

AREA 04 Arkansas

GSR Workshop



A Declaration of Unity:

*This we owe to A.A.'s Future;
to place our common welfare first;
to keep our Fellowship united.
For on A.A. unity depends our lives,
and the lives of those to come.*

Welcome to Arkansas Area 04 Assembly and General Service

You have become the link between your group and General Service Office (GSO) in New York. As the General Service Representative (GSR) for your home group, you now represent the voice of your A.A. Group's collective conscience to the District, Area Assembly and ultimately to the General Service Conference held in New York each April.

Through your District Committee Member (DCM) and your Arkansas Area 04 Delegate, you will become the two-way link between your Group and the world of A.A. as a whole. You are also the reporter to your group about discussions and changes within the fellowship.

Does this sound like a "big deal"? IT IS!

GSR is perhaps the most important task in the entire service structure. You and your fellow GSR's all over the world have become the key to the unity of A.A. Your job will not only protect the right of the individual member to be heard and considered – no matter how much of a minority opinion that represents; but it will ensure that any changes within A.A. (as a whole) come as a response to the needs of ALL A.A. members and not just a few.

Therefore, your VOICE and your PARTICIPATION are vital so that your informed group's voice is heard.

You are now involved in a new dimension of 12th Step Work. You can help ensure that your group understands the meaning of "**Conference Approved A.A. Literature**" and see that these publications are available to your home group. You help to ensure that your group is registered with GSO in New York through your DCM. Also, you help your group understand the importance of voluntary monetary contributions to A.A. as a whole (your District, Area 04 and GSO).

BUT WAIT THERE IS MORE!

Most of all, you are now vitally involved in making sure:

- The doors of your meetings remain open.
- The Twelve Traditions are practiced and understood.
- Your Home Group is well informed.
- Your meetings are safe havens for the suffering alcoholic.

We sincerely hope that your service responsibility will come to mean as much to you as it has become to countless others. **HAVE FUN!**

What IS General Service?

“Our Twelfth Step (carrying the message) is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society for alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those that haven’t been given the truth may die.

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 the A.A.’s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all of these is our Third Legacy of Service. Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees and conferences.

These services, whether performed by individuals, groups, areas or A.A. as a whole, are utterly vital to our existence and growth. The most vital, yet least understood, group of services that A.A. has are those that enable us to function as a whole, namely, the General Service Office, A.A. World Services, Inc., The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and our board of trustees, known legally as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.” ~ Bill W. 1951

What ARE General Services?

“Today, the term General Services is applied to all kinds of activities within the Conference Structure, carried on by area committees, delegates, trustees and the GSO staff. Usually, the services affect the fellowship as a whole. Almost always, they are a part of A.A.’s distinctive unity, which allow the movement to function so well.” ~ A.A. Service Manual

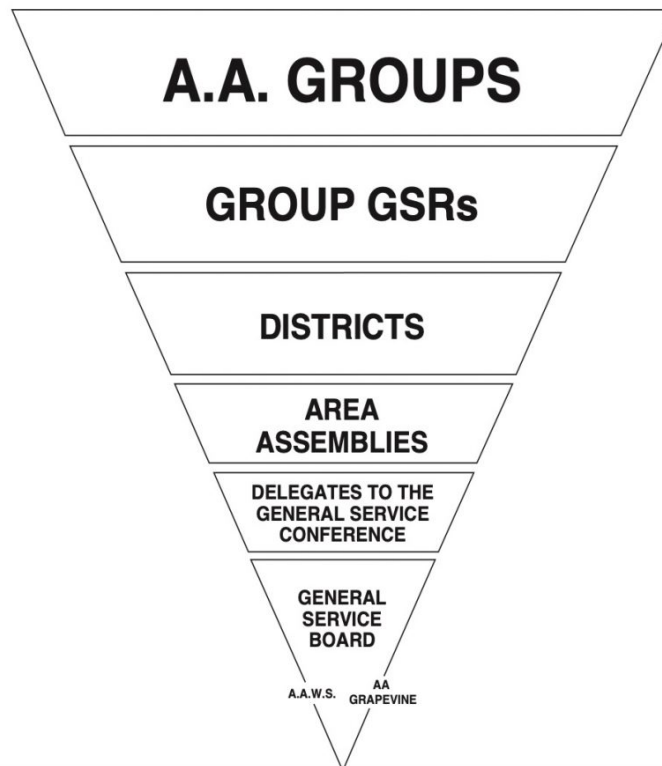
Original Conference Charter – 1955 (A.A. Service Manual)

“BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous should become, as of the date, July 3, 1955, the guardian of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, the perpetuators of the world services of our Society, the voice of the group conscience of our entire Fellowship, and the sole successors of its co-founders, Doctor Bob and Bill.” ~ “A Resolution” Bill W. 1955

Why Do We Need a General Service Conference?

- *“We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth which brought us back to life.*
- *“We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over-integration. We need it so that A.A. and A.A. alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions and all of its services.*
- *“We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A. members, and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that A.A. never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or hers social position is.” ~ Bernard Smith, Nonalcoholic (“Class A Trustee”) Chairperson of the Board of Trustees (1954)*

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



GSR - Roles & Responsibilities

The following are a few suggested roles/responsibilities you have as a new GSR:

RELATIONSHIP TO THE HOME GROUP:

- ↵ Attend your group's meeting(s).
- ↵ Make announcements to your Group about activities in your District & Area 04.
- ↵ Inform yourself and your Group of important issues. This includes issues at your District, Area 04 and General Service Conference.
- ↵ Collect your Group's *Informed Group Conscience* through regular sharing sessions (aka: Group Conscience Meeting) especially prior to the General Service Conference that is held every April.
- ↵ Keep informed of your Group's problems & concerns (use the *12 Traditions* for resolution of issues).
- ↵ Encourage voluntary monetary contributions from your Group to all levels of A.A. (District, Area 04 & GSO) – understand and clarify the 7th Tradition.
- ↵ Subscribe to *The Grapevine* and encourage Group members to subscribe too.
- ↵ Share the monthly *Box 4-5-9* and *The Grapevine* with your Home Group, along with other Conference-Approved Literature.
- ↵ Provide written reports to your Home Group of your attendance and participation at District meetings and Area 04 Assembly.
- ↵ Encourage group members to participate.
- ↵ LISTEN.
- ↵ **HAVE FUN! (“we are not a glum lot”)**

RELATIONSHIP TO THE DISTRICT:

- ↵ Attend your District's business meetings and provide a written report to your Home Group (obtain a schedule of meetings from your DCM).
- ↵ Share your Group's concerns and successes at District meetings.
- ↵ Participate in the discussions at your District meetings – be “The Voice” of your Home Group.
- ↵ Volunteer for and responsibly serve on committees as your time allows.
- ↵ Report the *Informed Group Conscience* of your Home Group to your DCM and Area 04 Delegate.
- ↵ Attend Area 04 Assembly scheduled in January, April, July and October.

SUPPORTING THE GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (“GSR”)

Being of service to your Home Group in A.A. should never become a matter of money. Members wishing to serve should not have to concern themselves with whether or not they can afford it. There is a major time commitment asked of GSR's. Therefore, Group members must be willing to financially support their GSR for the services provided to the Home Group.

You will be asked to attend a lot of service functions as your Group's GSR. Your Group should be advised of the travel/lodging/meal costs to attend District meetings and Area 04 Assembly. Although it is possible to carpool and share a hotel room to reduce expenditures, each Home Group should make a commitment to financially support their GSR.

If the GSR is not in need of the Group's financial support, we encourage them to give it back to the Home Group, anonymously in the 7th Tradition collections at Group meetings. With this method of returning unused money, the next GSR will not feel “less-than” for taking the needed financial support (if he/she is not at the same level of economic security).

Seventh Tradition support begins with the Home Group; GSR expenses are a part of that financial responsibility. If your Home Group has never been informed of these obligations or is “barely self-supporting”, discuss your options with a Service Sponsor or your DCM to ensure that you (and future GSR's) receive the needed financial support to **MAINTAIN YOUR GROUP's PARTICIPATION**.

THERE ARE NO SECOND-CLASS MEMBERS OF A.A.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VITAL TO THE HEALTHY SOBRIETY AND UNITY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

DO NOT LET MONEY STAND IN YOUR WAY.

SERVICE MEETINGS

During your term as GSR, you will be attending various types of service meetings. These service meetings will be a lot like your first A.A. meeting – confusing. However, you will find that your continued attendance at these meetings and your study of the service materials and literature will gradually dissipate your confusion. Your service commitment to A.A. will become an enjoyable and rewarding experience – **HAVE FUN!**



Now is the time to obtain a **Service Sponsor**. If you do not have one, ask your DCM for answers to your service questions as they arise. You will have an opportunity to get to know these trusted servants; they can be of great help to you. You will learn how to get an *Informed Group Conscience* in order to help keep A.A. strong, so that the collective strength and unity of A.A. can be passed on to future members. Attending service meetings is as vital to the health and well-being of A.A. members as is their attendance at A.A. meetings.

DISTRICT MEETINGS:

District meetings are held prior to Area 04 Assembly. At these meetings, the GSR's serving the Groups in that district gather together to discuss matters of importance to the District, Area 04 and A.A. as a whole. Each district is headed by a District Committee Member ("DCM"). The DCM serves as the chairperson at all District meetings. GSR's will present written reports of their Group's committee work, weekly meeting schedule and the Group's special events.

AREA 04 ASSEMBLY MEETINGS:

Area 04 Assembly is a quarterly meeting of the thirteen (13) districts within Arkansas. GSR's are responsible for carrying the *Informed Group Conscience* of their Home Group to the Assembly. These assemblies are held in January, April (this is the pre-General Service Conference assembly), July (this is the post- General Service Conference assembly) and October (in even-numbered years this is the Elections Assembly).

THE ARKANSAS AREA 04 ASSEMBLY PREAMBLE

The Arkansas Area 04 Assembly of Alcoholics Anonymous shall always be a service body and shall protect and respect the privilege and dissent of any and all A.A. groups in the Arkansas General Service Conference area. In the course of its deliberations and discussions, the Arkansas Area 04 Assembly shall be ever mindful of the ideas expressed in the *Twelve Traditions*, the *Twelve Concepts for World Service* and the *A.A. Service Manual*; and shall strive to be the true voice and group conscience of Arkansas Area 04 A.A. unity.

Service shall be the Assembly's primary purpose and the Assembly shall encourage all Arkansas Area 04 A.A. groups to participate in the business of the assembly; and to support the Area 04 Assembly in its efforts to cooperate with the A.A. General Service Office and A.A. World Services, Inc.

The Area 04 Assembly is specifically charged with the duty of electing a Delegate to the General Service Conference and to give the Delegate financial support to assist him or her in the course of the duties of the office.

The Area 04 Assembly is further charged with electing an Alternate Delegate to the General Service Conference and Area 04 Assembly Officers as it deems necessary.

AREA 04 OFFICERS:

- Area Chair
- Area Co-Chair
- Secretary
- Registrar
- Treasurer

ARKANSAS AREA 04 ASSEMBLY STRUCTURE & GUIDELINES

Please contact your DCM to obtain a copy of the *Arkansas Area 04 Structure & Guidelines*. You may log onto www.arkansasaa.org, then click *Area 4 documents*, then click on "*Area 04 Structure & Guidelines*". Or scan the QR code to set up the Area 4 Assembly App* In the app click on documents in the menu along the bottom of the screen.

How to Set Up the Area 4 Assembly App* on Your Phone



*The Area Assembly App is not a true mobile app like those you download from the app store. It is actually just a website specifically designed for use on a phone.

THE PERMANENT COMMITTEES' AREA 04 ASSEMBLY

Arkansas Area 04 Convention Committee (“Convention”):

The purpose of the Arkansas Area 04 Convention Committee is to plan and conduct the annual Area 04 convention – *OLD GRANDDAD*. The Committee consists of a minimum of five (5) members whose office terms shall not exceed five (5) years. The Area 04 Delegate will be appointed to serve as one of the members immediately following the Arkansas Area 04 Convention in the last year of their service as Delegate. In odd years, the Area 04 Assembly Chairman, with the approval of the Area 04 Assembly Co-Chairman, will appoint one new member, from the current-voting membership of Area 04 Assembly, immediately following the convention.

Arkansas Area 04 Structure Committee (“Structure”):

The purpose of the Area 04 Structure Committee is to maintain the *Arkansas Area 04 Structure & Guidelines* and to determine the feasibility of suggested amendments as they are presented, in writing, to the Area Chairman. The Area 04 Structure Committee consists of a minimum of five (5) members whose terms of office shall not exceed five (5) years. The Area 04 Assembly Chairman and the Area 04 Delegate will serve on the committee during their terms of office. Other members of this committee are appointed by the Area 04 Assembly Chairman, with the approval of the Area 04 Assembly Co-Chair. At the time of their appointment, new committee members must consist of the current-voting membership of Area 04 Assembly.

Archives Committee (“Archives”):

The purpose of the Archives Committee is to collect and preserve the experience, history and artifacts of Arkansas Area 04 in an undistorted manner as possible. The committee encourages and assists District Committees, Group Committees and individuals who are, or will become, involved in fulfilling this committee's primary purpose.

Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee (“CPC”):

The purpose of the CPC Committee shall be to provide information about A.A. to those who have contact with alcoholics through their profession. These professionals include physicians, nurses, members of the clergy (preachers & pastors), lawyers, social workers, union leaders and industrial managers; as well as those working in the field of alcoholism. Information is provided about where we are, what we do and what we cannot do. An attempt is made to establish a good rapport and cooperation between A.A. members and the professionals at the group, district and area levels.

Correctional Facilities Committee (“Corrections”):

The purpose of the Correctional Facilities Committee shall be to coordinate the flow of information and activities pertaining to carrying the message of recovery to the alcoholic that is incarcerated in correctional facilities, and from the Area Assembly to individual A.A. members, A.A. groups and A.A. district committees. The members of the Corrections Committee should encourage and assist group committees, district committees and individual A.A. members who are, or will become, involved in this vital Twelfth Step work.

Grapevine Committee (“Grapevine”):

The purpose of the Grapevine Committee shall be to inform all A.A. groups and individual A.A. members in Arkansas Area 04 of the many benefits that can be obtained from a subscription to *The Grapevine*. The committee shall encourage broadening the use of *The Grapevine*, such as using the publication for topics of discussion at A.A. meetings, submitting articles for publication, sharing copies with newcomers to the fellowship, friends, family, professionals and institutions.

Group Relations Committee (“Group Relations”):

The purpose of the Group Relations Committee is to improve communications, activities and services in Arkansas Area 04. The committee will strive for harmony in achieving specific goals for Arkansas Area 04 through unity and service at the group, district and area levels. The committee membership shall consist of the DCM's.

Public Information Committee (“P.I.”):

The purpose of the Public Information Committee is to keep individual A.A. members, groups, districts and Area 04 Assembly well informed so that the fellowship may carry the message more effectively to the still-suffering alcoholic. The committee should encourage and assist individual A.A. members, group committees and district committees with keeping the general public and “the third person” well informed about the A.A. program.

Treatment Facilities Committee (“Treatment”):

The purpose of the Treatment Facilities Committee shall be to coordinate the flow of information and activities pertaining to carrying the message of recovery to alcoholics in hospitals and alcoholism treatment/rehab centers; and carries info from Area 04 Assembly to individual A.A. members, group committees, and district committees. The committee should encourage and assist individual A.A. members, group committees, and district committees who are willing to become involved in this vital Twelfth Step work.

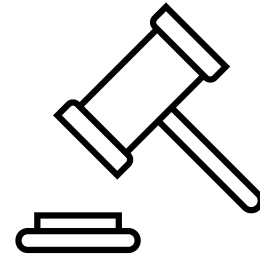
Information and Technologies Committee:

The purpose of the Information and Technologies Committee is to (1) facilitate the exchange of information about Arkansas Area Assembly, (2) facilitate communication among GSR's, DCM's, committee officers & area offices, (3) to improve understanding of the workings of Arkansas Area 04 in order to encourage participation in service work and (4) carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic using new or existing technologies. Committee members serve five (5) year terms.

Arkansas Area 04 Assembly Business Meeting

ROBERT'S RULES of ORDER:

Arkansas Area 04 Assembly makes every effort to follow *Robert's Rules of Order* in business meetings, with a few differences. The Area 04 Chairman will bring various issues before the Arkansas Area 04 Assembly for consideration. Using the annual budget as an example: a voting member of the assembly will make a motion to approve the annual budget. The motion dies if there is not a second from another voting member. If the motion receives a second, the assembly will discuss the issue (moderated by the Area 04 Chairman) – members (voting and non-voting alike) will come to the microphone, state their name and express their opinion. And the fun continues...



CALL THE QUESTION:

What in the world does that mean? Did someone have a question? What it means at Arkansas Area 04 Assembly is that a voting member believes it is time to end discussion and vote on the issue; the voting member says, "*I CALL THE QUESTION*" (a "second" is not required to call the question). The assembly will suspend discussion, and the voting members will vote on *calling the question* to end discussion. If the voting members vote unanimously to *call the question*, discussion is closed, and a vote occurs. If a voting member casts a NO vote to call the question, the discussion continues.

MINORITY OPINION:

The "*minority*" includes all voting members of the assembly that cast a NO vote on a motion. The minority is allowed to come to the mic to address the assembly with their rationale, and share additional information that justified their NO vote. After all minority opinions are heard, the Assembly Chairman will ask if anyone in the majority wishes to change their vote, based on the information given from the minority. If a voting member changes their vote, another vote is cast by the voting members of the assembly. The result of this vote is final.

THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE (found in the A.A. Service Manual):

Arkansas Area 04 Assembly uses the Third Legacy Procedure, as shown in the *A.A. Service Manual*, in all elections of its trusted servants.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A.A.W.S. (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.):

The A.A.W.S. is the non-profit corporation that, (a) employs the General Service Office (“GSO”) personnel, (b) directs GSO’s services, and (c) is responsible for the publishing of books and pamphlets. The GSO staff includes the General Manager, A.A. staff members, department managers and other employees.

AREA:

A term used to describe a particular geographic location of several districts in A.A. The entire state of Arkansas is *AREA 04*.

AREA ASSEMBLY:

A meeting of the voting-members of the area - GSR’s, DCM’s, and Area Officers to discuss issues that impact that particular Area. In Arkansas Area 04, this group includes Past-Delegates. The assembly is a basic unit of the General Service Structure and conducts or helps coordinate A.A. business on behalf of the A.A. groups in that area. The area is the primary conduit of information to and from the General Service Conference. Arkansas Area 04 Assembly meets quarterly in January, April, July and October.

AREA OFFICERS:

Area Officers are trusted servants for Arkansas Area 04 and are comprised of seven (7) members: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairman, Co-Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary. These servants are elected at the October Assembly in even-numbered years. Their term of service is two (2) years.

BOX 4-5-9:

This is the quarterly newsletter of GSO’s “news and notes”. This publication is copyrighted by A.A.W.S., Inc. (415 Riverside Drive * New York, NY * 10115) and includes information about A.A. service, literature, events, sharing from groups, service committees and individual U.S./Canada A.A. Members. You can subscribe to this publication at www.aa.org.

CONFERENCE:

This is the A.A. General Service Conference which is the guardian of A.A.’s world services, the A.A. Twelve Steps and the A.A. Twelve Traditions. The Conference is a service body only, as a whole, in the perpetuation and guidance of its world services; and is the vessel by which A.A. groups can express its opinions on all matters of A.A. policy and tradition. Each area in the USA and Canada is represented by a delegate; 93 delegates in total. The Conference is comprised of these delegates, the trustees and GSO staff. The delegates account for more than two-thirds of the voting members of the Conference.

CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE:

This is a term for A.A. publications that have passed the rigorous approval process of the Conference; a process that can take several years. Literature is the lifeblood of our fellowship. Editing, publishing and distributing Conference- Approved Literature is one of the most vital services provided by GSO.

DCM (“District Committee Member”):

This is an experienced GSR that is elected by other GSR’s in a district to represent the groups in the district at the area level and coordinate the services provided in the district. DCM’s are elected in even-numbered years and serve a 2-year term.

DELEGATE:

The Delegate is a voting member of area assembly that is elected to serve the area as its representative to the annual General Service Conference in New York. The Delegate reports the results of the Conference to the assembly and each district, separately. In Arkansas Area 04, this election is held in October of even- numbered years. Delegates serve a 2-year term.

DISTRICT:

This is a collection of A.A. groups in a specific geographical location – usually in close proximity to each other. Also, the structure of A.A. allows for “linguistic districts” (A.A. groups in an area that speak the same non-English language). Arkansas Area 04 is divided into thirteen (13) districts that are identified numerically (1 thru 13). Twelve (12) of these districts, 1 thru 12, are divided by county lines. District 13 in Arkansas Area 04 is a linguistic district comprised of Spanish-speaking groups from across the Area 04.

GROUP:

An A.A. group is two or more alcoholics who gather together for meetings on a regular basis. These meetings are the basic source of recovery for the alcoholic that has a desire to stop drinking. A.A. groups should be fully self-supporting with no outside affiliations or opinions on outside issues. A.A.’s public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; therefore, group members should maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, film and electronic technologies such as the internet (see: Tradition 3 – Long Form and Warranty 6 in Concept 12).

GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE:

The annual meeting of delegates, trustees, GSO General Manager and GSO staff held in New York.

G.S.O. (General Service Office):

The GSO is located in New York. Often referred to as the A.A. Headquarters, this building is the office space of the General Manager and staff members that carry out the administrative responsibilities of Alcoholics Anonymous.

GSR (General Service Representative):

This is an A.A. member selected by the group to voice the group’s opinion in discussions at the district and area level. The GSR participates in the election of the DCM, participates in area assemblies and the elections of area officers and the Delegate.

GvR (Grapevine Representative):

The GvR is responsible for the awareness of A.A. members of the fellowship’s international journal, *The Grapevine*, and the enhancements to sobriety it offers. They serve as the group’s representative to the district committee, the area assembly committee and the Grapevine administrative office in New York.

PANEL (Conference Panels):

A “panel” is a numerical designation that refers to a group of delegates elected to begin serving at the General Service Conference in a particular year. The Conference started in 1951 (PANEL 1); 1952 (PANEL 2). Each panel is numbered for the Conference at which the Area’s delegate will first serve. EXAMPLE: Panel 73 is the 73rd General Service Conference that was held in the year 2023 (add 73 to 1950, the last year there was not a Conference). The delegate from Arkansas Area 04 serves on an “odd-numbered panel” due to the fact Area 04’s elections are held in October of the previous “even-numbered” year (refer to the chart in the Service Manual for the assignments of “Odd/Even” years for each area).

REGION:

A geographical grouping of several areas from which a regional trustee comes to serve on the board of trustees. There are six (6) regions in the US, two (2) in Canada.

SOUTHWEST REGION:

Arkansas Area 04 is included in the Southwest Region. The Southwest Region is made up of eleven (11) areas: Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Eastern Missouri, Western Missouri, North East Texas, North West Texas, South East Texas and South West Texas.

SWRAASA (South West Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly): SWRAASA is a regional service meeting held in even-numbered years and is hosted by one of the eleven (11) areas in the South West Region; therefore, each area has the privilege of hosting this event every twenty-two (22) years. Arkansas Area 04 is hosting this event in 2016.

REGIONAL FORUM:

Regional Forum is a regional service meeting held in odd-numbered years and is hosted by GSO. A Regional Forum was last held in Arkansas Area 04 in 2005.

RIGHT OF DECISION (Concept III):

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the Groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “*Right of Decision*”.

Every level of service has the authority to decide on which problems the individual will dispose of themselves, and upon which matters they will report, consult or request specific directions. DO NOT use this right as an excuse for failure to make proper reports of actions taken, for exceeding a clearly defined authority or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision. There are no second-class members in A.A

RIGHT OF PARTICIPATION (Concept IV):

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “*Right of Participation*”, taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge. The preservation of the principle of “*Participation*” in our service structure is, to those of us who already understand its application and benefits, a matter of the highest importance to our future. The “*Right of Participation*” is therefore corrective of ultimate authority because it mitigates its harshness or misuse.

It also encourages us who serve A.A. to accept the necessary disciplines that our several tasks require. We can do this when we are sure that we belong, when the fact of our “participation” assures us that we are truly the “trusted servants” described in A.A.’s TRADITION TWO. There are no second-class members in A.A.

RIGHT OF APPEAL (Concept V):

Throughout our Conference structure, a traditional “*Right of Appeal*” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

In granting this traditional “*Right of Appeal*”, we recognize that minorities are frequently right; that even when they are partly or wholly in error they still perform a most valuable service when, by asserting their “Right of Appeal”, they compel a thorough-going debate on important issues. The well-handed minority, therefore, is our chief protection against uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority. There are no second-class members in A.A.

SERVICE SPONSOR:

An active A.A. member that has served A.A. in various service capacities and has knowledge of the service position you have been elected to. This individual acts as a guide for your questions and concerns.

THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE:

A special type of election procedure used for the election of delegates and other representatives of General Service. Also, this procedure is used by Arkansas Area 04 for the election of its officers. Basically, the procedure requires the winner to receive two-thirds of the total vote (substantial unity). If no one receives a two-thirds majority, the election is decided by pulling the winner’s name “*from the hat*” (aka: “God decides the winner”).

TRUSTEE:

The term for a member of A.A.’s General Service Board. Some trustees are members of A.A. and some are nonalcoholic. The Certificate of Incorporation of the General Service Board divides trustees into two (2) categories: (1) Class A Trustees are the nonalcoholic trustees; there are seven (7) “Class A” positions on the board and (2) Class B Trustees are the “ex-alcoholics” or A.A. member trustees; there are fourteen (14) “Class B” positions on the board giving this group a substantial majority. If you have trouble remembering the difference between Class A Trustee and Class B Trustee, the Class A’s are “**A**mateurs” and the Class B’s are “**B**oozers.

AN INFORMED PASS IT ON

We have both rotation and continuity in our A.A. service structure. Rotation is necessary so that we don't succumb to the temptation of taking ourselves too seriously as we become entrenched in any one service position. Some of you are new to your service positions and some will be rotating out of positions. An *informed pass-it-on* is the method we use in A.A. to achieve some continuity in the midst of our constant rotation.

This concept has been with us from the very beginning: Roland H. received an *informed pass-it-on* from Dr. Jung; the information was that alcoholism required a spiritual transformation for the alcoholic to be healed. Ebby T. received that info from Rowland and passed it on to Bill Wilson, along with a practical program of action, *The Five Procedures of the Oxford Group*, which forms the basis of A.A.'s Twelve Steps. Bill also received vital info from Dr. Silkworth, who educated him on the dual nature of the disease which involves the phenomenon of craving, set off by yielding to the compulsion to take the first drink.

Bill may have been the first person to have all of this information. He passed it on to Dr. Bob, and they passed it to others, thus initiating the process we are involved in today. If each alcoholic had to discover the nature of the disease and the method of recovery for himself, few would have recovered. The Big Book is probably the best example of an *informed pass-it-on* we have.

The info we pass on is gathered in two ways: by bitter experience and by sharing. Neither one seems to do us much good without the other. The *Twelve Traditions* is another *informed pass-it-on*. We tried dues & fees; we tried bosses; we tried membership requirements. These things did not work for A.A., so we wrote that down and passed it on. The *Twelve Concepts for World Service* were formed in a similar manner: by trial & error. The main difference between a practicing alcoholic and a recovering one may be the fact that the former seems unable to learn from his own experience. If he could, he would not take that first drink. The latter, with God's help, can learn something from experience and begin to make sense of his own life. It's good to learn from our experience; it's best to learn from the experience of others.

Service is always a learning experience. When we began our journey in A.A., we didn't know much about helping others – we had spent all of our lives “*helping ourselves*”. And we didn't know much about working with others for a common purpose. We only knew about getting our own way in spite of others. As new GSR's, we sometimes believe we are finally going to get our home groups to do what we want them to do. But by the time we rotate out, we begin to realize that we were supposed to do what the group wanted – **WHAT A CONCEPT!**

Were you encouraged to get into service, maybe at a time in your sobriety when you “*needed to get out of yourself*”, but weren't sure you had anything to contribute to the process? Or were you restrained from making snap judgements when you thought you knew how things ought to be done, and were shown a better way by someone with a little more experience? Was there someone there to guide you when you really just couldn't figure out what to do or say? If so, you know how to be there for someone who is just getting started in a position you once held.

Part of your job here is to try to make sure that when you rotate, we'll get along okay without you, because you chose to share, rather than to “own” your service position – SUCH A LOVING CONCEPT.

SECRET HINTS & PEARLS OF WISDOM

LISTEN before you respond

Don't take yourself too seriously ("*Rule 62*")

Get a service sponsor

Study the literature to become informed: THE BIG BOOK, *Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions*, *Language of the Heart*, *The A.A. Service Manual*, *A.A. Comes of Age* and *Twelve Concepts for World Service*.

Attend all district meetings and area assemblies

Read the A.A. pamphlets: *GSR* and *The A.A. Group*

Attend a sharing session of "*seasoned GSR's*"

Remember nothing happens in your time... it happens in God's time

Just when you've figured it how to do it, you will rotate out

Be patient with yourself and others... we are all learning

REMEMBER: this is a *Spiritual Program*, not a political debate

Don't respond first... LISTEN

Be enthusiastic... IT IS CONTAGIOUS

Don't give up before you see the "Miracle of General Service".

Defend one another and speak gently to each other

LISTEN

Our focus is the business of A.A. NOT POLITICAL FAME & NOTORIETY!

REMEMBER: you are a *Trusted Servant*. You serve your group and must vote their conscience, not your own.

Don't be afraid to ask questions.