

DISTRICT 28
Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2016

Officers/Chairs present at meeting:

Alt. DCM – Paige B.
Secretary - P. J. O.
Treasurer – Jen B.
C.P.C. Chair – Lina R.
Intergroup Liaison – Dean B.
Literature Chair – Lisa B.
Public Information Chair – Janet B.

GSRs/Alt. GSRs and Visitors present at meeting:

Janet B. – Alt. GSR, Attitude Adjustment Group
Jen B. – Alt. GSR, Crystal River Group
David V. – GSR, Monday Night Men’s Step Group
Bruce P. – GSR Resentment Group
John H. – GSR Sober Nooners Group
Dean B. – GSR Sober Sand Gnats
Lisa B. – Alt. GSR, Won Rebos Group

Visitors: John W.

Welcome by Alt. DCM:

Paige B., Alt. DCM, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.
Serenity Prayer
Declaration of Unity
Responsibility Statement

Recognition of New GSRs:

Roll Call: P. J. O. took roll call and Minutes.

Roll call: Alt. DCM, Secretary and Treasurer were present and 7 registered groups were represented by GSR or Alt. GSR. The Sign-In Sheet was circulated.

Everyone had received copies of the Minutes of the February 28, 2016 meeting. In response to the Secretary’s question regarding any corrections or questions, it was pointed out that the Alt. DCM report for February was actually presented by Steve, as Paige was not present. Lina R., CPC Chair, objected that her report was not reproduced as submitted, in that she had included her last name at the end of the report that was submitted and the last name was not included in the Minutes. Paige pointed out that last names generally are not used due to confidentiality concerns. Janet B. made reference to the statement in the Announcement section at the end of the Minutes, wherein it was reported that the public discussion on AA at the Lakes Library was sponsored by the Public Information Committee. Janet confirmed that the event was in fact sponsored and hosted by the Lakes Library, although the Public Information Committee ran the event.

Upon motion and second, the Minutes of the February 28 meeting were approved as amended above.

Treasurer’s Report: Jen B., Treasurer, presented the final Report for February, 2016, being the Income and Expense Sheet and Contribution Report. Copies were distributed to everyone. The Income and Expense Sheet showed a beginning balance of \$1468.69, income of \$273.81, expenses \$13.41 and an ending balance of \$1729.36. Jen noted that the remaining balance is pretty low compared to our established prudent reserve of \$3500. However, there had been a lot of expenses early in the year and contributions have been

down. She urged that the GSRs consider an appeal to the home groups for more generous contributions would be helpful. Upon motion and second, the Treasurer's report for February was approved. Jen then presented a preliminary report for March. The main activity so far this month having been the income and expenses associated with the Workshop. There was a balance of \$1674.54 at present.

The 7th Tradition Basket was passed.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Archives Committee: Denis S.

This month we had an opportunity to display the District 28 Archives when the Area Delegate Glen W. came to Inverness for the 2016 Pre-Conference Agenda discussion. It was a very appropriate event for a display of the historical artifacts and was appreciated by those in attendance.

Accessibilities Committee: No report.

CPC Committee: Lina R.

We have completed assembling the materials for the electronic presentation to be included in the in service education for Citrus County deputies. We've included a video from the GSO website, two pamphlets: **AA At A Glance** and **AA IN Your Community**, the current **Where and When**, and an audio commentary. I'll visit my service sponsor in Orlando to construct the final product but this may not happen till after the upcoming Area Assembly. We're very excited.

See you in Gainesville!

Love and service,

Lina Ricks CPC Chair.

Public Information Committee: Janet B.

These past two weeks have been busy enough for a full month. But first, some good news: we are back with Where and Whens in the CMH Emergency Room. They were still in the holder I appropriated and quite a few had been taken.

On March 4, we held our Speaker's Meeting at the Library. The Library staff did a great job advertising the event. There were five of us AAs present: Lina R. and Lynn B. were there to support us. Dean B. and Paige B. were ready to speak and I was poised to moderate. Linda, our go-to organizer from the Lakes Region Library staff was also present. There was a nice display of AA material and also, thanks to Gail W., some Alanon material.

We waited and waited. Finally, a young person from the library staff came in and told her story during her break time. We had some sharing time with her and we thankfully had Alanon meeting schedules to give her for herself and her family. We all felt so blessed and happy we were able to help.

We felt the event was a success and were invited back in the Fall.

I also attended the Pre-Conference Agenda meeting yesterday. Our Archives Chair, Denis S., had his usual interesting display. Thirty-four people heard Glen W. discuss the many agenda items. Attendees came from Districts 13, 17, 27 and, of course, 28.

Paige B. did a bang-up job doing whatever needed to be done and Bob G., from the Attitude Adjustment group, was our sanitary engineer deluxe.

Sincerely yours,

Janet B.

Men's Corrections Committee: No report.

Women's Corrections Committee: No report.

Grapevine Report: Paula D.

I have nothing to report for the Grapevine for March 2016, except to invite District 28 to the Area 14 Assembly Grapevine workshop on April 9th!

Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Literature Committee – Lisa B.

My name is Lisa and I am an alcoholic serving as the Literature Chairperson. The Literature Committee was represented at the Delegate Pre-Conference Review on March 12 in Inverness. What a great job Glenn did! In the limited time we had, he not only presented all the 2016 General Service Conference Committees Agenda Items but he also gave us pertinent background information.

There is a consideration at hand to develop a plain language version of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Since the 1980's there have been requests for easy to read literature at about a third grade reading level. The Conference, in 1995, reaffirmed in an Advisory Action that the first 164 pages would remain unchanged. Now, area 78 in Canada is requesting a simplified edition.

There will be a review of the progress that is being made on the revision of several pieces of pamphlet literature: ***A.A. for the Woman***, ***A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic***, and Inside ***A.A.: Understanding the Fellowship and Its Services***.

There will be a look at the progress on the development of literature for A.A.s with mental health issues and those who sponsor them. More stories are being sought.

Two other considerations of pamphlets: revise ***Young People and A.A.*** with additional information about conferences and update ***Twelve Traditions Illustrated*** with new cartoons and text.

As I noticed a number of other publications being addressed by committees besides the Literature Committee, I asked for clarification. Glen said that the Literature Committee takes care of everything else relating to literature not handled by the other specific service committee e.g. PI, CPC etc.

What a pleasure it is to see each month the high quality work being done by sober alcoholics...and to be a part of it! Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Treatment Committee: No report.

Technology Committee: No report.

NCI Liaison Report – Dean B.

Chairperson: Jen B. in Rick T.'s absence opened with a Moment of Silence followed by the Serenity Prayer and Declaration of Unity.

Roll: Jen B. took roll call; 6 groups represented with 7 members present.

Secretary's Report: Jen B. read the minutes from last month's meeting and they were accepted after amended.

Treasurer's Report: Paige B. went over February's financial report.

Motion was made and accepted as read. The March Draft was gone over.

Trustee's Reports:

Janet B. attended the 2016 Pre- Conference Review reporting that of 4 Districts there were 34 attendees present.

Denis S. reported that there are people interested in carrying the Hot Line. He talked about getting groups interested in a monthly basis, noting that we'd only need 12 groups.

Bill reported that he didn't drink today and was very grateful.

Sandy H. was absent.

There was no Hot Line report.

There was no Website report.

Journal: Paige B. reported that the March/April Journal should be out in a week or so.

Events: Paige B. mentioned that the Spring Fling and the Founder's Day

events are being worked on.

No Chairperson's Report.

No Alt-Chairperson's Report.

Old Business: The 2016 Budget was discussed. Do we need to lower our Prudent Reserve? After reviewing the By-Laws and Robert's Rules of Order, reference was made to the 'right to be wrong'. A motion was made to accept the budget as written, a vote was taken and the budget was passed unanimously.

There was no New Business.

Motion was made to close and we did so with the Lord's Prayer.

Yours in service,

Dean B.

Alt. DCM Report: Paige B.

My name is Paige I am an alcoholic and an Alternate DCM with the privilege of serving District 28.

Glenn W., the Area 14 Delegate, and his Alternate, Joyce C, presented the Pre-conference Agenda Review on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at The First Assembly of God Church in Inverness. I want to thank Glenn and Joyce for their time and tremendous effort on behalf of Districts 13, 17, 27 and 28. Also, I want to thank Janet B., Bob and Denis S. for making this event happen.

The next Area 14 Assembly, in Gainesville, is scheduled for April 8, 9 and 10, 2016. Accommodations are reserved for those who need them. Please contact me at floridadistrict28@gmail.com by Monday, April 4, 2016. I look forward to seeing you there. It would be great if more Committee Chairs could attend. The Area delegate to the New York Conference will again be there and will make a presentation on Agenda items. It is important that we receive this information. For example, there are important revisions to the Big Book under consideration, including changes to the language of the Steps. We need to spread the word and get feedback from our Groups on issues such as this. We need to let the Delegates know how we feel. The Delegate and Alternate will carry our input to New York. We need to participate so we will have an understanding of what is going on. It is important that we do this to help keep AA strong. The Home Groups, District, Area and New York all need to work together.

The next printed Where and When is scheduled to print by June 2016. Please forward any additions, changes and deletes to me at floridadistrict28@gmail.com. We are printing less frequently now, but larger quantities at each printing. This results in a cost savings.

Thank you for all you do!

Paige B.

DCM Report: No report.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

1. Conference Agenda (Discussed in Alt. DCM Report).
2. Paige initiated a discussion regarding finances, both of District 28 and AA as a whole. Comments made by various individuals during the discussion included the following.

At the national level, GSO is expecting deficit budgets for the next 3 years, approximately \$350,000 each year. Contributions are way down, and the cost of literature has gone up, and sales are down. AA at the national level has historically relied on the sales of literature to survive. However, literature is reaching the point of not being affordable.

If we don't get people to contribute more, the consequences will be severe for the future of AA. It was originally suggested that AA members contribute \$1 per meeting. However, a dollar at the time AA was getting started had about the same value as about \$14 in today's currency, due to inflation. Of course, costs have gone up as well. The expenses of items we provide at meetings, such as coffee, have increased significantly as well.

Why are groups not sending as much money as they used to? Has it become a hardship or is a message being sent? Only a small percentage of groups make contributions to District, Area or GSO. Nationally, only about 15% of the groups contribute to GSO. Perhaps there is a lack of understanding of what GSO does.

In the last few years, District has put a lot of money out there for events, and contributions were higher at that time, but they are down now. We don't know why. Intergroup has 45 groups, but only 7 groups have made contributions up to this time. Over the last year, only 16 of 37 groups contributed to District 28, Perhaps a road trip by the District officers would be appropriate, to thank those groups that have made contributions and to encourage those that have not.

Many individuals have no interest beyond their home group. Some of the home groups are essentially under the leadership of one person. They see no responsibility for what happens at the District, Area or national levels. Perhaps it would be beneficial if it could be explained what needs to be done, and what could be done if everyone helped, but people need to be asked.

We need to encourage home group meetings to make use of the AA Home Group Handbook and the GSR manual.

Groups need to have people designated to handle certain meeting responsibilities. Sponsors need to encourage new people to be active, volunteer for service positions.

We should make a better effort to carry information back to the home groups.

Is there a lack of understanding of what "group conscience" means? It is the power that runs AA, but many people do not understand that. Too many people do not want to participate in service work, but admittedly some of it takes time.

Small donations on a regular basis are the way it should be done. People in the home groups should be receiving background information on the issues being discussed at District, Area and national, so they can make informed group conscience decisions and so they know where their money is going.

One of the problems is that groups don't have a business meeting often enough. Further, when you do call a meeting too many people do not want to stay around for it. At the same time they want their GSR to speak for them at District and Area, they don't want to stay for business meetings. Some groups purchase Big Books, Twelve-and-Twelves and other literature for the new members. We need to get the financial information out to the home groups.

Perhaps we should have a sponsor workshop, and Home Group workshop.

Maybe another option would be a Group Conscience Workshop with sponsorship as one of the issues to be discussed.

The failure of more individuals to participate—at all levels of AA—is the problem. Most members just don't want to stay around for business meetings.

There should only be 21 groups in a District according to the GSR manual. Our district should be split up. Districts should have 21 groups or less in order to be better able to keep in touch, easier to get information and to respond to group needs.

Paige concluded the discussion by observing that she would like to two more workshops by the end of the year, one on Group Conscience and one on Contributions/The Seventh Tradition.

Announcements: None.

The meeting was adjourned upon motion and second at 6:53 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer.

The Principles of AA

AA gives us thirty-six Principles which, when practiced in all our affairs as a way of life, will enrich our lives far beyond our fondest dreams. These thirty-six Principles are grouped into three sets of twelve each. The Twelve Steps of Recovery awaken us to a Higher Power, a higher self with the ability to both give and receive love. The Twelve Concepts of Service are guidelines and tools for our passing on this love through Service. The Twelve Traditions of Unity teach us how to relate lovingly to others, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Tradition 3 - THE ONLY REQUIREMENT FOR AA MEMBERSHIP IS A DESIRE TO STOP DRINKING.

The principle found in this Tradition is one of the basic laws of all successful relationships with God, with people, places, or things. It is so very simple we often miss it. We must first want the relationship. When we want a relationship enough, we will find every way we can to make it work. When we no longer want the relationship enough, we will find every reason for it not to work. Your motive only matters at the time you have that "want".

As any relationship with God, with people, places, or things progresses our motive may change from day to day, hour to hour, maybe moment to moment. Our Higher Power or Higher Self only needs our willingness to want to open the door. An honest motive is not likely at first; it is useful not to judge the motive. It is enough to want to do whatever it takes. There will always be a great many who need something far more than we do; however they must want to change before the healing can begin.

Sacrifice for Tradition 3 - "Am I willing to sacrifice who I will sit with in an A.A. meeting?" - *Chet P.*

Affirmation for Tradition 3 - Let me remember that out of enlightened self-interest I want and I choose to share all I can with whomever He brings.

QUESTIONS for Tradition 3

1. When and with whom have you been willing to do "whatever it takes" to make "it" work?
2. When you no longer wanted the relationship enough, did you find every reason for it not to work?
3. Do you tend to get stuck with your or someone else's motive? Give examples.
4. What qualifying information do you seek entering into a relationship such as this?

5. One person cannot make a relationship successful alone and unaided. Both must want the relationship even if it is for different motives. Can you give examples when there was a mutual desire to make it work and when this mutual desire was not present?
6. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
7. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
8. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?
8. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
9. Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
10. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if he can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what he does for a living? Where he lives? What his domestic arrangements are? Whether he had been to AA before? What his other problems are?

Concept 3 - insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. — the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

The principle behind the third concept of service is that we serve by acting on our conscience through our “Right of Decision.” This is another delegation of authority by the overall group conscience. It means that when informed if we as representatives of our group or Area find additional information changes our opinion from group conscience then we can vote our conscience.

We also trust others when they exercise their “Right of Decision.”

This concept says that as a trusted servant I am expected to serve by acting on my conscience. I am not simply a messenger. I do not neglect consulting others though. I first exercised my “Right of Decision” in the third step when I decided to turn my will and my life over to the care of God. I now exercise it by choosing to pray for direction in all areas of my life: personal relationships, work, and other areas.

When I act in accord with my conscience I am a peace.

This concept emphasizes the importance of A.A. groups respecting the right of its trusted servants to act on their conscience in light of further information presented. Knowing that theirs is the final authority, the groups are sometimes tempted to instruct their delegates exactly how to vote upon certain matters in the conference. Because they hold the ultimate authority, there is no doubt that the A.A. groups have the right to do this. If they insist, they can give directives to their delegates on any and all A.A. matters. But good management seldom means the full exercise of a stated set of ultimate rights. For example, were the groups to carry their instruction of delegates to extremes, then we would be proceeding on the false theory that group opinion in most world service matters would somehow be much superior to Conference opinion. Practically speaking, this could almost never be the case.

Questions for Concept 3:

1. Do we understand what is meant by the “Right of Decision”? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we “instruct”?
2. Do we trust our trusted servants — G.S.R., D.C.M., area delegate, the Conference itself?
4. Am I acting in any area of my life that is contrary to my own conscience?
5. Am I mistrustful of the decisions of others in authority over me?
6. Am I demanding that anyone else act contrary to their conscience in order to please me?