

The Pigeon, this newsletter, is the area's main communication avenue with the groups. It is very important for all officers, standing committee chairpersons and DCMs to submit an article for each edition of *The Pigeon*. As Area Chairperson, and past Newsletter Chair, I am very aware of this importance. With that said I would like to apologize to the Area for not submitting an article for the previous edition. My excuse is no better one than most trusted servants would have, I was very busy and the time that the edition needed to go to press slipped past. Again I apologize and will do my best not to miss this important commitment again.

It was good to see so many of you at the January Service Conference. I was privileged to be the speaker host to Ric D., our guest from the Western Canada Regional trustee. It was good to get to know him and get a perspective on AA in a different part of our Conference Structure. The service conference was filled with great discussion on Our Singleness of Purpose. As always I leave with a wealth of information and different insight. I would like to thank Sonja H., our Alternate Area Chair and the service conference chairperson. She did a great job of selecting presenters and ensuring that everything would come off without a hitch. Also thanks to all the volunteers, especially from the host district, District 3.

Something has come up recently that has made me want to talk about the Area Committee in this article. As many of you know 4 times a year we meet in Mankato. In the morning all the area standing committees hold meetings. That same afternoon the Area Committee meets. First I want to give a description of the Area Committee.

"A committee made up of District Committee Members (elected by the GSR's in their respective District), the Area Officers, the Area Standing Committee Chairs, and Past Delegates. The Area Committee is a vital element of the general service structure. In Southern Minnesota its two main functions are establishing the agenda for Area Assemblies, and carrying out any tasks as directed by the Assembly."

You can find this description on our website, www.area36.org under the New to Service section. The A.A. Service Manual states that;

"Perhaps more than any other group of people in A.A., the area committee is responsible for the health of the Conference structure and thus for growth and harmony in the A.A. Fellowship."

So why this emphasis on the Area Committee? First, it's to let people who are not a part of the Area Committee know why we stay for the afternoon session, what it is, and why it is important. Second is for the members of the Area Committee. You maybe having the same thoughts I have had in the past – "Why am I here?" "It sure is a long afternoon?" "Are we getting anything accomplished?" I hope if you are having these thoughts that you come to believe what I have come to believe, that our predecessors who set up the Conference structure foresaw the value of the Area Committee, the same value exists today and our commitment to be an active member of the Area Committee is important.

The next Area Assembly will be held Saturday, March 27th at the Best Western Victoria Inn in Hutchinson from 9:00am to 5:00pm. The agenda for this assembly will include a discussion on Area self-support in our travel reimbursement policy; time to ask questions and explanations on the General Service Conference agenda items; the Corrections Temporary Sponsorship Program name change and much more. I encourage all of you to attend, especially GSRs, your group's input is important to the Area.

The next weekend, April 3rd, we will be holding the Delegate's Workshop. This is where the groups and committees gather to provide input to our Delegate on the Conference Agenda items. That way our Delegate will attend the General Service Conference with a better view of our Area's conscience on the different agenda items. This is a great place for your group to have input on AA as a whole. All this will be taking place at the Hennepin Technical College in Eden Prairie.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Area Assembly and Delegate's Workshop. If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns about our Area that you would like to talk to me about I can be reached at 763-559-3914 or at chairperson@area36.org. Please feel free to call or email me. Also I am willing to visit any group or district if you would like to meet with me in person.

Yours in love and service
Mark Miller
Area 36 Chairperson