



WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AREA 60 NEWSLETTER

SEEDS OF SERVICE



VOL. XXXIII, Issue 1
Winter/Spring 2022

Seeds of Service

The WPA Area 60 newsletter is published quarterly by the Area Committee. It is for AA members only. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily that of the Area Committee or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

We hope *Seeds of Service* will be a useful reference for GSR reports.

Distribution

Paper copies are distributed to DCMS at each quarterly meeting for redistribution to AA groups through their GSRs. A PDF copy of the newsletter is available at www.wpaarea60.org. It can also be sent electronically to DCMS and GSRs, if the Area Registrar has a correct email address.

Write for SoS

The 2022 theme for the General Service Conference is
“A.A. Comes of Age 2.0– Unified in Love and Service”

- ◆ Winter Topic: **How Do AA’s Go to Any Length to Recover, Unify, & Serve?**
- ◆ Spring Topic: **Going Beyond Fear**
(deadline 4/15/2022)
- ◆ Summer Topic: **How to Reach Anyone, Anywhere.**
(deadline 6/15/2022)
- ◆ Fall Topic: **To be Determined**

Submission Guidelines

Suggested text length is **150 to 300 words**. Artwork should be **b&w**, less than half a page (3”x5”), and **300 dpi**. Material should be generally relevant to the theme, and may be edited for clarity and length. All material submitted on time is reviewed, selected by topic, and may appear, based on available space. The newsletter does not publish song lyrics, tributes to individuals, prayers, plays, or anything unrelated to AA or that violates the principles of AA.

Please include your first name and last initial, district, and home group.

Submissions may be emailed to:

newsletter@wpaarea60.org

“How Do AA’s Go to ANY LENGTH TO RECOVER, UNIFY, & SERVE?”

“Our Third Tradition In Action”

Audrey B., D65, Secretary

Tradition Three (Short Version): “The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.”

When I became a member of Alcoholics Anonymous I had a burning desire to stop drinking. At the time however, I did not have the ability. For several months I attended meetings, absorbing everything that was said.

I desperately wanted what the sober members had...

I was a blackout drunk, but I can still vividly remember hearing the phrases “Keep Coming Back” and “It Gets Better.” Sure enough, the seed had been planted. I did not know it at the time, but my Higher Power was doing for me what I could not do for myself by bringing me to this group of men and women who found sobriety in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Not only were these men and women sober but they also seemed lighthearted and happy.

Alcoholics Anonymous Third Tradition suggests the Fellowship should be all inclusive, never exclusive.

Although I was not yet sober, I was welcome. During those months as a “not-yet sober” member, I found myself unable to contribute to the collection basket at every meeting I attended. After all, I still had booze to buy! The first time another member noticed, I was embarrassed. He kindly told me to “keep coming back” regardless of whether I had a dollar to contribute or not.

Once again, I was welcome. Several months later in May of 2019, after spending a week in detox, I returned to the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous as a **sober** member.

And again, I was welcome.

“It must never be forgotten that the purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous is to sober up alcoholics. There is no religious or spiritual requirement for membership. No demands are made on anyone. An experience is offered which members may accept or reject. That is up to them.” - Bill W.

Willing to Serve— The Fellowship or My Ego?

Meagan C, Area 60 Newsletter Editor

I began my journey as Newsletter Editor with Area 60 in February 2021. Becoming acquainted with my new role and the responsibilities was an exciting new phase in my recovery adventure! I recall with fondness the excitement and enthusiasm I felt at the opportunity to serve the Fellowship that continues to save my life.

Fast forward to the past few months. I have felt discouraged, overwhelmed, and confused about how to best serve and manage my time. While service is a rewarding and gratifying experience, it is ***not always easy***.

“As rewarding and enjoyable as general service can be, you might find yourself feeling overwhelmed at times. A service sponsor can help make the difference between struggling in your service position and feeling a sense of purpose and accomplishment (and having some fun along the way)!”

- AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, pg. 9

My ego still wants to shy away at the thought of sharing my imperfections and requests for help with others, (sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly)! I recently overcame the whining of my ‘lower self’ and reached out for help from my Area Committee. I was met with helpful suggestions, encouragement and love.

While Service can sometimes be a struggle, it is also a place of acceptance, humility, and a place we learn to overcome fear; principles I am learning to practice daily.

The wonderful thing about AA is ***we never have to do this thing alone again, unless we choose to!***

I am grateful for the Spirit of AA that is always there when I find the courage within myself to overcome ego.

I’ve spent the better part of a lifetime serving the needs of Self. The decision I make today, is to be willing to go to any lengths to serve those around me.

It always seems impossible until it is done.

“Nearly all of us, when we think about it, agree that we are a long, long way from being anywhere near grown up, almost from any point of view. We can see clearly that our job as individuals and as a Fellowship is to keep on growing by the constant use of our Twelve Steps.”

- Bill W. July 1960, “AA Tomorrow”,
The Language of the Heart

♦ **Step 6**

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all of these defects of character.”

♦ **Tradition 6**

“Our groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”

♦ **Concept 6**

“The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.”

COVID-19– A Wake Up Call

Meredith D., D21, Amberson Group,

My life made sudden and drastic changes when the COVID-19 virus struck in March 2020. My commitment to staying sober was more urgent than ever. It had to be.

My life depended on it.

The Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous knew from the start that their vision needed to include a way to carry forward after they were gone. The Three Legacies were included from the beginning.

The First Legacy is Recovery. For me, as soon as the reality of the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 became real, my priority was Recovery. How would I get to meetings and maintain my links with the fellowship!? I had never heard of Zoom. I thought of the coins with the triangles – Recovery, Unity, Service – the Three Legacies, surrounded by the circle representing our Fellowship. For me, that meant I knew where I belonged. I could not let something like a virus, or even a Pandemic, threaten my Recovery from alcoholism. I became frightened, like the day I was a newcomer.

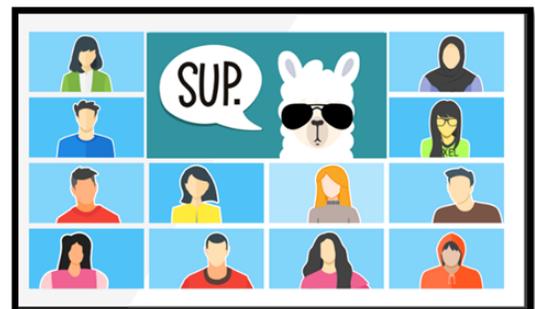
In Alcoholics Anonymous we are ***never alone***. With the help of others, I found Zoom. I began to go to Zoom meetings in different states, even different countries. I found a Zoom-only speaker meeting that meets seven days a week. I circulate the weekly schedule to people who are not on the master list.

I have stayed available to others when they reach out. I contact people who may be having a hard time. I make more of an effort through text, phone calls, or emails because it's not as possible to just "go for coffee" after the meeting. Alcoholics still need each other, and service work isn't always done in ash trays and coffee pots.

The Legacies are what will assure that Alcoholics Anonymous will live on for generations to come, after COVID-19, and after us all.

"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 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.—AA's Legacy of Service, Pamphlet P-44, Bill W.

Willing to go to any length, members of the Fellowship are finding new and creative ways to connect, recover, and serve by using virtual platforms and out-of-the box thinking to stay sober and help the still suffering alcoholic.



What's on Your Mind....?

Chuck J., D21, Spiritual Tools

Regarding the proposal of a plain text Big Book and side-by-side explanation of the Big Book, as a concerned member of AA, what are we giving up?

I find the work that was involved in reading the Big Book gave me opportunities to search unfamiliar words and learn to trust others for explanations of things I didn't understand, which I feel was very beneficial to my sobriety. I had the opportunity to work with a sponsor who gave me his explanation and his understanding of the Traditions and Steps of AA, as well as what the first 164 pages of the Big Book meant to him and how to apply them to my life. This also helped to gain an understanding of a "God of my understanding."

Are we in violation of Tradition 10 which says, "AA has no opinion on outside issues, hence, the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy?" The disease of alcoholism has not changed, even though society has changed. Are we conforming to society's wishes and ignoring the possible solution of a daily reprieve from alcohol? This book was written with the intent of a possible solution for alcoholism by more than 100 men and women, for the still suffering alcoholic. Tradition Two says, "For our group purpose there should be one ultimate authority, a loving God as He may express himself in our group conscious. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." When a floor vote is brought up to be considered without the general consensus of all alcoholics, is that not a form of governing? Tradition 9 says, "AA, as such, ought never be organized but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." My question for the AA GSO is, exactly who are they serving by considering these changes?

I find it almost as comical as tragic that these issues were brought up during a time when physical contact was at a minimum (COVID-19) and contact with all of the alcoholics worldwide was based on electronic communication, to which not everyone has access to or knowledge of how to use. Is that what this organization is coming to?

I always thought this was a "we" program instead of a self-help organization.

District 22 Hosts First Area 60 Traveling Workshop

On March 6, 2022, Area 60 and District 22 made AA history by hosting the first A60 Traveling Workshop.

Thank you District 22 for an informative day of Fellowship and learning!

Members of the Area 60 Committee traveled to host engaging discussion with members regarding the following topic:

Demystifying Agenda Items

- ◆ **Laying the Foundation:** Concepts 1 & 2
- ◆ **Importance of Elections:** GSRs, DCMs, Delegates
- ◆ **Lifecycle of an Agenda Item**– ie: Preamble Change
- ◆ **Mock Group Conscious**– Effective & Ineffective ways to vote at the home group level

Area 60 Traveling Workshop

Interested in hosting a Traveling Workshop in your district? Here's how:

Area 60 will receive bids for Traveling Workshops under the Recurring Business portion of Area 60 Meetings.

DCMs will approach the mic with the following information:

- Date requested & Topic requested
- Location and capacity of facility as well as anticipated attendance

Sample Topics Include:

- ◆ **GSR & The Group**
- ◆ **Acting as Guardian of the Traditions**
- ◆ **Conducting an AA Business Meeting**
- ◆ **The Twelve Concepts**



So...What if You Don't Like an Advisory Action of the Conference?

Jody K., Area 60 Delegate

An Advisory Action is a Group Conscience decision that passes with at least 2/3 majority of voting members of the General Service Conference.

Is it a simple matter to submit a Proposed Agenda Item to reverse the decision? Well, yes and no. Yes, anyone can submit an item, but whether that item will be considered again depends upon several factors.

On Friday, October 22, I had a virtual meeting with my Conference Committee, Grapevine and La Vina, where we spoke to Josh E., Chair of the Grapevine Board, Karina C., Associate Editor of La Vina and GVB Secretary, and Jon W., Senior Editor of the Grapevine about Proposed Agenda Items (PAIs) for the 72nd General Service Conference. The purpose of this meeting was to gather Conference Committee input ahead of the decision by the Trustees' Committee on Grapevine and La Vina regarding which items will be passed on to the Conference and which will not. Some of these items asked for a reversal of decisions made at the 71st General Service Conference.

This is what I learned.

While every member of A.A. has a voice and a vote, voice and vote are expressed as a member of a home group.

Remember that at the top of the triangle, the groups have the most power, not the individual member. Our voice and vote are expressed in our home group. *"...there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience."* No one individual on any level of the triangle makes decisions. We make them together with our group.

It's even better if the group conscience of several groups brings their decisions to the district level and a group conscience decision emerges there. This is then the group conscience of a collection of groups. If one or more districts asks that an area support their group conscience decision and the decision passes with substantial unanimity (at least a 2/3 majority), we now have a group conscience of many collections of groups.

This PAI can originate at anywhere in this group-district-area structure. Do you recall when I reached out to all of you and your home groups to consider a PAI to make the Conference Advisory Action to produce a plain language Big Book as a "side-by-side?" It was an idea that came out of the 71st General Service Conference, and while I could have submitted the proposal as a solitary member, I would have been ignoring our 2nd Tradition.

These are not requirements for a PAI to be considered and are offered as illustration of the ways in which different PAIs are submitted. Having said all that, a PAI submitted by an individual outside of our voting structure has a chance that the PAI will make it to the final Conference Agenda *if it is accompanied by new information*. This means that if some evidence or background material that is distinct from material already reviewed and considered that may change the way the Conference views the subject, it could be brought back to the Conference for additional consideration.

This applies to the PAI whether that PAI is submitted by a member or as the group conscience of an individual group district, or area. No new information, no new consideration. It is *not* enough to submit a PAI with the justification that, "we don't like the way you voted." Remember that the Conference follows the same 3rd Legacy procedure with agenda items as we do when electing our officers; a majority that's less than 2/3 still fails. So, every Conference Advisory Action has garnered at least a 2/3 majority of the General Service Conference: 93 Areas, 21 Trustees, and 18 members of the GSO staff representing all of A.A. in North America.

"My experience has been that unity is best achieved by a full hearing of all points of view, followed by some time for those involved to step back from emotional responses to the issue, as well as careful consideration and prayer...When we need to make a decision it is important for me to allow the group conscience to work and to trust in the process of applying the Twelve Traditions in making our decisions." AA Grapevine Article, January 1998

Virtual Ask-It Basket Questions

Q1. On the Subject of Cross Talk....

Jody K. Area 60 Delegate, responds:

What is crosstalk? Some define it as simply as directing a share at a previous person's share, which can then become a conversation across the table. Most of us agree, I believe, that our share should be based upon our own personal

experience, strength, and hope, devoid of 'advice' given to a specific person. If this is the problem a group is having, the group conscience could discuss a statement read at the beginning of the meeting to encourage sticking to principles and personal experience, strength, and hope.

Others see crosstalk as sharing more frequently than is considered polite. It's one of those unwritten "almost rules" we honor. We see a lot of newcomers doing this because they're unaware of our conventions. We're there to teach them, which can be done in a loving way by the chair, or by approaching someone after the meeting. In the case of an online meeting, the chair does have the ability to mute everyone and ask that hands be raised in order to be unmuted to share. If a statement is made that 'double dips' will be at the end of the meeting after everyone has shared, that will make it clear why a raised hand isn't recognized in order.

Of course, these are only suggestions. The informed group conscience is our best tool in addressing problems as they arise.

Q2. Does a Chairperson of a group conscious meeting get to vote at any level of service?

Jon C. Alternate Delegate, responds:

The chairperson is typically afforded the same level of participation as any other member. So yes, the chairperson typically has a vote. However, one of the main responsibilities of the chairperson is to maintain impartiality while conducting business. That is why the chairperson doesn't typically vote. Prioritizing impartiality is an important aspect of wise leadership. Therefore a chairperson should use their vote wisely. If a vote is done in secret, i.e. ballots or paper as opposed to a show of hands or voice vote, then the chairperson can cast an impartial vote much more easily.

— CALL FOR STORIES —

Fifth Edition of the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*

Deadline: October 31, 2022 The Preface to the Second Edition of the Big Book explains that revisions to the personal history section of the book were made in order "to represent the current membership of Alcoholics Anonymous more accurately, and thereby to reach more alcoholics."

In that spirit, the 2021 General Service Conference recommended that: "a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect the current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action:

"The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion', 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare', and the Appendices remain as is."

In response to this Advisory Action, the trustees' Literature Committee is seeking a wide range of A.A. recovery experience of members in the Fellowship.

Recognizing that all stories are of value, the Literature Committee is searching for recovery stories that are from a broad cross-section of our local communities. As Bill writes on page 29 of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*: "Our hope is that many alcoholic men and women, desperately in need, will see these pages, and we believe that it is only by fully disclosing ourselves and our problems that they will be persuaded to say, 'Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing.'"

It is the Literature Committee's shared hope that any new stories from our current membership will help future alcoholics to identify and find recovery in the pages of a Fifth Edition.

Further information on where to submit your story will be provided to the Fellowship through Box 4-5-9, the A.A. website and more. If you have any questions, please write to 5BBStory@aa.org.



Send your questions to our **Virtual Ask-It Basket** at newsletter@wpaarea60.org or from the Area 60 website Newsletter page at <https://www.wpaarea60.org/newsletters/>.



Get to Know Area 60!



Two Types of Area Meetings

1. **Quarterly Meeting:** Decides area business. DCMs, Area Officers and Coordinators, past Delegates vote.
2. **Area Assembly:** Elects officers, provides pre-Conference group conscience, hears the Delegate's post-Conference report. GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers and Coordinators, past Delegates vote.

ALL members of the Fellowship are welcome at meetings and assemblies. GSRs are especially encouraged to attend even when they do not have a vote.

Every GSR is potentially a future DCM.

Rules of Order at Area 60 Meetings

- Items for consideration are put on the **agenda**.
- Items are posed to the meeting in the form of a **motion**.
- All motions require a **second**.
- Motions can be *amended, tabled, or moved to a vote*.
- A vote is taken and the **results** are announced. The **minority vote** is allowed to voice its opinion.
- If a member of the majority (those who "won") wishes to **change their vote**, a second vote is held on the motion.
- The result of the second vote stands and the meeting **moves to the next item** for consideration.

What's the "Point of Order?"

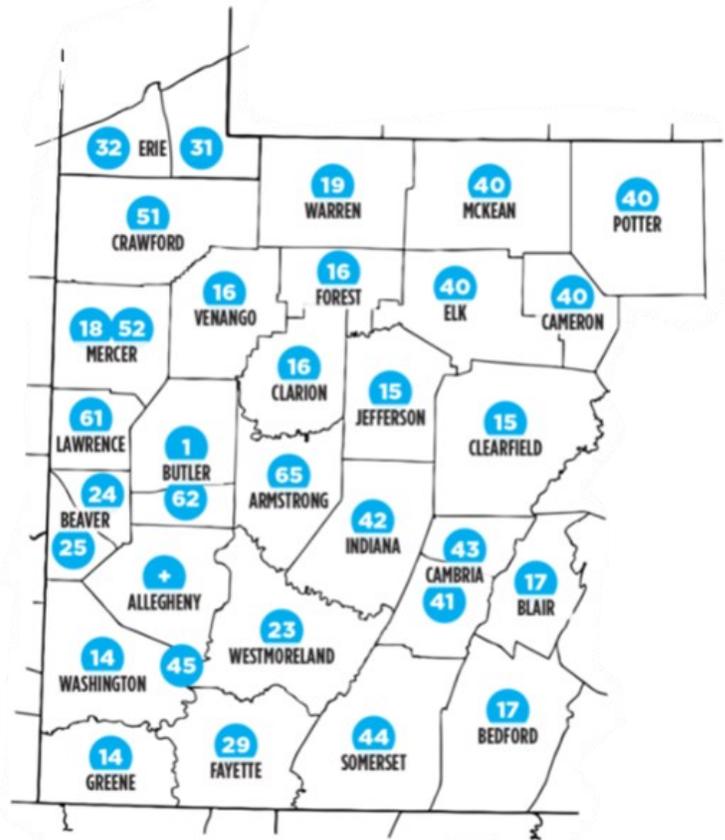
- ◆ To ensure that all voices that wish to be heard are heard.
- ◆ To ensure that no one voice dominates all others.
- ◆ To ensure that everyone gets to speak **once** before another speaks **twice**.
- ◆ To ensure that everyone understands the content of the vote.
- ◆ To ensure that it is clear what actions were taken.
- ◆ To ensure a thorough record of the actions taken.

Motions requiring substantial unanimity of the meeting require a two-third majority for approval. In some cases, the minority opinion (the people who "lost" the vote) may be larger than 50% of the vote.

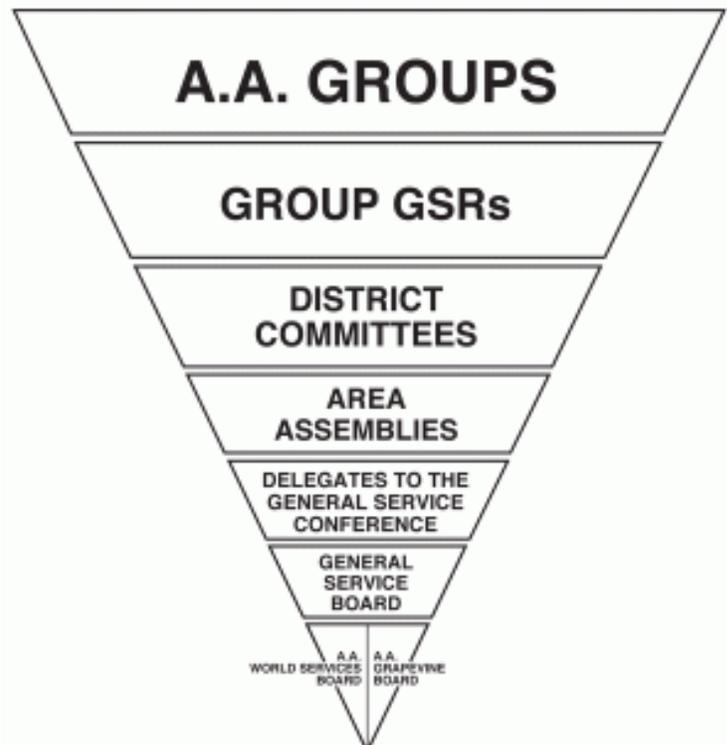
Area 60 Web Calendar

<https://www.wpaarea60.org/calendar/>

Our website has an updated online calendar, which lists service events (Pre-Conference Assembly Weekend, the General Service Conference, assemblies, etc.) in **green**; Area 60-sponsored events (quarterly meetings, Days of Sharing, etc.) in **blue**, and other events of interest to AAs (district-level events, recovery community events, etc.) in **red**.



STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE
(U.S. and Canada)



2022 Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, Area 60 meetings are held at the Comfort Inn, 699 Rodi Road, Penn Hills, PA

DATE	TIME	EVENT
May 15, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	2nd Quarterly Meeting (Grand Ballroom)
June 12, 2022	9 am via Zoom	Officers/Coordinators Meeting (Zoom)
June 26, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	Post-Conference Assembly (Grand Ballroom)
July 10, 2022	9 am via Zoom	Officers/Coordinators Meeting (Zoom)
August 14, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	3rd Quarterly Meeting (Grand Ballroom)
September 18, 2022	9 am Via Zoom	Officers/Coordinators Meeting (Zoom)
October 16, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	Fall Assembly Election (Grand Ballroom)
November 6, 2022	9 am Via Zoom	Officers/Coordinators Meeting (Zoom)
December 4, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	4th Quarterly Meeting (Grand Ballroom)

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AREA 60

ELECTED OFFICERS:

Delegate: Jody K. delegate@wpaarea60.org
 Alt Delegate: Jon C. altdelegate@wpaarea60.org
 Chairperson: Walter G. chairperson@wpaarea60.org
 Alt Chair: Dani M. altchairperson@wpaarea60.org
 Secretary: Sherri Lynn D. secretary@wpaarea60.org
 Treasurer: Darla S. treasurer@wpaarea60.org

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

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 Archivist: Nancy H. archivist@wpaarea60.org
 Registrar: Scott M. registrar@wpaarea60.org
 Alt. Registrar: _____
 Recording Secretary: Natalie O. recsec@wpaarea60.org
 Newsletter Editor: Meagan C. newsletter@wpaarea60.org
 Alt. Newsletter: Monique N. newsletter@wpaarea60.org

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 Alt. CPC/PI: Alex K. pi@wpaarea60.org
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 Alt. Treatment/SN: April B. treatment@wpaarea60.org
 Website: Dave K. website@wpaarea60.org
 Alt. Website: _____ website@wpaarea60.org

AREA 60 WEBSITE

There are many resources on the Area 60 website, including: back issues of the newsletter, flyers for Days of Sharing, the Area 60 calendar, Area 60 Guidelines, pamphlets, service documentation, and more. Direct questions or suggestions to the Website Coordinator at website@wpaarea60.org.

DONATIONS TO AREA 60

Support from groups and individuals is always welcome and appreciated! Make checks payable to:

Area 60 Treasurer
 P.O. Box 14622
 Pittsburgh, PA 15234

See All Those _____s to the Right?

Several service opportunities are available throughout Western PA Area 60.

When by devoted service to family, friends, business, or community we attract widespread affection and are sometimes singled out for posts of greater responsibility and trust, we try to be humbly grateful and exert ourselves the more in a spirit of love and service.

-- 12th Step Twelve, p.124

Area Committee members, DCMs, and GSRs are welcome to help *spread the word* to fill open, *needed* positions in our service structure, or to *volunteer* to serve themselves.

For more information on any open position, please feel free to contact secretary@wpaarea60.org or newsletter@wpaarea60.org.