Executive Editor and Publisher Ami B. from New York.

Committee led morning session titled "Your Triangle Balanced" 9-9:55 am, meeting room Summit A.

Ami gave a talk and our co-chair spoke about the audio project and our rep Ann presented history talk on the Grapevine developed last year by the GV/LV co-chair and chair. Presented history talk to Ami after she requested a copy.

Boards: Chair attended three anniversary meetings in Area 31 and set up and displayed boards and GV/LV literature. The Boards were updated and refreshed with new color printouts.

District Visits: Chair and co-chair visited various district meetings to speak about the committee's work and publicize the Grape Jam, including Districts 1, 4, 5 and 6.

Grape Jam: Committee worked together with the late addition of WMYPAA to present Area 31 First Annual Grape Jam on Saturday September 22 at 474 Pleasant in Holyoke. Event was success with more

than 120 participants and attendees. A DJ was hired to provide music for a dance that was sponsored by WMYPAA. Committee members did various readings and talks and there were two out-of-town guest speakers including one from the Berkshires. Both Spanish interpreter and deaf interpreter were in attendance. The committee broke even with the costs. Area 31 Intergroup did not open the bookstore. Consequently Area 11 Grapevine Chair was invited to sell books at the event.

Other activities: Chair attended Grape Jam in October in Hazardville, CT, Area 11, and chaired an AA meeting attended by 80 people.

Attended all Area 31 meetings and provided report. Co-chair provided report at August meeting.

Attended two Institutions meetings and two Intergroup meetings.

Grapevine Chair

P.I Report.

- We currently have approximately 10 to 13 commitments every month.
- We are also starting to bring pamphlets around to places like nursing homes and libraries
- We will be refreshing all our posters that were placed in local colleges last Fall
- PI Committee participated at the Round-Up with topic of Honest, Openminded and Willing – all went well
- The link for the PI and CPC radio show can now be found on the Area Website and on the Intergroup Website home pages. Many thanks to our Webmaster and the Program Director at the Radio Station as well as to the folks at the Intergroup Office for helping PI and CPC do their work.
- Made changes to PI presentation: expanding on some items and adding new items
- PI committee attended the event at Liberty Prep School in Springfield and all went well
- We now have an 11x17 stand-up easel Anonymity in the Digital Age for our PI table
- Membership of the PI Committee has grown recently- we now have approximately 14 members attending the monthly meetings. I am very lucky to be a part of such a dedicated and enthusiastic group of AA members.

Pi Chair

Website Committee Report

- The committee has been very busy
- The Grapevine committee and archives committee chairs have attended the meeting
- The committee has two active group representatives, one from the Holyoke group and one from the Suffield Men's Group
- The handbook editor has been attending regularly and assisting with the new pamphlet
- The new trifold Area 31 Website pamphlet has been printed and is available now
- New boards have been completed with a theme of "Top 10 Reasons to Use the Area Website"
- The boards have been displayed at various workshops and two assemblies
- The committee gave a Power Point presentation at the roundup regarding www.aa.org and the differences between the various websites and anonymity in a technological world.
- The Webmaster and Chairperson presented at the District 6 workshop in Enfield

- The committee has been visiting District meetings and would like to hear from any districts that have not been visited
- The committee has been discussing website content, handbook corrections, Meeting Finder App, WIFI for the area, and online donations
- The Co-Chairperson attended the National AA Technology Workshop

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Website Co-Chair

Round-Up Report

- The committee has met twice at this time
- The Round Up will be moving from La Quinta in Springfield to the Clarion in West Springfield
- The CPC committee will open the Round Up with a meeting for professionals on Friday
- There will be two performances of the Twelve Traditions skit
- A banquet will be held on Saturday night
- There will be greeters in the lobby
- Alanon will be participating
- Donations of money, AA literature, coffee, and snacks are being accepted
- Berkshire Institutions has quite a few openings for institutions to be filled
- The Berkshire intergroup will be hosting Christmas and New Year's alcathons, the next meeting for planning will be on October 22nd at 3pm in the intergroup office
- Elections are upcoming and the intergroup is still looking for a co-chairperson

Institutions Report

- The committee will attend the Mass State Convention
- The committee will attend NERAASA
- There is a corrections assembly being held in Portland ME
- Donations have been phenomenal for the last six months
- 149 inmates at Cybulski Correctional Institute looking for sponsorship now down to 34

Western Mass Intergroup Report

- The Western Mass Intergroup Provides the following services:

1. Fully Staffed bookstore
 2. 24 hour informational and crisis hot line
 3. Website with online meeting list
 4. Monthly intergroup meeting
 5. Area 31 Meeting List
 6. Bookie exchange meeting to allow groups to set up incoming and outgoing commitments
 7. An FYI newsletter
 8. Worldwide Shipping Program
- Intergroup family picnic was a huge success
 - Intergroup will sponsor a 24hr Christmas alcahthon and a children's Christmas party with Santa and gifts for the children
 - Book prices had to be raised this year, the increase will help offset our shortfall of donations in the future. Thank you for your continued support of the Intergroup office
 - With your help and support the intergroup will continue to pick up the phone and to help the sick and suffering alcoholic, and your group will be able to purchase literature at the lowest costs and continue to have dedicated officers and a management team that will keep your office open and running smoothly
 - Your home group, through its intergroup representative, will always have a voice in Western Mass Intergroup
 - If your group is does not have an intergroup representative we will help if at all possible to change that
 - Never lose sight that your intergroup office is on the front lines of AA
 - We ask that your group always considers the PIE chart, and if possible, donate in any amount large or small. To help guaranty that these vital services remain intact

Intergroup Chairperson

WMYPAA Report

No Report

NECYPAA Bid Committee Report

- Working on hosting the 2019 NECYPAA in Springfield
- Working on hotel contracts-Sheraton, MGM (possible issues), Sturbridge
- Most likely Sheraton ~\$120 a night 200 room block
- Spooky Football 11/3 Community Park Holyoke
- Held kickball tournament, dodgeball tournament, and two game nights
- Nov 21st thanksgiving dance, site tbd
- Christmas party, date tbd
- NECYPAA December 28th-30th Burlington, VT
- Working on bid book, need a letter from area chair
- Commitment to Providence Hospital

District 1 Report

- District meeting attendance has been 10-15 GSRs
- The district has had several new GSRs roll in and get their GSR kits
- District 1 workshop to be held on 10/20
- Flyer is on the website
- The workshop will be a two topic four speaker format with topics of “Clarity of Purpose” and “Our Big Book Spirituality Without Borders”
- Past trustee Bob W. will be one of the speakers

District 1 Co-DCM

District 2 Report

- The Wildcats group announced it will be putting on an open Big Book meeting in addition to its regular meeting on Sunday night from 9-10pm at the Agawam United Methodist Church at 459 Mill St
- The Only Today group will celebrate their 35th anniversary on Saturday 11/24 at the United Methodist Church in at 459 Mill St in Agawam at 10:30 am for the meeting with food and fellowship to follow
- A joint ad hoc committee has been formed to put on a workshop with district 5 at Providence Hospital on Saturday 12/1 from 11am to 2pm
- The LCM has been instrumental in reaching unrepresented groups in the district
- District elections were held using the third legacy procedure and a new Co-DCM has been elected

Thank you

DCM District 2

District 3 Report

It's been a strong year for District 3. We've had an average of 15 GSRs at each monthly meeting. We had 14 new GSRs, some show up on a regular basis , and some don't.

At the beginning of the Meeting we go around the room and each GSR introduces themselves and talks about what's going on in their Group .

Every other month we've had an Area Committee visit and give a presentation about what their Committee does and then they take questions from the GSRs .

Alternating months we have a presentation of the Concept of the month and then discuss it.

We had a successful Service Workshop , September 8th , at the Lenox Community Center ,with about 60 AAs in attendance. The topic was “Carrying AA's Message into Institutions, Getting Back to the Roots of Our Service “. The idea was to get people more aware of service and to get involved, especially with Institutions, which was in need of support. I heard that Institutions had a least 3 new reps at their last Meeting.

We had an Ad Hoc Committee of GSRs in charge of the Service Workshop instead of it being run by the DCM. I think that the GSRs felt more involved and took ownership of the Workshop, making it more

successful.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as DCM.

DCM District 3

District 4 Report

- Successful workshop was held on September 29th
- The focus of the workshop was making meetings accessible to all with topics on newcomers (packets), LGBTQ (pamphlets), Spanish language meetings, and services and meetings for the deaf and hard of hearing
- The GSRs made the workshop happen
- Updated group information with the Registrar

DCM district 4

District 5 Report

District 5 been averaging about 12 to 13 GSRs in attendance at our monthly meetings. There have been some new meetings being represented at our district meetings. These GSRs can verify at times. It is difficult at times to maintain these numbers during the summer months and District 5 has many of the meetings on holidays. Turnout has still been good. The GSRs who are present are active participants in the meeting. The districts continue to utilize the group sharing forms, which allows the GSRs to discuss what's going on in their groups, good and concerns. Each month, the district completes readings from the service manual/concepts and traditions. Prior to the end of the district meeting 2 volunteers are asked to complete the following month's reading and discuss it with the group. LCM, Bill has been working very hard these past 6 months. He has visited many of the unlit groups as well as groups that used to be represented at the district meeting. Due to his outreach to home groups the district has had new representation at the meetings. Bill reported he has found a lot of resistance from the groups he has been visiting; much of it being the commitment of an individual. This has been the struggles the current active GSRs have reporting, not enough people wanting to participate in service work. District 5 had a workshop on June 2, 2018. Topics were 3 Legacies of AA and how they influence AA groups in this area? It was decided to have an earlier workshop, 10 am to 1 pm, which proved to be good because of the turnout. There was a good number of GSRs present at this workshop. Many of the groups have shared common issues or concerns in their home groups; lack of participation/ service work and financially contributing to the PIE. Some of the groups have been sharing how the attendance at their meetings have been low but the expectation is this will increase once the summer months are over. Many of the groups can only fulfill the service position of GSR and intergroup. What they call the "Important" position. This district has monthly representative from other committees in AA. The committees provide the GSRs with a brief synopsis of what each committee does and the importance to "keep AA alive". Discussions are had regarding the importance of each home group having a representative from each committee, to know what each committee is doing and how they each help AA. Many of the groups have been requesting assistance to completing group conscience from previous delegates. One of the groups in our district, have decided to utilize the concepts and read 1 at their business meeting. District 5 will be collaborating with District 2 with providing the Area with a workshop. This workshop will be held on December 1, 2018 at Providence Hospital (same location as scrambled

eggs meeting) from 11 am to 2 pm. There will be a collaborative ad hoc committee to finalize topics and food. There should be a flyer by the November Area Meeting. District 5 attempted to complete elections at the October District Meeting. Unfortunately, no one stood for the position for Co-DCM. Another election will be held in the November meeting.

District 5 DCM

District 6 Report

- The district has added four new GSRs and two alternates since the Spring 2018 Assembly
- The district workshop in July was a success and had 42 AA members in attendance
- The next workshop will be held on December 9th or 15th in Westfield
- The district was well represented at the area 31 round up
- The district will be manning the registration tables at the Mass State Convention
- The Co-DCM stepped down a week ago and the district will discuss and vote on a possible replacement
- A new secretary and LCM have been elected for 2019

DCM District 6.

Delegates Report

- Area 31 has "it" together
- The final General Service Conference report is available in English and Spanish
- The General Service Office has released a new edition of the AA service manual
- There is a new computer system being used at the General Service Office, the contact management system is enterprise wide
- The General Service Office performance report from Impact Collaborative is available on the area website, it is an abridged version and there will be more to come
- The Alcoholics Anonymous APP is up and running but has not been released to the public. This delay has bought us time to get our meeting list on the APP. The APP is expected to be released around New Year's Day
- The Mass State convention will be held on November 9th to the 11th

Alternate Delegate Report

No report

Area Chair Report

Today Area 31 has dozens of trusted servants doing the tasks of the many committees and districts to help make 12th step work possible. From the secretaries, LCMs, DCMs and GSRs of our 6 districts to all the standing and invited committee chairs, co-chairs, group reps, members and Area officers that give up their time to help with this critical work. Thank you for all your hard work. Without you, there is no us!

The focus of the Area committee has been predominantly about how to increase groups and members involvement. We have begun the rotation of the assemblies through the districts in an attempt to increase group awareness and perhaps foster more group participation in our assembly process.

Yesterday we held an outreach and a call for help to the Area to send members to the committees that require it. Often in the past we would have workshops with the topics from the Conference or an Area inventory, but it was decided that our Areas needs have to be met and that is why we had the outreach yesterday and why we are in Springfield this weekend. The Spring Assembly will be held in District 3 at the end of April or the beginning of May 2019 since the General service Conference is late in May next year.

We have more than 300 groups in the Area and around 30 participate through a GSR at the assemblies while around 65 send GSRs to the Districts. At our standing committees as was talked about yesterday members are needed to do this important work. At NERAASA last year I asked at the Area Chairs round table what we can do to increase participation and it was met with laughter. That response and the discussion that followed leads me to believe that a victory for AA and the Area's members is achieved if we increased these committees by even 1 dedicated person per committee and 1 more GSR that shows up in a District. I have seen the Area answer this call for help first hand and the result was awesome. I have the faith given to me through my higher power that whatever is needed in AA will be provided. For me being grateful to be sober means service to help the sick and suffering alcoholic however the opportunity presents itself. I serve as your Chairperson and am grateful for the opportunity. I am looking forward to see what the future has in store for us in the next year. Thank you all for your service and thank you for my sobriety!

Gratefully submitted,
Area 31 Chair

Recount for voting =51

Old Business

- Motion was made that "As a standing committee, the Round Up committee be granted two votes, one for the chairperson and one for the co-chairperson." The motion was seconded, discussed and passed with 49 yes votes. It was also decided that this change was a policy change and would have to be voted on again at the next assembly.
- It was noted that more copies of the treasurer's report and the Area Guidelines should be brought to the next assembly.

- A motion was made "To cancel the April district 6 meeting due to the assembly occurring in that month." Motion was not addressed as it was a matter for the district not the area as a whole.

New Business

- The motion "As a standing committee, the Round Up committee be granted two votes, one for the chairperson and one for the co-chairperson" made and passed during the Spring 2018 assembly was considered a structural change and required a second vote to be implemented. The motion passed a second time and the Round Up committee now has two votes at area meetings and assemblies
- An election was held to nominate a candidate for the North East Region Class B Trustee following our third legacy procedure. The qualifications of the two candidates were read and Brian O. received greater than two thirds of the votes and will be the Area 31 candidate for North East Region Class B Trustee
- A motion was made to "Ask GSO and AA Grapevine Inc to provide a list of all the specific ways AAWS and the AA Grapevine currently share financial and personnel resources as well as any planned future sharing of resources in the works including pertinent background information as to when and how these resources became shared". The motion was discussed and voted upon. The motion did not carry.
- A motion was made "To have the Area Delegate investigate the merging of the AA Grapevine with AAWS". The motion was discussed and withdrawn.
- A motion was made "To create an ad hoc committee to prepare a conference agenda item to instruct the AA board of trustees to keep AAWS and AA Grapevine separate". The motion was discussed, and called. The vote to end discussion on the motion carried. The motion was voted upon and it did not carry.
- A motion was made "To create an ad hoc committee to gather information about AAWS and AA Grapevine and the "Plan"". The motion was discussed and withdrawn due to no motion being required for the area chairperson to create an ad hoc committee. Such a committee investigating the topics listed in the motion will be created.
- The next are meeting on November 14th, 2018 is the budget meeting. There will be no committee or district reports

The Assembly ended with the "Declaration of Unity"

