



The Pigeon



Your Area Delegate's Report

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new D.C.M.s starting their journey of serving their districts and Area the next two years! We have several districts in our Area who elect their trusted servants on a different year than the Area elects its officers. Thanks for being willing to serve the groups in your district! I look forward to serving with you!

Ready, set, go! It's that time of year again for the upcoming General Service Conference to be held in New York City, April 18-24, 2004. The theme this year is "Our Singleness of Purpose - The Cornerstone of A.A." As of the printing of this newsletter, all D.C.M.s, Area officers, Area standing committee chairs, and past delegates for our Area have received, by mail, the final agenda items and background materials for the conference. You can also find a complete list of the final agenda items in this issue of *The Pigeon* and on the Area website at www.area36.org.

Everyone is busy discussing and gathering a group conscience on the issues that face A.A. as a whole, and

bringing this conscience to the Delegate's Workshop on April 3, 2004, at the Hennepin Technical Center in Eden Prairie. Please take the time to participate in your district's and group's discussion on these items. As Concept One so carefully points out - "The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services - those special elements of over-all service activity which make it possible for our Society to function as a whole." It is important that the groups uphold that responsibility and participate in the structure process. We need your voice! If you have any questions about the agenda items please feel free to give me a call, or call your District Committee Member (D.C.M.).

I have already set up many post-conference delegate reports for the districts, but don't have all of you on the calendar yet. Please give me a call so we can get your district scheduled. If possible, I would like to have these all determined before I leave for the conference in April. Thanks.

The weekend of January 30 - February 2, 2004, I traveled to New York for the General Service Board Weekend where the final agenda was determined for the General Service Conference. I was able to experience first hand how effectively our committee system works within another aspect of our service structure. As chairperson for the Conference Literature Committee I was invited, (along with other delegates chairing the other conference committees), to attend the quarterly General Service Board meeting and sit in on the Trustee Committee meetings. We had a very informative orientation pertaining to responsibilities as chair of a conference committee and attended the Trustee Committee meetings held throughout the weekend for Conference, Regional Forums/ International Conventions, Correctional Facilities, Public Information, Literature, Nominating, Archives, International, C.P.C./Treatment Facilities, and Finance.

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Your Area Chairperson's Report

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 D.C.M.s 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 and trustee from the Western Canada Region. It was good to get to know him and get a perspective on A.A. in a different part of our Conference structure. The service conference was filled with great discussion on "Our Singleness of Purpose." As always, I left with a wealth of information and different insight. I would like to thank Sonja H., our Alternate Area Chairperson and the service conference chairper-

son. She did a great job of selecting presenters and ensuring everything 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, four 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 G.S.R.s in their respective Districts), 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 commit-

tee 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, 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 may be 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 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. 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 and name change, and much more. I encourage all of you

to attend, especially G.S.R.s. 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 A.A. 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 chairperson@area36.org. Please feel free to call or e-mail 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 M.
Area 36 Chairperson

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