



# DISTRICT 29 NEWSLETTER

January 2019

[www.district29aa.org](http://www.district29aa.org)



## El Primero....

**Step** – We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol; that our lives had become unmanageable.

**Tradition** - Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.

**Promise** – If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.

**Concept** - The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

## With the New Year and a Lot of Help From Our Friends

Welcome to a new year! May yours be filled with new and exciting adventures in recovery. We through 2019 we resolve – with a little help from you friends – to bring you a few yearlong series and hopefully find a few of you willing to help share your miracles in recovery!

This is the year our Panel which includes our District and Groups – election year. We promise no mudslinging or side taking here in the pages of the District 29 Newsletter! We do hope, however, through a series of articles to introduce you to each of the positions available to stand for here in our District and your Groups. With a goal of help you make a well-informed decision on which of the positions you would be of the most service to your fellows, should you be elected. There will also be articles helping you know about

the election details as the time approaches. In the months following the elections you will have a chance to get to know those willing and elected to be of service at the District level to keep the AA doors open and tires on in and around Bastrop County!

Coincidentally, we also plan to run a series of articles that are aimed to help all of us learn more about the AA – please don't balk too much – organization! While each Group in AA is autonomous and there is not hierarchy there is some structure that helps to ensure books are printed, meetings can be found, people can find the hand of AA with a simple phone call, and similar activities that help to ensure AA stay around. This will be a series of articles which cover the 12 Traditions and Service Concepts. An article on each which correspond with the month. This is in part inspired by the

Newsletter Chair wanting to learn more after bristling a little with the service structure. Hopefully the articles will help me past my discomfort by helping me better understand something which causes me discomfort. There was through 2018 a service study group which met here in District 29 and hopefully this series of articles will help to invigorate our community to restore this precious and now (temporarily) gone resource!

### **What's Happening, in and around District 29 - January**

**1 through 31, 2019**

**Jan 5** - Speaker Meeting at On The Colorado (OTC), Smithville at 8pm

**Jan 6** - SWTA 68 Summer Workshop Committee Meeting at Sunday Morning Sidewalk Group at noon

**Jan 12** - Speaker Meeting at Lost Pines Group at 7pm

**Jan 13** - District Meeting at 1:30pm at On The Colorado (OTC)

**Jan 13** - Treatment Workshop presented by Sandy T SWTA68 Treatment Chair at On The Colorado (OTC) after the District 29 Meeting approximately 3pm

**Jan 18-20** - SWTA 68 Winter Workshop in Uvalde, TX

**Jan 26** - Area Birthday hosted by Phelan Road Group. Potluck at 7pm. Meeting at 8pm.

**Jan 29** - Speaker Mtg. at A Way Out Group at 7pm.

And finally, in the coming year we hope you will help us rise to a request! There was a request that the newsletter share a few miracles! The fact that we are sober is a miracle and sharing our miracle helps keep us sober while inspiring others. This is a call for you all to share a story in your recovery! We can help via using an interview format, writing assistance, idea development, etc.. If you volunteer, we'll help you take it from there. Please share your miracle and make the story of recovery, 'round here ring loud and clear!

If you have ideas for or would like to see other series or individual articles let us know. We here would like to hear from you on how this Newsletter can help share the message and make recovery more available here in our area! Help District 29 know more about your AA group and its goings on! Share some of your personal experience or inspiration! Be a contributor and help the District 29 Newsletter spread the good news of living sober out here in the Lost Pines! Send in your articles by e-mail to [theol\\_jackman@hotmail.coim](mailto:theol_jackman@hotmail.coim) or get them to Theol J. in person.

We look forward to the journey of our shared path in sobriety through 2019!

## Open District Committee Chair Descriptions

All Committee Chairs attend District 29 meetings monthly, are encouraged to attend SWTA 68 Area Assemblies and other General Service activities to learn what other Service Committee Chairs are doing in their Districts and Groups.

### Alternate District Committee Member

The alternate is a backup for the D.C.M. If the D.C.M. resigns or is unable to serve for any reason, the alternate steps in.

### Intergroup

Participates in intergroup business meetings several times a year to share their groups' experience in carrying the A.A. message. The intergroup representative tries to keep the district well-informed about what the Hill Country Intergroup is doing.

### Archives

Maintains the repository of A.A. related materials primarily relating to the origin and development of A.A. in District 29. Duties include but are not limited to: receives, sorts, indexes and preserves all A.A. related materials pertaining to District 29. Maintains and updates District 29 Group Histories for inclusion in the Archives. Conducts and maintains Oral Interviews of "Old-timers" in District 29.

### Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)

Distribute A.A. literature/information to the general public and professionals who are in contact with alcoholics. Should be thoroughly familiar with the A.A. program and able to provide consistent and accurate information about the Fellowship. Visits might include schools, local businesses, church and civic groups, clergy, health care providers, lawyers and teachers.

### Treatment

Coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment and outpatient settings, and to set up means of "bridging the gap" from the facility to an A.A. group in the individual's community.

## The Elections are Coming, The Elections are Coming!

Whoa there AA family, this is neither a call to arms nor a call to start researching candidates! No need to pull down the musket to fight the British! Nor worry that politics have entered the rooms.

However, with the local Groups, District 29 and Area 68 elections coming later in this year, it is time to start learning a little about the service positions and how you can best help keep the AA tradition of recovery going.

This is the first article in a series which in the coming months will introduce you to each of the service positions in at District 29. Starting this month with the General Service Representative (GSR) and the

Alternate GSR (ALT-GSR) . The GSR is the voice of the AA Group.

A bit about the mechanics. Elections will be held at the Groups, usually during the Group Conscience or Business Meetings. Each group elects a GSR and likely an ALT-GSR along with other positions. The group elections are held in September of the odd numbered years and coincide with the District 29 elections for DCM, District Chairs and Officers. All of the positions term of service start in January of even numbered years and are a two (2) year term.

*Confidential Document for AA members only*

In the months leading up to the elections we look to bring a more in-depth look at the process, the positions and the meaning behind them all! We hope to help you explore and answer for yourself the question, "Why is there this type of service in AA?".

### **General Service Representative – (GSR)**

GSRs link their group with AA as a whole and represent the voice of the group conscience by sharing with the DCM who passes it on the Area 68 (SWTA) Delegate who passes that voice on to the General Service Conference. According to the "The A.A. Service Manual Combined with the Twelve Concepts" the qualifications for GSR are:

1. Been active in their home group or other service positions and familiar with and use the 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous
2. Usually has at least two years of continuous sobriety
3. Time available to attend monthly District 29 Meetings and SWTA 68 Area Assemblies
4. Have the confidence of their Group and an ability to listen to all points of view.

GSRs serve a two-year term that runs concurrently with those of the District 29 Committee Member (DCM, District 29 Officers, Committee Chairs and the SWTA 68 Area Delegate. District 29 conducts elections of new members September of odd years, i.e., 2017, 2019, 2021 etc., and takes office the following January in even years, i.e. 2020, 2022, 2024, etc.

### **Alternate General Service Representative (Alt GSR)**

Alternate GSRs are elected at the same time as GSRs and in the event the GSR cannot continue to serve or fulfill their term, the Alternate is ready to step up and serve. Alternate GSRs have same qualifications as the GSR.

<b>Area Birthday Locations</b>
<b>By Month</b>
<b>Jan.</b> -Phelan Road Group
<b>Feb.</b> -LaGrange Gratitude Group
<b>Mar.</b> -Friday Night Group
<b>April</b> -Lost Pines Group
<b>May</b> -Smithville Group
<b>June</b> -Giddings
<b>July</b> -On The Colorado (OTC)
<b>Aug.</b> -LaGrange Colorado Valley
<b>Sept.</b> -Sunday Morning Sidewalk
<b>Oct.</b> -The Elgin Group
<b>Nov.</b> -Smithville Group
<b>Dec.</b> - Legacies Group

<b><u>District Committee</u></b>
DCM Debbie M
Alt DCM <b>Open</b>
Secretary Kathleen P
Treasurer David M
Webmaster Michael B
Intergroup <b>Open</b>
Newsletter Theol J
Literature Katie H
Grapevine Holly H
CFC Mike G
Treatment <b>Open</b>
PICPC <b>Open</b>
Archives <b>Open</b>

### Correctional Facilities Committee

The corrections committee assists individuals, groups and districts in carrying the AA message to the alcoholics who are confined in, or recently released from jails, prisons, and other correctional facilities. Committee work includes:

- Providing AA Literature to inside AA members and groups
- Serving as a contact for correctional facility administrators to promote cooperation
- Administering a correspondence program focused on sharing the AA message
- Providing AA contacts for inside AA members who are about to be released from their facility
- Increasing awareness of the need for corrections service work

Here in district 29 we desperately need volunteers to help bring the message to Bastrop Count Jail. Michael G., the District 29 Correctional Facility Chair, implores you to come share your experience strength and hope. You will find all the information you need to help and how to contact Michael at webpage [Http://district29aa.org/district-resources/](http://district29aa.org/district-resources/). Look for the PREA Volunteer Flyer, Jail Volunteer Rules and Volunteer Application.

#### As the Holidays Roll In A.A. Love Makes a Difference

"Loneliness is no stranger to those of us who suffer from alcoholism," says Bob G., correctional facilities chairperson for Southeast New York. "But there is a special kind of emptiness that is experienced by A.A. members getting sober inside prison walls, especially at the holiday season."

Bob urges A.A.s to write to their fellow members behind bars - "even a few lines, or a card." He remembers another Christmas some years ago when, as a member of the Institutions Correspondence Committee, "I always sent a cheerful Christmas card to whomever I was writing. One fellow wrote back, 'Your cards and letters at Christmas make all the difference between depression and joy.'"

From [Box 4-5-9 Holiday 1985 Issue](#)

For additional information and to gain "...a clear understanding of what A.A. can and cannot do to help alcoholics — in correctional facilities and after they are released" read A.A. in Correctional Facilities available at [https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/p-26\\_AAinCF.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/p-26_AAinCF.pdf).

A few untitled poems by Theol J to fill some space. Send your writings in; they may on time this place grace!

Thank you G-d for helping me grow,  
 Granting me grace for what in the past I did not know.  
 Giving me power and strength today as before,  
 As I do my best to discern your path and explore.  
 Pray that today, serenity I find,  
 Not worrying 'bout this or that in my mind.  
 Pray I can accept today, for just what it is,  
 With contentment and peace and a bit joy bubbling like soda water fizz!

I have found my mind the maker of my own misery,  
 Things are much better when I let Him work for me.  
 Stay out of the way, just let things unfold,  
 Always His blessings are treasures better than gold!  
 My life still has sadness and at times there's pain,  
 But when I let Him, I need not suffer long or again.  
 I have today and that can live well,  
 I'll give it to G-d and it will go swell!

Thank you G-d for introspection.  
 Digging deep, past self-deception.  
 For granting tools to help work through,  
 The things I find, there are a slew.  
 For friends, who lend Your hand along  
 the way.  
 Guiding me toward Your path and then  
 help me stay.  
 Please grant me strength to be a  
 friend,  
 Share Your peace and love as hand I  
 lend.  
 Thank you for Your wondrous gifts  
 !!m grateful for Your grace, my spirit  
 lifts!

## DCM Report for January 2019 Newsletter

### Debbie M, DCM District 29, Panel 68

Happy New Year District 29!!! It has been a busy month both personally and within our District.

We have accepted and will be hosting the 2019 Summer Workshop, July 26th- through 28th at the Hampton Inn in Bastrop, Texas. The theme of the workshop is “the new and triumphant arch through which we will pass to freedom”. page 62 from Alcoholics Anonymous. Jan S. and Kathy A are our chairperson and co-chair. I know our District will shine at this opportunity to serve. Many opportunities are available from greeting to baking cookies or snack. Fun, fellowship and food will be had by all.

I also will be attending the Winter Workshop in Uvalde, TX., January 18th through 20th I will taking some flyers regarding the 2019 Summer Workshop and be ready to report to ya'll on what is happening in Area 68. We also will have four members of our District 29 fellowship share the experience with the first 4 Traditions. I know they will be great!!

I am looking forward to a great and fun filled year sprinkled (can you tell I like baking cookies) with some business. I have grown so much this past year and look forward to continuing to grow and learn from ya'll this coming year and beyond.

Hope to see ya'll soon. As always thank you for the opportunity to serve District 29.

Your Grateful Servant,

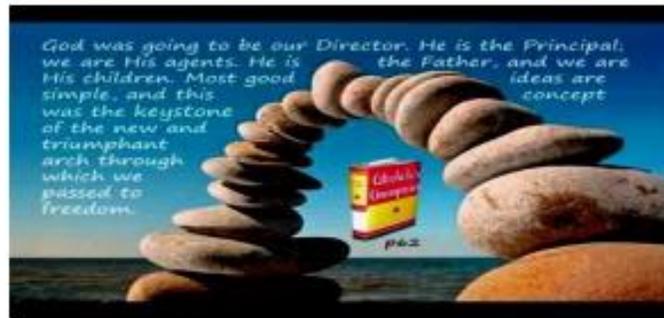
Debbie M.

2019

### Southwest Texas Area 68 Summer Workshop

“...THE NEW AND TRIUMPHANT ARCH  
THROUGH WHICH WE PASS TO FREEDOM.”

page 62



Friday July 26th- Sunday July 28<sup>th</sup>  
Hampton Inn  
240 S. Hasler Blvd., Bastrop, TX 78602  
512-321-2898

For More Info Contact  
Jan S., 512-947-3554

Nightly Room Rates:  
\$88 for King/ \$119 for King Suite  
\$99 for 2 Queen Beds  
Ask for Code SWT



Hosted by District 29  
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## Treasurer for the District – Are you kidding me?

I'll never forget the day I was attending the District meeting, just innocently doing my duty to suit up and show up. It just so happened to be the meeting to elect Trusted Servants for the upcoming Panel. I didn't even know what a "Panel" was. I thought that was an electrical enclosure with switches and buttons on the front. What I learned was, a Panel – to explain it simply – is how AA keeps track of what year it is. It seems the idea of a Panel started long before I ever knew I'd need AA.

Anyway, I show up at the District meeting and it is time to elect trusted servants for Panel 68. If anything, I was thinking I might stand up to serve when they asked for a Grapevine Chair. When it came time to ask for someone to stand for Treasurer, one of my dear friends that shall remain nameless for this article (only-mind you, out of respect for her anonymity) raised her hand and then she nominated me for the position of Treasurer! I could've kicked her in the shin (again only to protect her anonymity do I not mention her name here, I have long since worked through the I had in that moment resentment)! Well, there was a second person in agreement (they too shall remain nameless, you know just for anonymities sake) and then they asked if I would. I sat in silence (possibly contemplating revenge). A long silence (not quite bodily injury). A very long silence (it was getting uncomfortable). I can't remember, but I think I prayed (could we have the building evacuated right now, God?). Mainly because the person that was currently doing this job then was an Accountant by trade and had done an AWESOME job. How could I ever measure up? Mind you, I'm the guy that hasn't balanced a check book since the days of Moses. I can't even keep my personal finances accounted straight. And it has been rumored that I need to take off my shoes to count past 10! Are you kidding me?

I accepted, reluctantly! I still think God moved my lips and have since learned to be grateful that I was voted in.

I knew right away that I HAD to be completely accountable (no pun intended) to the organization, my friends, fellow alcoholics, this District and I felt more duty to y'all than I did to myself. I knew I had to be completely transparent and as accurate as I could possibly be.

The first thing I did was get with the current treasurer and talk to him about how he'd done it, how his experience, strength and hope had carried him through. The second thing I did was come up with my own way of doing it... Having quickly recognized that for me, his way too complicated. Imagine that! Doing it MY way. Sound familiar?

We met at the Bank and changed over the account into my name. You'd given – maybe even forced on – me the responsibility to look after your money, I was mortified! I wanted another person there and so I dragged the secretary elect along with us, too.

Once the bank account was setup, I was confronted with the next calamity! The statement came, right before the regular District meeting day. Perfect! So, all I do is put the beginning and ending balance of the statement into a spreadsheet and list the deposits and payments with a little more detail than the bank gives. I include information on each transaction that I feel will help explain

to anyone in the district where money's coming from and going to. Voila! My first treasurer's report was made!

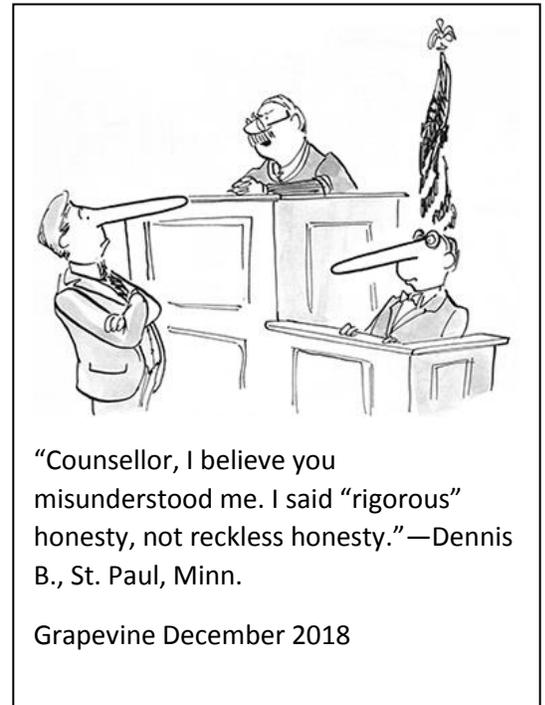
District Treasurer is, although in my anxiety the first few months I would not have been able to tell you, actually quite easy. Most income (and there's usually 3-4 per month) comes from the Groups in the form of checks. Sometimes there's 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition cash. I always have another person count the cash and put their initials, right next to mine, on the envelope it's in. Any payments made from the account (usually only one, maybe two per month) typically are to reimburse the DCM for hotel expenses four times a year, or for a GSO Literature Order with the ATM Card. I ALWAYS leave home WITHOUT it. Ha!

I've learned the best tool I have for doing this job is a copier. I make copies of all the checks I get before I deposit them and write on the copy any notes that will help me remember how to allocate the money, where it's from, what it's for, when I received it, and when I deposited it. Sometimes I'll get one check with a note that says to allocate \$20 to CFC and \$40 to the District. I keep that note and all the copies in a three-ring binder. It's easy for me to get busy with life and make a transaction and not remember the details. Copies can be the only memory of what I've done. I always want to be able to have an answer if anyone asks about any money I've handled.

I've done the first year of my two-year commitment. It was a little nerve racking at first, but I quickly found my routine. My reports have been accepted and approved by the District Committee, so I guess I'm doing OK.

Just like when I don't want to go to a meeting, then I go and I'm glad I did. I feel same way about District Service. I enjoy it because it gets me out of my homegroup and into a bigger community of recovering alcoholics. It keeps me obligated to the program. I need commitment in my life and this is a good way. I'm planning on attending the Winter Workshop in Uvalde in January and I'm looking forward to seeing my brothers and sisters from the Area. As my friend Debbie McD said at last District meeting, "Service keeps me sober." And for that, I am grateful to serve.

**David M., Panel 68 District 29 Treasurer, Homegroup OTC**



## The AA Traditions and Concepts Series 2019

This article is intended to be the first in a series of 12 in 2019. Look for each of the Traditions and Concepts to be covered in the corresponding month throughout 2019. We hope to have a different author each month to help us explore AA Service from different perspectives. Getting the series started with Tradition 1 and Concept I is Denise T., who calls the Legacies Group in Bastrop her home group!

### Tradition 1

**Long form:** Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterwards.

**Short form:** Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.

All of my life it has been 'all about me' without my realizing it. I come to AA, start working the steps and find that even in my most 'giving' moments; I was still 'all about me'. This Tradition urges me to consider that it is not 'all about me' anymore. I am just a small part of a greater whole. I must consider not only current alcoholics out there struggling, but also those future alcoholics: our & our friends' children and grandchildren. This tradition brings home our recovery message: Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us (BB pg. 77). Again, it's not all about me anymore.

This tradition lays the groundwork for all of the rest of the Traditions. It's all about the preservation of unity. Why is unity so important? Bill W. writes that 'without unity, the heart of AA would cease to beat'. Bill W. goes on to write 'when an alcoholic applies the 12 steps of our recovery program to his personal life, his disintegration stops and his unification begins. The Power which now holds him together in one piece overcomes those forces which had torn him apart'. Bill states that exactly that same principle applies to each AA group and to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. So long as the ties which bind us together prove far stronger than those forces which would divide us, all will be well'. In other words, unity is what keeps us together as a group so that the newcomer has a place to come to and find our life-changing message. If we cannot stay unified in our common solution and efforts, how can we be we helping the newcomer – present and/or future?

Because neither I, nor anyone else can survive unless we carry the AA message. And we realize that most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group in which we carry the message. So the group must survive or the individual will not. I am a small part of a greater whole. Personalities destroy unity, our principles protect unity. And so I have to conform to the principles of recovery as my life depends upon obedience to spiritual principles.

Lastly, this tradition is how our AA groups relate to AA as a whole. As we will learn shortly in Concept 1, our AA groups hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services. Again, our common welfare comes first.

I love what Bill writes in the 12&12 on pgs. 130/131: As we had once struggled and prayed for individual recovery, just so earnestly did we commence to quest for the principles through which AA itself might survive. By faith and by works we have been able to build upon the lessons of an incredible experience and they live today in our 12 Traditions which-God willing-shall sustain us in unity for so long as He may need us.

## Concept I

**Concept I:** The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because the “ultimate responsibility and final authority for ... world services” resides with the groups. The A.A. Groups through their elected GSRs are at the top of this upside-down triangle.

It wasn't always this way. In A.A.'s beginning, Alcoholics Anonymous operated through a board of trustees. The purpose of this board of trustees (first called the Alcoholic Foundation and then renamed in 1954 as the General Service Board) was to perform the services the groups could not do for themselves: e.g., uniform literature, uniform public information about A.A., helping new groups get started, sharing with them the experience of established groups, handling pleas for help, publishing a national magazine, and carrying the message in other languages and in other countries. A service office was set up in New York City to carry on these functions under the board's direction. (now known as the General Service Office). All of the early decisions about literature, public information, etc. were decided by this board of trustees and Dr. Bob and Bill W. were often called upon for direction. The A.A. groups were generally oblivious to the workings of this office and board of trustees; they looked instead to Dr. Bob and Bill for their direction and assistance with group problems.

But in 1948 Dr. Bob became critically ill. Bill began to wonder how the board of trustees, who were basically 'removed' from the pulse of the A.A. groups except through his and Dr. Bob's input; were going to carry on A.A.'s service activities? Who would be there to advise the trustees? Where would they get their direction? With Dr. Bob and Bill gone, who could link the 'little known Board' to the 'thousands of groups'? These were the concerns that led to the idea of a 'representative conference' that could take the place of Dr. Bob and Bill. Bill began to look at a way to shift the responsibility and authority of A.A. to A.A., rather than a board of trustees.

There was great resistance to this idea by not only the Trustees of the time, but also by many A.A. members. But Bill, the great persuader, was able to 'sell' the idea of calling an A.A. General Service Conference. It started as a '5- year experiment' but Alcoholics Anonymous members showed that we could handle this responsibility. Today we look forward to being able to take part in this Conference through our elected Delegate. Groups everywhere get together and bring forth ideas for the good of A.A. Creation of new literature to further reach the still suffering alcoholic come from us. This truly is **our** Alcoholics Anonymous!

Bill W. writes in Concept 1 that “the life of each individual and of each group is built around our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Extensive disobedience to these principles is death for the individual and dissolution of the group”. He goes on to say that “an even greater force for A.A.'s unity is the compelling love that we have for our fellow members and for the principles upon which our lives today are founded”. It is no longer 'all about me'.