



DISTRICT 29 NEWSLETTER

February 2019

www.district29aa.org



The Second....

Step — Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Tradition — For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.

9th Step Promise — We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

Concept — The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.

In this Month's Newsletter.

A little more about trusted servant positions as we approach the District 29 elections for Panel 69.

Jan S. from the Elgin Group, our newly elected Alternate DCM, is bringing home two articles in her first month!

The 12 Traditions and Service Concepts continue. The Newsletter chair, yours truly is writing this month's as my search to understand is the driving force behind the series. David M. from On the Colorado will bring the March articles home to continue the series! Thank you David!

We are looking for daring souls, willing to take on the pleasure of writing about one of the sets of Traditions and Concepts Four and beyond?

Looking for your Miracle(s)!

We are still looking for articles to share your miracle with the District 29

Fellowship! I have heard many in the rooms around District 29 and look forward to seeing some here in print! You never know who you might help! Share some of your personal experience or inspiration! Be a contributor and help the District 29 Newsletter spread the good news of living sober! Send in your articles by _____ e-mail district29.newsletter@gmail.com to _____ or get them to Theol J. in person.

Help Us Know What Ya Wanna Know!

If you have ideas for or would like to see other series or individual articles let us know. We here would like to hear from you on how this Newsletter can help share the message and make recovery more available here in our area! Help District 29 know more about your AA group!

A CALL TO SERVICE

The following is from the General Service Manual; *“Our Twelfth Step—carrying the message—is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven’t been given the truth may die.*

Hence, an A.A. service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer—ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent (sic) phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.’s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum-total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service. Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship” Bill W.

Early in sobriety I learned that anything I could do to help was a form of service. Even simple tasks at my home group like emptying ashtrays (yep, we smoked then) washing cups, arranging chairs, reading HOW IT WORKS or the 12 Traditions and straightening up after a meeting, were all forms of service. Believe it or not I even learned that sharing my experience, strength and hope, is a form of service, because they all help make sure that the message is being carried.

Through sponsorship I’ve learned how to be of service in sponsoring other women, taking the message -- via an A.A. meeting – to a treatment center or standing for a service position in our local district.

At times, as many of you may have experienced, these were somewhat fearful decisions. This fear turned out to be my old self-centered fear-based thinking: I had to rely solely on my own abilities and I was not enough! My self-sufficiency turned into my self-suffering

As we read on page 76 of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions...

“The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear—primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded. Living upon a basis of unsatisfied demands, we were in a state of continual disturbance and frustration...”

Little by slow, I’ve realized that we have at our disposal, a wealth of fellow travelers who have trudged this road before. These fellow AA’s generously give of their time and talents so that we can all succeed in our service endeavors for the good of Alcoholics Anonymous and the still suffering alcoholic.

From the myriad fears that I suffered in early sobriety to fears of stepping out onto unknown path in service, I have found encouragement on page 122 of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*...

“When, with God’s help, we calmly accepted our lot, then we found we could live at peace with ourselves and show others who still suffered the same fears that they could get over them, too. We found that freedom from fear was more important than freedom from want.”

Powerful words, and finally I know that I’m not alone. I have a loving connection with the God of my understanding and my A.A. family.

Jan S.

Open District Committee Chair Descriptions

All Committee Chairs attend District 29 meetings monthly, are encouraged to attend SWTA 68 Area Assemblies and other General Service activities to learn what other Service Committee Chairs are doing in their Districts and Groups.

Intergroup

Participates in intergroup business meetings several times a year to share their groups’ experience in carrying the A.A. message. The intergroup representative tries to keep the district well-informed about what the Hill Country Intergroup is doing.

Archives

Maintains the repository of A.A. related materials primarily relating to the origin and development of A.A. in District 29. Duties include but are not limited to: receives, sorts, indexes and preserves all A.A. related materials pertaining to District 29. Maintains and updates District 29 Group Histories for inclusion in the Archives. Conducts and maintains Oral Interviews of “Old-timers” in District 29.

Literature

Maintain a stock of suggested literature to give new G.S.R.s. Keep a stock of catalogs for A.A. literature. Keep an ample supply of current General Service Conference approved pamphlets, books and audiovisual material, as well as other A.A. material. Set up this material for viewing and sale at functions, including: workshops, conferences, conventions, roundups and meetings. Order literature for district activities as needed. Become familiar with the general contents of all literature, in order to provide information to inquirers. Be represented at and participate in literature committee functions, and, from time to time, communicate with the General Service Office. in District 29.

Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)

Distribute A.A. literature/information to the general public and professionals who are in contact with alcoholics. Should be thoroughly familiar with the A.A. program and able to provide consistent and accurate information about the Fellowship. Visits might include schools, local businesses, church and civic groups, clergy, health care providers, lawyers and teachers.

Treatment

Coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment and outpatient settings, and to set up means of “bridging the gap” from the facility to an A.A. group in the individual’s community.

District Elections, the Continuing Saga!

This month we take a look at the roles – District Committee Member and Alternate District Committee Member – charged with keeping the local groups linked to the Area. These folks serve as a conduit of information and are charged with the responsibility of being our voice to the rest of A.A. while keeping us informed about the goings on in the rest of A.A. Folks are elected to these vital roles by the General

Service Representatives from each of the groups in our District.

Look for more on the General Service committee officers and roles in next month’s issue. We hope bringing you information on each of the roles and the election process will help you make an informed decision on how best you respond should you feel a call to service.

DCM (DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER)

The District Committee Member (D.C.M.) is an essential link between the Group G.S.R. and the SWTA 68 Area Delegate. Serves as a leader of the district committee, made up of all G.S.R.s and Committee chairs in District 29. DCM serves on the SWTA 68 Area Committee and passes on the District’s thinking to the Area delegate and the Committee. Attends all District Meetings and Quarterly SWTA 68 Area Assemblies.

Qualifications

1. Has usually served a two-year term as a GSR and is elected by other GSRs
2. DCM should have enough sobriety (generally four or five years) to be eligible for election as Area Delegate.
3. Needs to have the time and energy to serve the district well.

Term:

The D.C.M.’s term of office is two years, coinciding in most areas with the terms of the delegate, committee officers, and G.S.R.s. D.C.M.s are elected in September of odd-numbered years to begin their term in January of the following even numbered year.

Duties

- Regularly attends all district meetings and area assemblies.
- Receives reports from the groups through G.S.R.s and through frequent personal contacts with groups in the district.
- Holds regular meetings of all G.S.R.s in the district.
- Helps the SWTA 68 Delegate cover the area, which would be impossible for the delegate to do on a group-by-group basis.
- Assists the Delegate in obtaining group information in time to meet the deadline for A.A. directories.

District Committee

DCM Debbie M
 Alt DCM Jan S
 Secretary Kathleen P
 Treasurer David M
 Webmaster Michael B
 Intergroup **Open**
 Newsletter Theol J
 Literature **Open**
 Grapevine Holly H
 CFC Mike G
 Treatment **Open**
 PICPC **Open**
 Archives **Open**

- Keeps G.S.R.s informed about Conference activities; this includes setting up opportunities for the delegate's Conference report, occasionally making the Conference report if the delegate cannot be present, and inviting the delegate to regular district meetings.
- Makes sure that G.S.R.s are acquainted with *The A.A. Service Manual Combined the Twelve Concepts for World Service*, the G.S.O. Bulletin *Box 4-5-9*, workbooks and guidelines from G.S.O., and any other service material.
- Helps G.S.R.s make interesting reports to groups, and encourages them to bring new A.A. members to service events.
- Keeps groups informed about Conference-approved books and pamphlets.
- Organizes workshops and/or sharing sessions on service activities.
- Regularly keeps in touch with the Alternate D.C.M. and the delegate; sends district minutes to the delegate and alternate, and exchanges them with other districts.
- Brings Traditions problems to the attention of the delegate.

**ALTERNATE DISTRICT
COMMITTEE MEMBER (ALT
DCM)**

Performs the DCM duties in their absence or if the DCM is unable to serve for any reason, the Alternate steps in.

Tears

What if we could count the tears,
Loved ones shed throughout the years?
What's the number we would see?
How big would the puddle be?
A stream, lake, river or maybe sea,
How many tears were shed for you and me?
While we were there, in our self-imposed hell.
Ripping and tearing, where the devil likes to dwell.
Stuck in the bottle, all the while drinking to hide,
The fact that we had our own innumerable tears inside.
Truth is we'll never know,
But what a sight to see their pain go!
What a blessing to see their laughter and faces full of cheer!
Eyes go bright, smiles ear to ear!
All the loved ones, that held us so dear!

By Sam M.

Correctional Facilities Committee

The corrections committee assists individuals, groups and districts in carrying the AA message to the alcoholics who are confined in, or recently released from jails, prisons, and other correctional facilities. Committee work includes:

- Providing AA Literature to inside AA members and groups
- Serving as a contact for correctional facility administrators to promote cooperation
- Administering a correspondence program focused on sharing the AA message
- Providing AA contacts for inside AA members who are about to be released from their facility
- Increasing awareness of the need for corrections service work

Bringing a Meeting Makes a Difference

"I have just started going to A.A. meetings in jail, and I must say they are really helping me! Every night I read one chapter out of Alcoholics Anonymous. I enjoy A.A. and I'm eager to read more and work on the Steps. Thank you for creating this program! Without you I'm not sure how my life would be." — Justin K., Pacific Region

From "SHARING FROM BEHIND THE WALLS" Fall 2018. Issue

https://www.aa.org/newsletters/en_US/f-97_fall_2018.pdf

Here in district 29 we desperately need volunteers to help bring the message to Bastrop Count Jail. Michael G., the District 29 Correctional Facility Chair, implores you to come share your experience strength and hope. You will find all the information you need to help and how to contact Michael at webpage [Http://district29aa.org/district-resources/](http://district29aa.org/district-resources/). Look for the PREA Volunteer Flyer, Jail Volunteer Rules and Volunteer Application.

From the Grapevine

July 2014



"The good news is, when I get out, I can pick up a 60-day chip."—Doug R., Calif.

For additional information and to gain "a clear understanding of what A.A. can and cannot do to help alcoholics — in correctional facilities and after they are released" read A.A. in Correctional Facilities available at

https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-26_AAinCF.pdf

DCM Report for February 2019 Newsletter

Debbie M, DCM District 29, Panel 68

Hi Fellowship in District 29!!! I cannot believe January has come and went by so fast. In one month so much has already happened; and there is so much more to look forward to come.

I attended the 2019 SWTA68 Winter Workshop in Uvalde, January 18-20. The workshop was filled with valuable information to start the year off. We learned about the history of the Traditions, the Traditions themselves and ended with the "How the Concepts Began". These were broken into 5 segments throughout the weekend and 5 different Districts had people from their fellowship shared their experience, strength and hope on their given topic. It was so great to hear so many perspectives throughout Area 68 realizing that we have so much in common no matter where we live. District 29 was one of the Districts asked to and presented Traditions 1-4.

Our SWTA68 Delegate, Jonathan S., shared what was going on up at G.S.O. (General Service Office). Jonathan shared information from the G.S.O. Quarterly Report dated October 2018. This document is available at www.aa.org if you would like to read it. One of the things he shared that I found rather interesting was the topic of the General Sharing Session which was "Rigidity in A.A., Our Greatest Danger". Many shared on this topic and I found it to be so enlightening.

Portions of that article from the G.S.O. Quarterly Report are as follows, "The topic of the Fourth Quarterly General Sharing Session was *"Rigidity in A.A.: Our Greatest Danger. G.S.O. staff member Jeff W. presented on the subtopic, "Essentials of Recovery: Honesty, Willingness, and Open-mindedness." General Service trustee, Beau B., presented on the subtopic, "Is Our A.A. Service Manual, like our Big Book, Meant to be Suggestive Only?"*

Jeff shared that as a newcomer, his perception of A.A. was that it was extremely rigid. He eventually saw that while "The Program" could be uncompromising, it was balanced by "The Fellowship" which was welcoming and forgiving. However, that balance is lost if members become rigid in areas like membership rules or judging the content of sharing.

Rather than engage in passionate debate about strict adherence to the Service Manual versus using it as gentle guardrails, Beau wanted to remind us that "the promise of sobriety and the pathway to it, actually existed for our founders before the Big Book or the Service Manual were written. The grace discovered by those that came before us in A.A. is the same grace that is with us right here today in this very room." Beau cautioned "If we forget that grace, we can let personal ambitions and resentment enter the discussion, let fear guide our decisions, and begin to think of ourselves as charged with "protecting" the program from other members of A.A. Beau noted how much difficulty and debate surrounded the writing of the Big Book, but early members stayed united despite their differences in perspective or opinions."

I encourage you to take a second if you get a chance to read the October 2018 quarterly report from G.S.O. It shares so much information that I could go on to long for this article. I honestly would never take a second look at the quarterly reports if it were not for the SWTA68 Workshops and Conferences. I learn to look outside of my box and learn from the many different ideas shared

these workshops and conferences. I highly recommend you attend one of these sometime if you get a chance. Great information and fellowship.

Jonathan S. also shared with us the location of the 2030 International Convention was recommended to be held in St. Louis, Missouri. Reservation forms should be out later in 2019 for the 2020 International Convention which is being held in Detroit Michigan.

One of the things that I am always reminded that may slip all of our minds from time to time is that the common purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous is to help the still suffering alcoholic. What a beautiful blessing and opportunity for the growth that we get to do while helping the still suffering alcoholic.

Your Grateful Servant,
Debbie M.

What's Happening, in and around District 29

February 1 through 28, 2019

Feb 2 - Speaker Meeting at 8pm at On The Colorado (OTC), Smithville

Feb 9 - Speaker Meeting at 7pm at Lost Pines Group

Feb 10 - District Meeting at 1:30pm at Elgin Group
- SWTA 68 Summer Workshop Committee Meeting following the District Meeting at Elgin Group

Feb 15 - Speaker Meeting at 7pm at the Elgin Group.
Potluck at 6pm

Feb 15-17 - SWTA68 Correctional Facility Conference in Killeen, TX at the Courtyard by Marriott

Feb 23 - Area Birthday Potluck at 7 pm Chips at 8 pm hosted by the Gratitude Group in La Grange

Feb 26 - Speaker Mtg. at 7pm at A Way Out Group.

These Group Schedule Updates Are Coming (to a paper schedule near you!)

These updates will be added, via a sticker or label, to the paper schedules recently distributed! Not available before the paper schedule went to print, these changes will be updated on the schedules we have left according to our DCM, Debbie M. For the time being, we'll publish the updates here in the newsletter. If you have updates for your Group's scheduled meeting time, day, format or location, send them in so we can get the word out and corrected on the District 29 website www.drstrict29aa.org.

The Manor Group now meets every Tuesday at 6 pm at 12800 Lexington, Manor, TX in the building behind the main church. This is an Open Discussion Meeting.

Let Go Let God meets every Friday at 7:30 am (yes in the morning) at 1109 N Main Street, Bastrop TX, 78602. This is an Open Literature Meeting

Alternate DCM Report for February Newsletter

Jan S., DCM District 29, Panel 68

January 13, 2019

I want to thank all of you for the honor of being a trusted servant in District 29; I look forward to being of service. It was a somewhat fearful decision, as I'm sure many of you have experienced. But as it says in our 12 x 12 on page 122 "...When, with God's help, we calmly accepted our lot, then we found we could live at peace with ourselves and show others who still suffered the same fears that they could get over them, too. We found that freedom from fear was more important than freedom from want." Powerful words!

Most importantly, I know that I am surrounded with others who generously give of their time and talents so that we can all succeed in our service endeavors for the good of the still suffering alcoholic. Thank you all.

We had our kick-off meeting for the SWTA 68 Summer Workshop on December 15th and the following servants stepped up to fill positions:

Jan S.- Chair, Kathy A. Co - Chair, Debbie Mc. – Entertainment, Linda D. – Fund Raising and Décor, Brooke G. – Hospitality, Anita W. – Hotel Liaison, Theol J. – Registration, David M. – Treasurer.

We continued to plan on January 6th and welcomed our Area Chair, Cathy H. to define the Districts' duties for the workshop.

I got the opportunity Dec. 27th to make a visit to Manor Group with Debbie Mc and Denise T. Unfortunately, that group is no longer meeting at the location listed on our schedules on Thursdays. I subsequently ran across a member of that group and was able to give Debbie contact information for them.

I will attend the Winter Workshop this month in Uvalde and look forward to increasing my service knowledge and getting an opportunity to renew friendships at that event.

With sincere Thanks for the opportunity to be of service,

Jan S.

Area Birthday Locations By Month
Jan.-Phelan Road Group
Feb.-LaGrange Gratitude Group
Mar.-Friday Night Group
April-Lost Pines Group
May-Smithville Group
June-Giddings
July-On The Colorado (OTC)
Aug.-LaGrange Colorado Valley
Sept.-Sunday Morning Sidewalk
Oct.-The Elgin Group
Nov.-Smithville Group
Dec. - Legacies Group

2019

Southwest Texas Area 68 Summer Workshop

“...THE NEW AND TRIUMPHANT ARCH THROUGH WHICH WE PASS TO FREEDOM.”

page 62



Friday July 26th- Sunday July 28th
 Hampton Inn
 240 S. Hasler Blvd., Bastrop, TX 78602
 512-321-2898

For More Info Contact
 Jan S., 512-947-3554

Nightly Room Rates:
 \$88 for King/ \$119 for King Suite
 \$99 for 2 Queen Beds
 Ask for Code SWT



Hosted by District 29
www.district29aa.org



The AA Traditions and Concepts Series 2019

This series of articles on the Concepts and Traditions is inspired by my desire to better understand Service in the A.A. General Service structure. Last month we learned from Denise T. about the shift from All About Me to All about to being a part of the whole as well as the upside down triangle of AA's groups running the organizing. This month we'll explore the near explosion that brings you this series of articles.

Tradition 2

Long form: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

Short form: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.

Concept II

Concept II: When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference — excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter — the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society.

My first few District Meetings left me frustrated. I wanted to have us make a decision, charge off and see how things worked, wait for a few results and then try the next change. That is how I approach change in my professional life, let's make a quick decision with some heed to long term goals and an openness to fail or succeed with the change and adjust with the next change. Wanting to use the approach I have come to value and appreciate at work left me a bit off in those first few meetings. I had two thoughts, the first was to find a way to keep writing the newsletter without having to attend or vote at the district meetings and the second was to leave this line of service all together. Fortunately, for me – and hopefully for you too – my third thought was to practice a bit of patience and investigate what General Service was all about and why. Hopefully, allowing me to make an informed and fact based decision about how I feel (yep, I just mixed facts and feelings) about being of service in this way. I hope these articles help you to explore and understand from others' perspectives enough so that you can decide if Service in the General Service Structure and Group(s) is something for you (and me too)!

I chose to write about Concept II and Tradition 2 because they seem at the crux of my being ill-at-ease with the District Meetings. Why all the formality? The silly rules? Why do we need to discuss stuff for 30 minutes and then listen to the minority opinion? Or why talk for five minutes about an "a" instead of a "the"? All that rigmarole just to go back and see what the Groups would tell us to vote the next month! Arggh! Why couldn't we just decide and be done!

The second Concept and Tradition to me explain why and how A.A. oversees its own affairs by placing the power in the members but not making any of them in charge. I find, on honest evaluation, the approach I have used at work is based on someone being in charge. While we make a decision jointly, there is always someone with organizational power to force the change to happen. That person with authority can make us change what we have decided to change or encourage folks to either accept the change or leave their job. The power the person "in-charge" has is often based on the fear of others. Fear of losing their job, fear that they won't have their ideas heard, fear that they will be placed in charge, etc... Those

experiencing the fear often allow the others to be in charge because they don't want to step up and be in charge themselves. My frustration came from my long exposure to a top-down someone is in charge world. I understand why such an approach would not work for long in A.A., yet at the time I did not identify with what was driving me to become frustrated. I was expecting a approach for change that is based on fear to work in a fellowship based on helping us to gracefully walk through fear. I was wanting to take charge and let others believe I was in charge to move things along, like I have learned at work.

It seems a great thing that Bill W. and Dr. Bob where able to recognize that stepping out of and making sure that A.A. Groups as a whole should guide the affairs of A.A. and decide on any changes. This bit on Concept II from "The Twelve Concepts for World Service" (https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-8_the-twelve-concepts.pdf) helped me to realize how they had to recognize and reinforce how an approach – like the one I know from work – leaving individuals in authority or accountable would not do for A.A.

"Concept I establishes the "final responsibility and ultimate authority" of the A.A. groups; but, in actual practice, how are they to manage A.A.'s service affairs? By delegation, Concept II declares. Bill and Dr. Bob, entrusted by the early groups to get the program going and to spread the message, found nonalcoholic friends to help them. They formed a trusteeship and delegated to it the responsibility for finances, the Big Book and other literature, public information, the service office and the A.A. Grapevine. However, as the trustees constantly looked to the co-founders for advice and guidance and the groups also continued to hold them accountable, it was evident that the leadership should be transferred to the A.A. groups as a whole. But if the groups were to carry on their primary purpose, they would have to delegate their leadership role to a General Service Conference. They do this by electing a General Service Representative for each group. These G.S.R.s meet regularly in area assemblies and every two years elect a delegate from among their number. Every April, the delegates from the 93 areas in the U.S. and Canada meet for six days with the trustees of the General Service Board, the staffs of the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine and certain other service workers. Thus, this General Service Conference of A.A. is "the actual voice and effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs."

What a spot Dr. Bob and Bill must have been in? They set the trusteeship up to move away from being in charge and the groups were still making them the de facto leaders. They were seen as running the whole show all the while looking to step out of that role so that there would be a stable ongoing recovery program for others after them.

Writing this article has helped me to understand better why I was frustrated in those first few meetings. I was trying to put myself in a place to lead. I wanted the group to make a decision, make it now and move out sharply. I struggled (and may continue) with wanting the small group make a choice about how to govern and not take decisions back for the Groups to decide. The exact place, centralized author, the founders recognized was not good for the longevity of AA. So for now, I will practice more a little more patience and study, through this series, the Concepts and Traditions to seek a peaceful for me place in Service.

Theol J.

Home Group Let Go Let God

From the Grapevine

June 2014



"So tell me, do I come here often?"—Mary M., Gig Harbor, Wash