

## Why an Area Newsletter?

- Do you really want to BELONG to AA, not just hang around meetings?
- How INFORMED are you about what happens in AA?
- Do you rely on word of mouth to find out what's going on?
- Do your eyes glaze over when some-one starts talking about 'SERVICE'?

Subscribing to the Area D Circular 'D-Liberation' may

help you keep up with the latest!

At the last Area Assembly, it was decided to trial an electronic circular that will bring members news from the Area, articles about what's happening when and where, and give you an opportunity to learn more stuff about what keeps AA ticking over.

For example, the article on page 2, *AA Service in a Nutshell*, demystifies all the different service roles in AA.

You might even be tempted to get involved yourself!

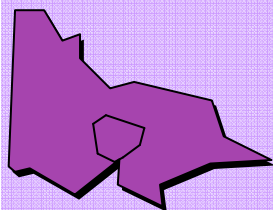
If there is something you want to know about, or something you want to contribute, get in touch with the editor at [D-Liberation@aread.org.au](mailto:D-Liberation@aread.org.au)

The content of the Newsletter is described in the Guidelines, available on the Area D Website.

To **subscribe**, contact [areadnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:areadnewsletter@gmail.com)

PS: This is *your* Newsletter.

Constructive criticism is welcomed!



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## Women's Day in AA 2009

Old friends were hugged, new people welcomed, city and country, old and young; 140 women met in Ivanhoe, last July, 2009. They gathered for the *Women's Day in AA*. Every single woman had recognised that they were powerless over alcohol, and had learned that if they don't pick up the first drink, they will not get drunk.

From a distance no one would have picked it. The delighted and excited were loud in meeting those they knew. The quiet were welcomed and the shy were encouraged. No one would pick this group as victims or losers.

The hall was decorated with flowers, there were beautiful hampers for raffling and the food smelled and later tasted great. The committee and their helpers brought together speakers, cooks, raffle gifts and workshop leaders. The eleventh *Women's Day in AA*, was attended by women from all parts of the State. There was a combined strength of 997 years plus of sobriety.

The first session focused on early sobriety: *Out of the*

*Wilderness*; the second session explored the need to maintain vigilance in the later years: *If nothing changes, nothing changes*. The stories of our *Country Cousins* reinforced the messages of the morning sessions. There was a hushed silence during one speaker's honest sharing of a bust after a good many years. The messages echoed *How it Works* in chapter five of the Big Book. There were three workshops in the afternoon. *Life's In Session Group*, from *Bentleigh* ran the Sponsorship workshop. (For the 2010 day we would love to have workshops run by other women's meetings.)

The day-long event allows women to share in a safe environment. The strength of older sober members supporting and sharing their experiences is invaluable. Similarly the courage of younger members coping with their difficulties is source of inspiration for all. The day went well. Morning and afternoon tea and lunch were provided; the participants had time to catch up, become acquainted and watch and

listen. Tears from some gave way to smiles. Beginners were encouraged to ask for temporary sponsors from among the women in the Sponsorship workshop.

Joyce was the oldest member for the Sobriety Countdown. She presented a *Big Book*, with an insert signed by everyone, to the youngest member, who was six days sober. Singing *One Day at a Time* complete with musical accompaniment ended a good day!

### Think about supporting Women's Day in AA 2010...

- Note the date in your diary : July 10<sup>th</sup> 2010;
- When the flyers for the day come out in April or May: *tell people you know to read this article*;
- Join the planning committee meetings 7.30 – 9pm on 2 Feb, 2 Mar, 6 Apr, 4 May, 1 Jun & 7 Jul (first Tuesday of each month) at the Uniting Church 19 Seddon Street, Ivanhoe.
- Register as a volunteer for the event.
- To join the committee contact Andrea c/- [areadnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:areadnewsletter@gmail.com).



## AA Service in a nutshell...

AA is not organised in the formal or political sense, but our Fellowship has to be sufficiently organised to be able to provide **services to alcoholics**, like answering enquiries, providing literature and public information, co-operating with health workers and providing guidance on the AA Traditions. AA has been called an upside-down organisation because the final responsibility and ultimate authority for World Services is with the Groups, rather than with Boards, Trustees or National Offices.

### Group

For most AAs the feeling of 'belonging' to a particular Group (sometimes called their Home Group) is important in maintaining sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous. This is where we share our experience, strength and hope, and help each other to learn about the Steps and Traditions, sponsorship, fellowship and service.

### General Service Representative

The GSR is elected by their Group to represent the views of the Group on matters that affect AA as a whole, at Area Assemblies. They also bring back reports to their group or issues for voting from Assembly, enabling group members to be connected to the whole Fellowship.

### District

The District is simply a geographic unit within the Area. Districts are involved in carrying the message at the grass roots level through Public Information and Co-operation with the Professional Community, detoxs and rehab centres, and other areas in the community. Area D has several Districts at the moment, consisting of Groups located in the **Ballarat, Calder, Geelong, and Western Suburbs. East Coast** Tasmania has just joined Area

D as a temporary measure. The **Prisons** District cuts across geographical borders and carries the message to prison inmates.

### District Committee Member

The DCM is the vital, 2-way communication link between the General Service Representatives in the District, and the Area Committee, and carries the collective Group Conscience of the Groups in the District to the Area Committee.

### Area Assembly

This is a meeting between the Area Committee, the DCMs and the GSRs. In Area D we have four routine Assemblies each year. They are the mainspring of the Conference (Service) structure. Sometimes we have special assemblies to deal with particular issues.

### Area Committee

Is responsible for the health of the Conference (Service) structure, and for growth and harmony in the Fellowship.

### Area Delegate

Is the Area's representative at the annual Conference.

### Region

AA in Australia has geographic regions. Victoria, Tasmania and border areas of NSW and South Australia are called the **Southern Region**. Each region has several Areas that help to provide service to alcoholics locally. There are 18 Areas in Australia. We are in Area D, Southern Region.

### General Service Conference

'Conference' helps AA in Australia to function as a whole, by acting as the "Collective Conscience" of AA members in Australia. Conference meets each year and provides a link between the Groups and the Trustees who serve as custodians of AA Traditions and interpreters of policies affecting the Fellowship as a whole.

### General Service Board

The General Services Board

consists of 4 Class A or non-alcoholic trustees and 8 Class B alcoholic trustees. The Trustees are concerned with everything happening inside and outside AA that may affect the health and growth of the movement and are answerable to Conference.

### National Office

The National Office of AA, with a small, full time staff based in Sydney, is responsible to AA groups throughout Australia and deals directly with members, AA groups and the public. It also provides AA Conference Approved Literature (CAL), which is imported from the US or printed here in Australia for distribution Australia-wide.

### 12 Step Offices in Area D

12 Step Offices are there to support Groups in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic. There are several offices in our Area that coordinate vital 12 step work, including telephone phone services that are answered by volunteer members.

Our main CSO, with two paid staff, is located in Richmond and keeps a supply of literature for individual members and groups to purchase. Other offices, staffed by volunteers, are located in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Mornington Peninsula and Shepparton and in Melbourne city.

*Adapted from an Area D Eastern Region article with permission of the author*

## District News...

An AA District is a geographical unit within an Area containing a number of AA Groups, the number being dependent on the ability of the General Service Representatives (GSRs) to communicate between each other and to meet regularly together with comparative ease.

A metropolitan District may cover a small area but contain hundreds of Groups, while a rural District may cover many square kilometres but include as few as 3 or 4 Groups. As the number of Groups in an Area increases more Districts are formed, each new one then electing another District

Each District has a Committee Member (DCM) on the Area Committee.

Experience has shown that the answer to growth rests in the setting up of more Districts to meet the Fellowship's expansion in size and activities.

Extract from *Australian AA Service Manual 7th Edition 2007 ~ Section 4 The District & DCM*

*"Because of the closer communication links within the District, the Groups are able to share together and to carry their message more effectively."*

## Prison District



The Prison District runs across geographical boundaries and includes members from Areas A, B, C & D who carry the AA message into the local jails within their region.

Area D makes an annual contribution to the District for purchase of literature and pamphlets etc.

The Area D Women's Day also made a large contribution to the Prison District in 2009.

## Ballarat District

Greetings to all from Ballarat. Thank you to the Area Committee for the tremendous workshop on Public Information at the last Assembly. The outcome of the election of a PI Coordinator and Alternate was fantastic. Congratulations to Sharon and our own little Di. Since the August Assembly at Hurstbridge the work we have undertaken in the last 12 months has been buzzing along – almost on its own momentum.

The highlight has been the ongoing meetings at Langi Kal Kal Prison. Dave has put together a roster of around six to eight men. At present Lyle, who just celebrated his 40th sober anniversary, and started a meeting at the prison some 20 years ago, is attending on a weekly basis. His offsider Chris, who is nearly two years sober, and was voted 'the least likely to make it', is enthusiastic about attending. Dave and Bernie are also keen supporters.

Phoneline continues to bring new members to the meeting. Since February, 30 people have attended or come back to a meeting, many continuing to come along ever since.

The phoneline has also been used for internal communication and has the potential to be the spearhead of 12 Step Work if we can convince the members who came in through the phoneline to give back to this essential service work.

The Anniversary preparations are well advanced. The main focus has been group visits to spread the word. The District visited: The Deal; Bendigo; Hamilton; Colac; Camperdown, and Castlemaine

We expect an enthusiastic response at our Anniversary.

As I have a professional interest in Dual Diagnosis (Alcoholism and Mental Illness) the Fruit Loop Group, which first met at the Melbourne City Contact Centre in 2002 has been resurrected. It meets at 11am on Tuesdays at the Church of Christ, cnr Eastwood and Peel Sts, Ballarat. If you want a no frills fundamental AA meeting in the spirit of our founding members, you're most welcome. It is a closed meeting and our aim is to get two or three

alcoholics gathered together for the purpose of sobriety as expressed in the Long Form of Tradition Three.

A big thank you to Kylie who is responsible for technical communication amongst other things. After attending the National PI Forum and a lot of labour, our website is up and running and meets the requirements of the guidelines. I look forward to using it as the primary tool of third legacy communication.

Yours in loving service

**Steve C DCM & Chief Fruit Loop**

Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/ballarataadistrict/>

## East Coast District (Tasmania)

We held our last District Meeting on Monday 23 November. All groups had GSRs or representatives present, there were 11 people from 6 groups: St Helens Meeting, St Marys Meeting, Campbell Town Traditions, Campbell Town Steps, Westbury Big Book, Launceston Speaker. All meetings spoke of good attendance generally six to a dozen people attending regularly which is good for Tassie meetings.

**Public Information:** St Helens Group has literature at the St Helens Hospital, the St Helens Community Health Centre and the Neighbourhood House. The local psychologist and psychiatrist both have regular contact from AA members. We have a member liaising with the St Helens Police Station and the St Marys Police Station.

Campbell Town Meetings have a advertisement in the local monthly rag, and the Doctor and Police have also had a member visit. The most recently established meeting in the District, the Westbury Big Book Study, has made contact with the Westbury Community Health Centre via the Social Worker whom has also informed the Youth Worker of our presence. Fiona the Social Worker is extremely positive about AA's presence in her town. We will be giving her literature regularly and also meetings lists. We also donated to her a Big Book. We also advised her of the Malvern Private Clinic with which she will be making contact.

We have also made contact with the Deloraine Community Hospital and given them literature. Finally this Group has made contact with the Deloraine Police Station and advised

of the new meeting and they are happy to have some literature and meetings lists at both Deloraine and also the Westbury Police stations. We welcomed the established Launceston Speaker Meeting (Saturday Night 5:30-7pm) to our District. The Group asked to join us and we welcomed them with open arms. This group is very keen to get into PI work which I am aware they have been doing and trying to do this service.

The East Coast District Rally is coming soon and was discussed at our meeting. It is to be held on the 19, 20 & 21 of March 2010.

All left the District Meeting happy, positive and with Big Smiles ☺ on their dials.

**Dave M. East Coast DCM**

## Calder District

At our November District meeting the position of District Secretary was filled by Kay and the Treasurer's role was taken on by Michelle.

While we are still trying to fill the position of District Committee Member, we are now in a position to continue with the more important functions of the District.

The District will hold its annual BBQ and nature walk on Sunday 13/12/09

at the "Canning Reserve" on the banks of the Maribyrnong River.

The Calder District is also preparing to set up a Public Information stall at the 2010 Moonee Valley Festival (28 February). This will be our third year at the Festival and we will be seeking members to assist on the stall for blocks of two hours each. Anyone interested please contact Glenn on 0417 130 866.

The District continues to run rosters of members to attend Depaul House Detox and the Ozanam House Shelter for homeless men, which has a number of alcoholics amongst its clients.

**Yours in service,  
Glenn B**

## Geelong District

It's over – our 54th Geelong Convention took place last week – lots of hard work, lots of enthusiasm, lots of learnings – and we made it! The weekend can certainly be counted a success, with a debt of gratitude to all the GSRs and other members, whose talents really shone and combined to achieve great things – from the banners, to the catering, to chairing the meetings – just everything flowed so well – certainly a tribute to all our "blossoming sobriety" – which was our well-chosen theme!

Being so busy with the convention other issues have unfortunately taken

a back seat – groups with low membership and no true AA structure, portfolios not being run as effectively as they should, especially our phones & 12 step roster, which requires urgent attention as soon as possible.

Have no fear though – once our batteries are recharged Geelong District will fire up again in 2010.

The PI portfolio is certainly one exception firing on all cylinders since several members attended the recent National Forum, lots of ideas brewing there! Each month brochure distribution is maintained through the District, plus we are investigating

printing car bumper sticks, and business cards. We've heard that another district gives these out to the local police who stick them in the pockets of any drunks they pick up saying "Think you need to go to a meeting mate!"

We are also going to run a 12 step roster workshop early in February to hopefully inform members and maybe generate new ideas to carry out this essential service in Geelong.

**DCM Contact: Sue T.**

## Land of Plenty Intergroup



The Land of Plenty Intergroup is supported by a number of groups in the North East of Melbourne.

Its sole purpose is the

distribution of literature among the participating groups and to rehab and detox units in the District.

Contact can be made through the editor of the Newsletter at [areadnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:areadnewsletter@gmail.com)

## Western Suburbs District

The District is going well but members don't seem interested in participating in functions or committees. For instance, after all the work that went in the 'Walk for Gratitude' it was a complete failure. But we will battle on!

The District will be making a drive to attract more members to the District

Committee, thanks to a good committee meeting which was held last Tuesday on 1 Dec 09. Our Area Delegate (Barry H.) and our Southern Regional Trustee (Sharon R.) attended. Thanks to them.

There has been a rotation in our Detox Co-ordinator and Amanda P. is now the new Co-ordinator.

Our thanks to Barb who has rotated off. Our detox work is going great. We are making headway into schools thanks to our PI Co-ordinator Mick H. It was good to hear positive steps had been taken towards PI work in the Area.

**DCM Contact: Barry D.**

## Public Information News...

The Public Information Committee was formed at the Area D Assembly held in Ocean Grove December 2009. It is composed of the DCM of each District within the Area (and/or a PI representative) as well as one elected Coordinator and an alternate Coordinator. Anyone else who is interested may also join.

The purpose of this Committee is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who still suffers & to inform members of the professional community who may

come in contact with alcoholics. This is done through the use of the media, public speakers, & liaising with the professional community.

The Committee will endeavour to ensure that any information the public receives within the Area is correct and is given within the guidelines of The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee will work towards establishing cooperation with the professional community within the boundaries of what AA can do &

what AA cannot do.

As a matter of interest, the most important piece of PI any group can do is to make sure the AA sign is displayed at the front of their meeting.



Whilst we as individuals remain anonymous at the level of press, radio & film, the Fellowship itself is not anonymous.

In love & service, **Sharon R**



## Service Opportunities!

"... an AA service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer, ranging all the way from the *Twelfth Step* itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to AA's General [National] Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our *Third Legacy of Service*." Australian AA Service Manual 7th Edition 2007 ~ Section 1 *The Conference Plan* . <http://aaservice.org.au/members/ServiceManual>

There are many service opportunities available at the Area, District and Group level. Filling an alternate position is a good way to start in service, as it provides an opportunity to learn the ropes without having sole responsibility. It also gives the office holder some support and backup. The *AA Group Handbook* (latest edition published in 2009) and the *AA Service Manual* describe what various positions do. Check them out and talk to members already in service to see how you can get involved in this vital part of your recovery. Watch this space for vacancies in Area D.

## Coming Events ... dates to put in your calendar

- Next Area D Assembly**  
**Sunday 21 February 2010**  
 1pm (Workshop 11am—PI Work)  
 Moonee Ponds Courthouse  
 Kellaway Ave Moonee Ponds ([map](#))  
 (hosted by [Road to Recovery Group](#))
- AusYPAA Convention**  
**Friday to Sunday 29 to 31 January**  
 Australian Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous  
 Victoria University, 300 Flinders Street, Melbourne  
 Hosted by VicYPAA with Al-Anon/Alateen participation
- Ballarat Alcoholics Anonymous 59th Anniversary Weekend**  
**Friday 12 to 14 February**  
 Eureka Hall 104 Stawell St, Ballarat  
 For More Information Contact:  
 AA Ballarat District (03) 5364 2915  
 With Al-Anon Participation [Download flyer](#)
- Tasmanian 4th Annual East Coast Rally**  
 with Al-Anon Participation  
**Friday to Sunday 19 to 21 March**  
 Anglican Church Hall, Cecilia St, St Helens, Tasmania
- 2010 National AA Convention**  
**Thursday 1st to Monday 5 April**  
 With Al-Anon and Alateen participation  
 Novotel Pacific Bay Resort, Cnr Pacific Highway & Bay Drive,  
 Coffs Harbour, NSW

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We're on the web!

See us at  
[www.ared.org.au](http://www.ared.org.au)

### Disclaimer:

Except for material identified as being taken directly from AA Conference Approved Literature, articles published in this Newsletter are the experience and opinion of the author, and are not necessarily the opinion of AA.

## About Area D

Area D Southern Region is a part of the Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference Structure of Australia.

As such we fully participate in the Australian General Service Conference.

We also support the AA National Office in any way we are able.

Bordered by the Yarra river, the Area includes the Western and Northern suburbs of Melbourne and extends to include other major cities such as Geelong and Ballarat, and regional centres such as Daylesford.

