



## Area 59 Inventory, October 20, 2019, Leesport PA

10:45 the meeting was opened by Steve S. the Area Chairperson with a reading from A.A. Comes of Age pp231. Area guests were welcomed including past delegates J. Gary L., Shiela D., Lowell L., Pat F., and Paul M. Also Donald H., Archivist, Jack C., Assistant Archivist, Greg G., Web Servant, Evelyn and Lisa, Translators, Debbie T., past Delegate in Northern New Jersey, and Frank G., past Delegate from Central Ohio, our facilitator.

Some general announcements were made then the meeting was turned over to the facilitator, Frank, to begin the questions.

### Area 59 Inventory Questions

#### **What is the basic purpose of the Area? Area Committee? Area Convention/ Assembly? Are we fulfilling these purposes?**

Nora – linking districts bringing together trusted servants to help alcoholics.

Kathy – to inform the membership what is happening in AA.

Paul – the Area Convention is the one time of year that all of the GSR's and DCM's get together to learn what the Area does.

Ron – we are well supported through Area servants.

Andy – in supporting unity there is a spirituality in coming together.

Alicia – the first year's Convention we learned how to vote for officers next year.

Paul – the Convention is a great learning experience for early sobriety.

J. Gary – has heard around the North East Region that if you want to see how general service is done go to area 59.

Jen – seeing how professionally everything is done at the convention really opened her eyes.

Ken – expanding service positions for EPGSA is great for allowing more servants to participate at the area level.

#### **How well have the Area Officers been available to answer questions pertaining to (a.) the Subcommittees as Subcommittee advisors and (b.) the Area Committee and General Service as Officers for Panel 67?**

Ken – I have not been to any service event without seeing at least one officer or Area servants.

Ron – the subcommittee chairperson's orientation is a great event.



Dan – Area officers are always available to come to district meetings and great for the subcommittees.

David – the DCM orientation is very helpful and the officers helped to turn down the volume of a new DCM's anxiety level.

Jen – always gets a quick response from any email requests.

Vicki – all of the officers gave great directions.

Jim – I'm not a DCM or a GSR and this panel is great for helping us members and makes us feel like we belong.

### **How are our area committee communications practices? What can we do to be more effective in communicating with DCMs? Intergroup? Members?**

David – PI has a new email system, Mail Chimp, which is a great improvement for communications.

Danni – we have no intergroup and PI is helping us improve communications.

Sarah – the newsletter, "WE", gets much better readership by using Mail Chimp.

Alicia – getting too many emails of the updated roster, can it be updated quarterly?

Melissa – at the district level it seems there too many changes in GSR's or groups not even having one which harms communication.

Greg – workshops are great way to communicate and it would be nice to have some guidance from the Area on how to have more effective workshops.

Nora – we have a very user-friendly area website – electronic communication is the way of the future.

Sidney – many GSR's do not attend district meetings – attending the Convention opened her eyes.

Pat – make sure the website is kept current.

Sarah – surveys are an effective way to get a collective pulse of the Area.

Bill – communication from GSO is going well. Intergroup events are not on the Area calendar. We had more share a days last year.

Kim – electronic communication is great but I still need a paper trail.

Lowell – past Delegates are too much out of the communication loop. I'm glad I get an updated roster.

### **What more can we do to efficiently utilize our financial resources to carry the message and educate the membership of Area 59 on General Service?**

Donald – the last panel approved spending over \$1200 a month for a storage facility. Area should look further into the future when planning these expenses. What is affordable today may not be tomorrow.

Vicki – area should have more workshops to help GSR's and members get more service oriented.

Nora – we could more effectively use the Grapevine as a PI tool. Language of the Heart is an underutilized book. Could we give nursing homes a subscription to

Grapevine?

Moderator – does GSO still sell back issues of Grapevine? Answer, yes.

Dale – in the last panel the general service 101 workshop was a great idea.

Jack – large print service material in nursing home is a good idea.

Susie – there seems to be too much apathy, how can we get more attendance at workshops?

Tony – we need to talk about Traditions and Concepts on a deeper level at workshops.

Dan – we need to improve our spending policy and budgeting practices.

Mario – in the Spanish community many anniversary events have families participating. Area should have more anniversary events.

**Has enough effort been made to explain the need and value of unity (12 Traditions) and service (12 Concepts)? If not, what can be done to achieve this end?**

Michael – Districts should invite past delegates to come to their meetings.

Pat – we as Area trusted servants must pass on enthusiasm at the group level.

Dale – it seems more and more groups are trending towards recovery at the expense of service. Workshops should be geared more towards service.

Katie – our sharing at general meetings should include more about General Service.

Kenny – make sure illustrated 12 Concepts and 12 Traditions is in literature racks.

Nora – can Area develop a regular conference call on Traditions and Concepts with a recorder and the discussion being archived?

Alicia – when we discussed Concepts and Traditions at our quarterly meeting some people may zone out, could we insert them throughout the meeting instead?

Andy – subcommittee displays work very well at workshops. Having a brief discussion about them during the workshop may be a good idea.

Bridget – as a sponsor after working on Steps and Traditions we move on to books and literature.

Nate – enthusiasm has a lot to do with it, that's what made me desire getting involved in service.

Evelyn – electronic communications can be a detriment. We used to meet as subcommittees at members' homes, electronic communication makes unity more difficult.

Catherine – learned a lot from the DCM at district meetings about service.

Zach – we seem to have lots of meetings but not many groups.

**Is adequate opportunity given to all members to speak and participate in District/Area activities and arrive at an effective group conscience for our whole Area?**

Lowell – DCM's do not use past Delegates enough for an informed group conscience.

Leah – some groups feel they have no voice at the Area level with the Pre

Conference Sharing Session being an example.

David – we are trying to work well with communication with the guidance we receive from area officers and our advisors.

**How can the Democratic election of our Area leadership be enhanced so that our GSR's have a broad informed incentive for voting?**

Mike – inviting Officers and Chairpersons and other DCM's to District meetings to explain what they do.

Dan – having monthly speaker meetings at home groups and inviting area servants to tell their stories.

Donald – it is our responsibility to encourage members to come to Area events.

Gary – an Area Assembly is different from Area Committee meetings. Maybe have more than one assembly per year.

Joe – GSR's don't want to come to area meetings and just listen they want to participate.

Steve – guest observers at EPGSA use a resume, should candidates at officer's elections also do this.

Candi – better educate members on the service manual.

Suzanne – most GSR's don't even know who they're voting for during the elections.

Nora – Officers and DCM's go to many workshop, sit down and talk to them.

Paul – a bio is not necessarily an honest bio. It is a voting member's responsibility to learn about potential Officers through participation in events.

Lowell – we need to keep politics out of voting is much as possible.

**Have we defined well the scope of authority and service responsibility of our Area committee DCM's and officers, by specific job descriptions or guidelines?**

Dan – the service and structure manuals define the roles well.

Ken – the DCM orientation workshop was a great idea.

Ken – there seems to of been a lot of turnover in DCM's so far this panel. This second year will have a DCM Sharing Session and all members can attend.

Jen – since the DCM workshop went so well make it available for ADCM's and recruit them. Also better define the roles of ADCM's.

Donald – there is nothing in the Area Structure Manual describing what the committees are supposed to do.

Dave – it is not well communicated what is required at the Area service level.

Catherine – is the members responsibility to become better informed.

Mike – the Area Committee's responsibility is spelled out well in the Structure Manual. The DCM's could work harder to better inform their GSR's.

Kathy – there is no description of what the ADCM's responsibilities are in the service literature.



Paul – each District is autonomous and can describe service responsibilities anyway they would like to.

**Are the quarterly meetings informative and worthwhile? Are the issues brought to the Area meetings made clear so all know what they are voting for or against?**

Kim – if members come to the area events to keep informed they can get to know trusted servants and get better informed when voting.

Dan – there doesn't seem to be enough debate at Area committee meetings.

Nora – subcommittees make good background information available prior to the meetings and Mail Chimp will make this process easier to keep all informed.

**Are our Subcommittees doing their best to fulfill their charge? If not, what are the impediments and the strategies for addressing this issue?**

Nora – as a Grapevine representative it is noted that all are English speaking members and it seems there should be a Spanish speaking member as a liaison for Lavinia.

Ron – why are we not using resources such as ADCM's or GSR's to fill vacancies and allow them to vote on subcommittees?

Andy – it would be very helpful to have ADCM's assist on subcommittees.

Jack – keep in mind that making any changes in the structure manual go beyond just our panel years.

Sarah – on the Literature subcommittee ADCM's are doing well.

**How has everyone felt about that Area Newsletter "WE"? What has been the response from members throughout the fellowship? What could be added, taken away, or are there any suggestions to improve the Area Newsletter?**

David – "WE" is emailed to 1500 members, we should have a Spanish version available and distributed.

Moderator – are hard copies available of the newsletter? Answer, only electronic copies are sent.

Dan – as a DCM he will ask his GSR's if they read it.

J. Gary – in past panels a newsletter was always voted down, it is a splendid service long in coming.

Catherine – the Literature subcommittee should work on making a Spanish version of the newsletter available.

**What additional activities can the area engage in to help you in your service positions?**

Nora – roundtable discussions of past and present Treasures, Subcommittee Chairpersons and DCM’s would be very helpful.

David – last panels Area workshops were a good idea and should be done in the future.

Paul – why did we stop the area forums, is there any feedback about them?

Ken – it was felt the area forums cost too much money for the low attendance achieved. The Committee could vote to have some this next year.

### **How is what Area does different from what Intergroup does? What more can the Area do to carry the message?**

Caroline – Area connects the group to GSO, Intergroup does more boots on the ground local work. Not all places have an Intergroup so the District must then step in.

Mario – Area does the heart of AA and motivates me. Area completes the task of carrying the message to our group.

Ray – Area sets up the guidelines for AA so that Intergroup can be guided in their service work such as institutions and corrections.

Robert – after six years in the Intergroup I’m now a GSR and our District does not donate literature, Intergroup does. Whose job is it?

Steve – Districts are autonomous, but Intergroup’s are where local direct service happens. There are no guidelines which say you can or cannot donate literature.

Kelly – we have no Intergroup so District takes care of hands-on AA.

Vicki – Area is the business side, Intergroup is the 12 step recovery.

Jen – our Intergroup serves to Districts. As long as they communicate well there is no conflict in double efforts.

Suzanne – our District covers three counties, only one has an Intergroup, we all need to work well together.

Sarah – our District formed an outreach committee to SEPIA to better fill voids.

### **How can Area Officers, also trusted servants, better help you in your District in your service?**

Mario – we have 80 home groups and over 50 don’t come to District meetings. District officers travel out to those meetings and try to generate interest. Having area representatives come to our meetings is helpful.

Haley – as I travel around I see no pink cans, why not? They provide separate funding for hospitals and institutions.

Bob – meetings in District 43 have pink cans at their meetings.

Candy – sees so many past and present area servants at many events.

Nora – when asked for help all Officers respond quickly. We also have many past Delegates who are very active.

Kim – reaches out to area servants often and finds them very willing to help.  
Paul – past Delegates are reimbursed for travel to Area events not District events.  
Could the Area change the policy to pay for their travel to District events?  
Steve – when asking for help at the Area level the response is very positive.  
Karen – Area representatives are always available and very supportive.  
Donald – when asked for help past Delegates are available to help with their past experience.  
Dan – it seems that funding is available.

**What actions can the Area Committee take to increase involvement of all GSR's and strengthen the communication and decision-making between the Area Committee and it' link GSR's and groups in all geographical parts of area 59?**

Ken – forgive the convoluted question. We all have a responsibility to reach out. While we are having this inventory today we must always be willing to spot check how we are doing in the moment and feel free to offer comments. Please continue with them open dialogue on how we can make improvements.  
Ron – we need to focus more on making it clear that General Service is 12 step work.  
Candy – doesn't like the past Delegates are not reimbursed for District travel.  
Bob – has isolated populations and needs the Areas help to increase enthusiasm.  
Paul – since we get together only once a year with our GSR's perhaps we should find a way to involve them more at the Area level throughout the year.  
Sarah – make service attractive by talking about it positively, I don't have to serve – I get to serve.  
Beth – it would be good if subcommittees could have a little bit of time to say something at workshops when they bring their displays. It would be nice if there were some better way to introduce ourselves at area events.  
Mike – there District has a monthly District night out event where they go out to dinner and then go to a meeting. Also more than one area a day events per panel would be nice.  
Nora – we should focus more on service sponsorship and better use of outgoing DCM's.  
Nick – when area servants go to local workshops make sure to talk to GSR's and let them get to know you and pass along some enthusiasm.  
Steve – through the years he lost enthusiasm for General Service then got it back realizing it would help him be a good example for response sponsees

**General Session**

Alicia – I was surprised to find that there was no ask it basket at this event for people who are intimidated by the microphone. Something which helped her Districts GSR's participate more was renting a van to take them to the Mini



Assembly. We need to remember that AA is not the only recovery program out there so we must always be willing to show our enthusiasm for our program. Geremo - as a member I am going to take back to District 68 my enthusiasm to get more members involved in Area events.

Monica - this is my first Area inventory and it has sparked my enthusiasm.

Katie - we need to better help specialized populations to overcome a language barrier. There is no audio General Service Manual available, GSO says it's too expensive. That's not a good enough reason.

Jen - it's nice to have GSR's be able to participate in the Area inventory.

Catherine - making audio service material may be too expensive - we should try harder anyway.

## Area 59 Archives Sub Committee Inventory

Attendees: Andy B. (Chair), Ken P. (Secretary), Steve P., Mario, Donald H. (Archivist), Jack C. (Asst. Archivist), Paul M. (Facilitator), Evelyn & Lisa (Translators).

### 1. How can we improve our collection and filing of area 59 documents?

Newsletter – add article to ensure archives has copies of documents.

Information documents – keep electronic – only keep handwritten and printed documents of historic value.

The way we do it is fine, but the article suggestion.

Establish written, specific policy on collecting electronic documents and how to categorize them.

### 2. What can we implement to ensure preservation of our documents?

Sift through the items digitized – digitize it and remove it.

Need a safe physical space in which to perform the work more easily and protect the documents.

Establish a set of questions to help determine how and what to store (digital/hard copy/no storage?).

### 3. What works best when taking displays to workshops to educate the fellowship?

There is an interest in area history – photos and illustrations are more appealing.

Trifolds don't get too much response – go around each table and talk about group histories – don't be passive.

Can take trifold to all district events, workshops, any related AA event etc. – for Area – Donald does display.

### 4. How can we improve communication in our committee?

Like the online format for committee meetings – online chat. Don't have to wait for work sessions. Able to communicate more often. More structured. Don't have to be physically together.

Some have email, some do not, some have text, some do not. All have phones, conference calls may be an option.

Good with what we have – conference call is a good idea.

Chat group can update – What's Up app – can work with the interpreter.

Zoom is an option.

### 5. What delegate recommendations should be our priorities for the second year of our panel?

Designate someone to work on planning committee for area day.

Upgrade/add to our trifold displays – missing two – need to pass on complete set the next panel.

Ensure district minutes are sent to archivist.

Ensure all reports are submitted in a timely and complete fashion.

**6. Any ideas on speeding the scanning process?**

Focus on organizing inventory and system for storing and what to store and consider assistance with standing. Third party question? – Formulate recommendation.

People show up on Sundays to perform work.

**7. We are down two trifold displays, ideas?**

Add two more and update them with visuals (pictures) – added display for the Hispanic district.

Look at rollup display similar to other committees – it's custom can add Hispanic.

Like the rollup display – take up less space and they are more durable – keep replacing trifold with the “blind” rollup display.

**8. What are our thoughts on the proposal to move the archives?**

What we are looking for does not exist in our price range. Current facility is probably the best option right now – the workspace is not ideal, but we can manage unless we want to look at a long-term facility for more access.

Will continue to look for something adequate, but will have to wait – it's a long process to bring back to area.

Can't afford what we want/need – stop wasting energy.

Would be great to move, but be patient – it'll work out how it needs to work out.

**9. Any other ideas to improve our archives?**

Show up as we can.

Mariano will visit.

**10. How can we improve our service in cooperation to our Spanish-speaking district?**

We did not have much from the Hispanic community in the archive. We would love to add to the archive. Would like to visit the Hispanic activities to speak on archives and ask for material.

Make a focused effort to attend Hispanic activities – it's a two-way street.

Attend the Hispanic functions.

Workshop coming up – attend.

Convention May 16 and 17.

Hispanic district still needs to be more fully developed. Area officers are visiting. The literacy is an issue – 1:1 connection is paramount.

## Cooperation with the Professional Community

Area inventory 2019: Discussion Questions and Answers

- 1) Does the CPC subcommittee work well to fulfill its function? What can the chairperson do to promote engagement and retain members? Would more meetings be more effective?**

The subcommittee functioning has been positive. Loss of or lack of participation of members unfortunately happens. It has severely hampered our ability to fully implement ideas, but what has been accomplished we think it good.

- 2) Has the CPC subcommittee been effective in providing displays at as many Area events as permissible? Is there room to improve and how might that be achieved?**

Again, the discussion returned to lack of active members. Those that are active are geographically localized. We have done what we can, but as is typical more could be done. We have opted to implement the method used by other subcommittees to break up the area and assign to specific members. This removes the ambiguity of assignment, **but may not do much to improve coverage of events.**

- 3) Have we been effective in assisting districts with CPC work? Can we take other steps to maximize our resources as it applies to carrying the message to districts not served by Intergroups?**

Thus far we our efforts have been localized within member districts. Moving forward we will make concerted efforts to approach underserved districts. Implementation will be discussed at the next subcommittee meeting.

- 4) The CPC subcommittee attempted to place literature within hospitals. Was that effective and can more be done to improve this approach?**

The loss of members throughout the year has hampered this attempt. Though successful for one, other have not been given their proper due.

- 5) To date, we have not worked with other subcommittees. Can we formulate strategies that might be effective if done with other subcommittees?**

Pertaining to hospitals we intend to initiate contact with PI and Treatment subcommittees to see if we can pool resources.

**6) Regarding other delegate recommendations. Which items have we made progress on achieving, and which can we make plans to focus more effort?**

We have identified four key recommendations to focus on for the next year. Those have largely been identified by the previous questions.

General thoughts: Nearly every question brought back the issue that CPC has been poorly staffed. At one point there were only two active members which is simply not enough to get anything done. We think the Area needs to consider allowing ADCMs to participate on subcommittees or combining certain subcommittees such that when this situation does occur there are still sufficient members available to fulfill at least some of the goals.

**Grapevine:**

What is the purpose of our subcommittee?

Letting newcomers know about the grapevine, and that it is more than a magazine. Serving La Vina as well. Increasing awareness, education – passing it on. Books – beyond the Language of the Heart.

What more can the subcommittee do to carry the message?

Build connections from Area to District to Home Group to members. Supporting new Grapevine reps. Mentoring Districts, Groups and institutions. Partner with other subcommittees.

Are we adequately providing support to La Vina, in addition to Grapevine?

Suggestions made to have paperwork in Spanish, poster boards in Spanish. Maybe have La Vina rep on our subcommittee?

Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our group members and other AAs outside the meeting rooms?

Yes.

Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and participate in other group activities?

Suggestions made to create a Grapevine reps flyer, go to other Districts.



Do members feel that the workload is evenly distributed? If not how can we better share the responsibilities?

Yes - no issues noted.

What is our subcommittee presently doing well?

Working well together.

What are some of our subcommittees' greatest challenges?

Geographic area. Language barrier with La Vina. Suggestions made to have a "Grapefest" in underrepresented areas, building contacts at meetings.



## **AREA 59 PUBLIC INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE INVENTORY OCTOBER 20, 2019**

David M. Pl Chair, DCM District 56 Joe G., DCM District 61 Erik, ADCM, District 67  
Rita S., Pl Secretary, DCM District 65

Greg G, Web Servant Facilitator: Sheila D., Area 59 Delegate, Panel 57

### **1. What is the basic purpose of the Area 59 Public Information Subcommittee?**

Provide information and effective communication to members of Alcoholics Anonymous and the general public about what AA is and what AA is not. Discussed description of subcommittee responsibilities in Structure Manual.

### **2. How informed are incoming DCMs about their subcommittee Area responsibilities? Do we provide appropriate training and orientations for those new to Area service? What about those who join us part way through the Panel?**

Yes, DCM orientation is provided at the beginning of subcommittee member term. Appropriate training and orientation is accomplished by making sure each committee member is provided with the Area Structure Manual and the Pl Work Kit, which contains the Pl Workbook. These are valuable reference tools. Members are introduced to their area advisor. A copy of the Delegate Recommendations is also provided. Introduction to members joining part way through the panel is accomplished through electronic communication with a welcome by the chair and other members of the Pl Committee. There is additional communication by the chair, providing information on current activities within the Pl Subcommittee. Contact information is exchanged through email as well as availability times to answer any questions for the incoming member.

### **3. How does our subcommittee assist in addressing issues of gender, race, sexual orientation, remote communities, special needs, etc. in carrying AA's message?**

The committee utilizes AA literature, the AA Public Information Guidelines. The committee reaches out to our membership using our email system. Public outreach is accomplished by email and other forms of communication to inform various agencies



about AA and the availability of the PI Display, literature and digital media files for a PSA.

**4. How reasonable are the responsibilities on members serving on the P1 Subcommittee? Is the workload being shared equally, and if not how might we address this issue?**

Workload is shared as well as can be, given participation of individual subcommittee members. The subcommittee does its best in assigning tasks and sharing responsibilities. Communicating through a chat room platform for weekly meetings is a possible consideration. S. Are our subcommittee members doing their best to fulfill their responsibilities? If not, what are the reasons? What strategies can we develop to address this issue(s)? Members of the subcommittee are doing their best to fulfill their responsibilities given the workload, the number of active participants on the subcommittee and personal work schedules, family obligations and life outside of AA service work. Again, a chat room platform for weekly meetings is a consideration.

### **Structure Subcommittee**

**1. Does the work of the structure subcommittee lend itself to the unity of area 59? What about AA as a whole? Why? Why not? What and how could we change?**

The charter states that we address issues from each district workshop presentations being presented, revisions presented to Area, consensus is good job being done.

**2. Are we open to the minority voices and opinions among ourselves and within our area? Do we strive to research and understand issues that affect AA as a whole as deeply as possible?**

Yes, answering minority opinion at area meetings, listening and explaining reasoning of committee, willing to be open, do the necessary research and share same. Researching questionnaire sent out and used answers/sponsors.

**3. Do we conduct our business with respect to Traditions and concepts, paying attention to the democratic process afforded by Tradition Two (“...one ultimate authority... They do not govern.”)?**

At meeting we use agenda, no one heavy-handed pretty democratic, Traditions and Concepts in mind, identify strengths and allowing committee members to do their work, open enough to bring up a Tradition or Concept violation – respect of each other without judgment.

**4. Does our work fit into the primary purpose? Are we aware of Tradition five as we research, vote, and recommend actions of Structure to the area committee?**

Displays carry message, research looks to establish practices, look at previous things done, primary purpose is being followed, preconference sharing is example finding ways to help better understanding for GSR’s and members. Example terminology breakdown.

**5. Do we assess our recommendations and work in light of Tradition six and eight (endorsement and non-professionalism.)?**

Yes we do.

**6. Do we keep our perspective in line with Tradition nine (“... Responsible to those they serve.”) when we recommend change? Do we maintain the simplicity of the leased structure needed?**

Absolutely, yes and we try to keep it simple.

**7. Do we refer to the Service Manual and Concepts for guidance in our deliberations and recommendations?**

Yes, can always refer to more and can always improve.

**8. Do we play service principles before personalities?**

Absolutely, yes. Definitely.

**9. Do we strive to humbly educate members about the role and nature of Structure in General Service?**

Yes, in our recommendations in our displays and in chats with members at displays.

**10. Is there any activity or service that we as a committee are doing that is no longer necessary? What? Could it be stopped? Why?**

No.

**11. Is there an activity that we as a committee are not doing that could be started? What? Why?**

Recommended by Pat to use Delegates as a resource and past Delegates for experience. Yes, outgoing committee chair to meet with incoming committee chair for Q&A, to assist incoming committee.

**12. What effective actions and practices as a subcommittee should we count as good practices to continue? Why?**

Continue using GoToMeeting, Zoom or some platform to meet rather than conference calling, reaching out to Delegates and past DCM's and other Areas, not afraid to ask questions, having agendas and quick turnaround on minutes, keeping committee advisor informed, reminders and reminders of agenda. Why? Informed group conscience.