

Area Chairpersons Report

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Hello Southern Minnesota Area! I hope you have all enjoyed your summer. They seem to go by so fast in Minnesota. I want to thank everyone who attended the June Assembly in Northfield and the August area committee meetings in Mankato. It was good to see so many people willing to give up nice summer days to serve Alcoholics Anonymous.

I have been busy setting the 2004 Area Calendar. You can find a copy of the calendar on the website. You may notice that a few of the events are listed as tentative. We have verbal agreement to hold the event in the location listed and I am working on getting signed contracts. However I thought it was best to list them as tentative until we get the contracts. I do not foresee any problem getting in getting the signed contracts and hope to have that completed by the Fall Assembly.

Speaking of the Fall Assembly, it will be held on October 25th at the Park Inn & Suites in Shakopee. Some of the items on the agenda for this assembly include: assembly votes on producing literature for the teen alcoholic; discussion on where general service work crosses over into a position better served by paid special workers; and electing a West Central Regional trustee nomination candidate from our area. I hope that you can all make it to the assembly. While only GSRs, area standing committee chairs, and area officers are eligible to vote all AA members are encouraged to participate.

I have also been busy setting the 2004 area budget. You can also find a copy of that budget in this issue. At the area it is our policy to have the assembly vote on the high-level budget items. Those are the numbers you will find in this newsletter. I decided to go back to the practice that was in place a few years ago and create a one-page budget that is voted on and then to provide the 5-page worksheet that I used to get to that budget. The 5-page worksheet will be available at the assembly for those members who are interested in how I came to the budget numbers.

I was fortunate to be able to attend the West Central Regional Forum in Minot North Dakota this past weekend. A Regional Forum is an event started in the 1970s. It was felt that most AA members would never be able to attend our General Service Office (GSO) in New York. But since it is our GSO it was felt that it was important that the AA member knows the services provided there and get to meet some of the people involved. So every two years each region has a Forum where the GSO general manager, some staff members and some trustees come out to the region and put on meetings and workshops letting us know what is going on at GSO and listen to our concerns and suggestions. One item that I found especially interesting was the presentation by our AA Grapevine executive editor on how the Grapevine affected his recovery and the process involved in publishing the Grapevine. Another was the presentation by Warren S. our GSO Regional Forum Coordinator on "How did Regional Forums Come About?". Finally I enjoyed talking to our GSO manager, Greg M., over a bowl of ice cream at the ice cream social.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Area Assembly in October. If you are interested in seeing a copy of the agenda or the budget worksheets ask you DCM. I emailed all this information to them and they should have it available. If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns please feel from to contact me.

Yours in Love and Service
Mark M.
Southern Minnesota Area Chairperson