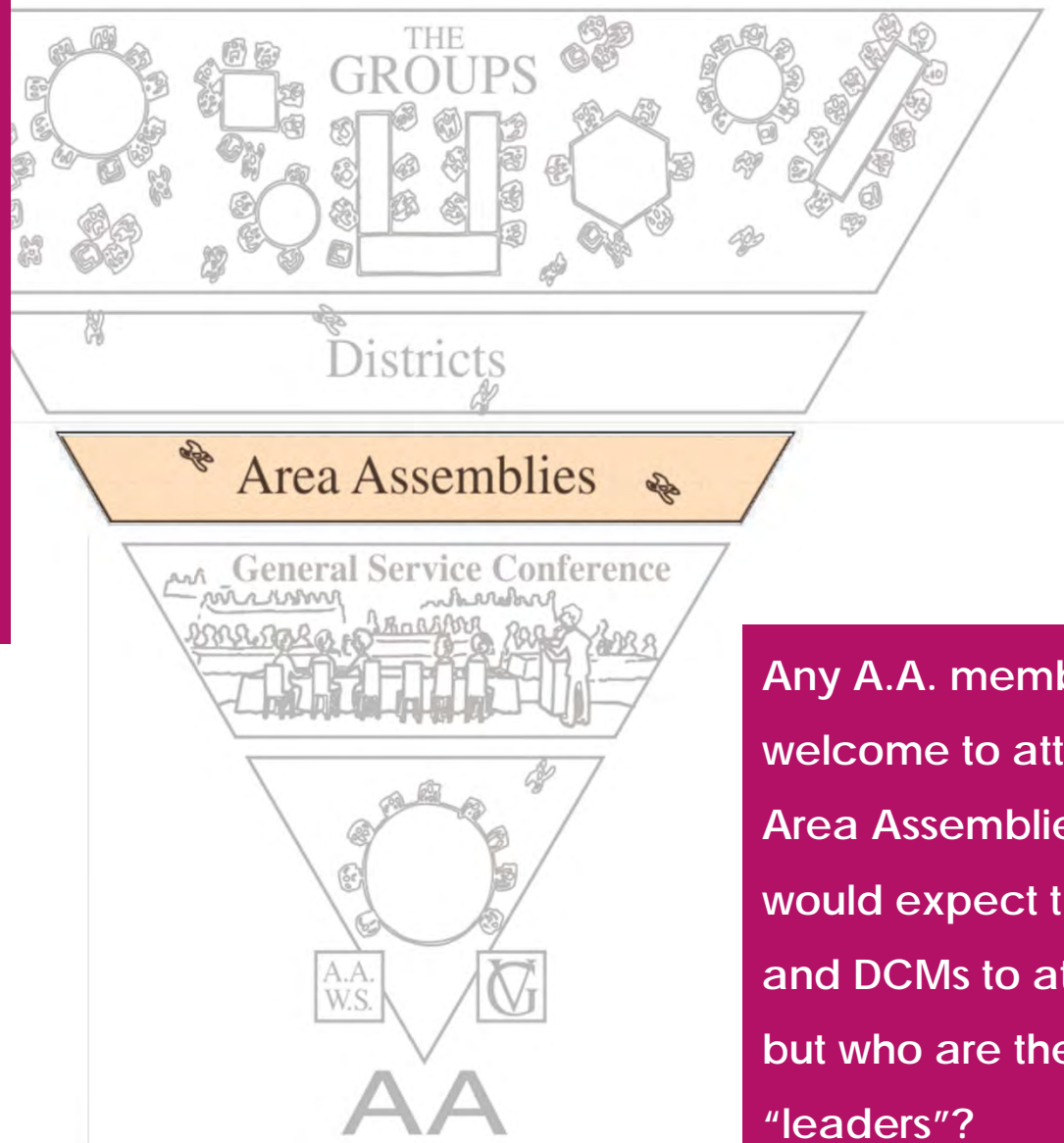G.S.R.
GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB IN A.A.

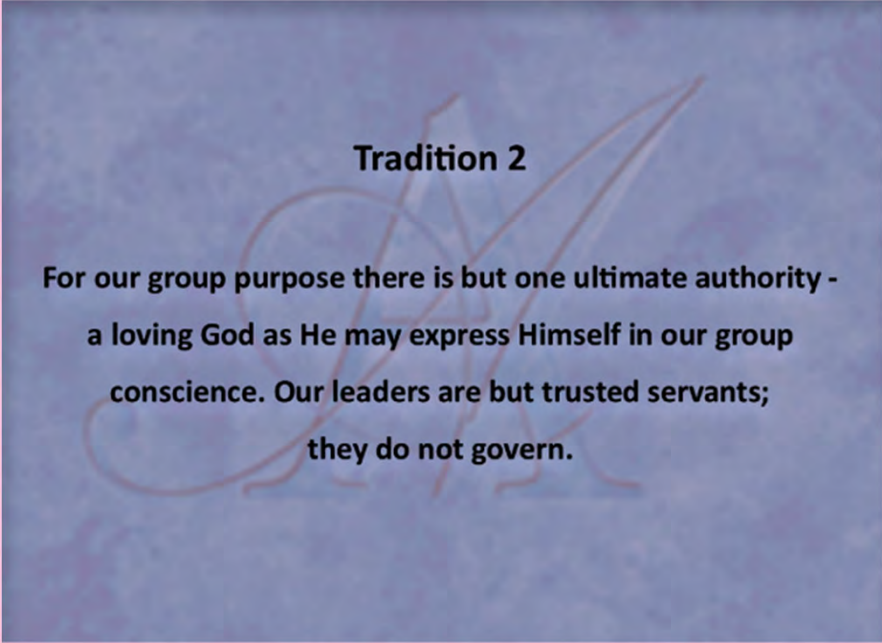# G.S.R. Resources

Elections for Area Positions

Area 50 WNY

We have discussed the groups and districts as well as what happens at Area Assemblies- but WHO is at the Area Assembly?

THE GROUPS

Districts

Area Assemblies

General Service Conference

A.A. W.S.

G

AA

Any A.A. member is welcome to attend the Area Assemblies. We would expect the GSRs and DCMs to attend, but who are the "leaders"?

Tradition 2

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

This tradition has been misquoted many times, as "we have no leaders." But it clearly states that each group does have its leaders, they just have no authority over the rest of the group. Whether they be the group's representative to the area or district, or the secretary or treasurer, they have been entrusted with the responsibility to serve the group, not make decisions for it.

Spirit of Rotation

"But then I began to see rotation in action, and I learned the difference between ruling and serving. Rotation is one of the ways we use to make sure we serve and don't rule...AA's tradition of rotation (even if it permits some inexperience and even ignorance) was a bit shocking. Could such a structure stay intact? Wouldn't it finally fall apart? The answer, I discovered, was this: AA is unified and strong, because we are not organized...we've insisted that all those serving AA derive their authority from a loving God expressing himself within the informed group conscience."

~Grapevine 1992

CONCEPT IX

Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need

(Excerpts from Bill W.'s article in the April 1959 Grapevine.
See Concept IX, page C29 of "Twelve Concepts for World Service" for the full article)

Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect: "Our leaders do not drive by mandate: they lead by example." In effect, we are saying to them, "Act for us, but don't boss us…."

Therefore, a leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with his job. When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own — well, he really isn't a leader at all….

Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need
(Excerpts from Bill W.'s article in the April 1959 Grapevine.
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The Area 50 handbook
(http://area50wny.org/handbook/) states that the Area Assembly is made up of not only Group Representatives and District Members, but also the members of the Area Committee which includes:

- Eight Area Service Committee chairs
- Area 50 Committee Officers
- Other Voting Members of the Assembly and Area Committee

* While the home groups elect their GSR and the districts elect their DCM, the Area Assembly elects their leaders.

Voting Area Members

Service Committee Chairs

- Accessibilities
- Archives
- Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)
- Correctional Facilities
- Finance
- Literature
- Public Information
- Treatment Facilities

Committee Officers

- Delegate
- Alternate Delegate
- Chairperson
- Alternate Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Other Voting Members

- GSA Education Chair
- GSR Orientation
- Registrar
- Web chair
- Area Intergroup Liaison – elected by the Area
- 4 Intergroup Liaisons-one elected by each Intergroup

All General Service Representatives (GSRs) and District Committee Members (DCMs) are voting members as well as the District Committee Member Chair (DCMC) elected by the DCMs.

* If all Groups have a GSR (approximately 450 groups) and all Districts have a DCM (22 districts), that would be 23 voting Area positions plus 23 more voting at Area Committee meetings and almost **500** voting members at each Area Assembly! Not *that's* an informed group conscience!!

Panels

Rotation of leadership in the service structure is achieved through Panels. Members of a panel serve a 2-year term.

The Conference started in 1951 (an odd year, Panel 1) and included 37 delegates. The following year (an even year, Panel 2) there were 38 delegates added. Since then, there have been additional areas added to states and provinces – total count, 93 – with about half elected in an odd year and half in an even year. This system ensures that each year around half of the delegates are attending their first Conference and half are attending their second. This helps with continuity of leadership.

In Area 50 (an even numbered area) we elect a delegate and other trusted servants to serve a 2-year term beginning with an even numbered year. The panel beginning January 2024 will be panel 74, the 74th year of the General Service Conference.

How do we vote?
The Third Legacy Procedure

A.A.'s Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral procedure, used primarily for the election of delegates and regional and at-large trustees. It is considered to be unique to A.A., and at first glance, appears to introduce a strong element of chance into a matter that should depend solely on the judgment of the majority. In practice, however, it has proved highly successful in eliminating the influence of factions or parties that seem to thrive on most political scenes. The railroading of a candidate for election is made difficult, if not impossible, since voters have a wide selection of candidates to choose from. More importantly, a second-place candidate who may be extremely well qualified but without early popular support is encouraged to stay in the balloting rather than withdraw.

▶ Third legacy voting is used in area assemblies to elect the delegate, alternate delegate, area chair, treasurer, and secretary. The procedure emphasizes substantial unanimity: for a person to be elected they need two thirds of the vote. It can take up to five rounds of voting. This voting system is unique to aa which is pretty amazing how it keeps us unified.

The Third Legacy Procedure

BALLOT

1ST Does one candidate have 2/3 majority of total vote? **Yes** → Candidate with 2/3 majority is elected

No ↓

2ND Does one candidate have 2/3 majority of total vote? **Yes** → Candidate with 2/3 majority is elected

No ↓ *Candidates with less than 1/5 of total vote are withdrawn [Top candidates and all runners-up must remain]*

3RD Does one candidate have 2/3 majority of total vote? **Yes** → Candidate with 2/3 majority is elected

No ↓ *Candidates with less than 1/3 of total vote are withdrawn [Top candidates and all runners-up must remain]*

4TH Does one candidate have 2/3 majority of total vote? **Yes** → Candidate with 2/3 majority is elected

No ↓ *The candidate with the smallest vote total is automatically withdrawn. [Top candidates and all runners-up must rema...*

Chairperson asks for motion to conduct a Fifth Vote → **Motion Defeated** → **GO TO THE HAT**

Motion Passed (by simple majority) ↓

5TH Does one candidate have 2/3 majority of total vote? **Yes** → Candidate with 2/3 majority is elected

No ↓

GO TO THE HAT

Who should lead?

Good leadership originates plans, policies, and ideas for the improvement of our Fellowship and its services. But in new and important matters, it will nevertheless consult widely before taking decisions and actions. Good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Consequently, good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source....

Another qualification for leadership is give-and-take, the ability to compromise cheerfully whenever a proper compromise can cause a situation to progress in what appears to be the right direction. Compromise comes hard to us all-or-nothing drunks. Nevertheless, we must never lose sight of the fact that progress is nearly always characterized by a series of improving compromises. We cannot, however, compromise always. Now and then, it is truly necessary to stick flat-footed to one's conviction about an issue until it is settled. These are situations for keen timing and careful discrimination as to which course to take....

Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need
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COMMUNICATION

Conversations, not *Confrontations*

Tools of AA can help every one of us communicate better

Enables us all with the ability to have conversations, not confrontations

Using the tools of communication to help better serve God and our fellows, and help the next sick and suffering alcoholic

Communication & Service in Area 50

- Goal One of the Area Inventory was "Improved Communications with the groups and members", indicating the need for better communication

- Responsibility Statement: "I am responsible, when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible"
  - Suggests individual responsibility to communicate to other individual members and homegroups, and thus carry the message

What do I need to do right now?

?   When anything is unclear to you, ask a question at any time.

👥   Let your home group know that Area Elections are taking place at the next Area Assembly on Saturday, September 16th.

📕   Check your Service Manual and the Area 50 handbook for more information on the positions available. http://area50wny.org/handbook/

✔   Attend the Assembly to stand for any of the available positions and cast your vote for our next Panel of trusted servants in Area 50.