



Where does the money go? Essentially Area 35's purpose and responsibility is to perpetuate Alcoholics Anonymous. In its beginnings, our society expressed many needs of which were born many services. There were pleas for help, guidance, and support at the group level. We needed literature, updated meeting lists, good publicity, and cooperation with hospitals, legal entities, and treatment centers. And, we needed someone to facilitate all these services. It became clear very quickly to Bill that in order to ensure the health of AA as a whole, we needed a General Service Structure that could help meet the varied and ongoing needs of the group. Our ultimate goal in Area 35 is to ensure that AA groups in Northern MN (and worldwide) have the ability to continue to thrive, and carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. To do this, it is obvious we still need many services: archives, public information, corrections, literature, Grapevine, Cooperation with the Professional Community, and treatment facilities.

This, then is the function of Area 35: to build a healthy environment, that AA may continue to flourish and meet the needs of alcoholics, for so long as we are needed. One way we do this is through providing a venue and opportunities for the groups (through their representatives) to communicate their wishes, concerns, and questions through the service structure, as well as addressing the needs of AA locally. In order to do this, the Area Committee (Area Officers and Area Action Committee Members) was formed and area events (Winter Workshop, four Area Committee Meetings, and Two Assemblies) were set up. (More about this can be found in the AA service manual).

Clearly we need people to oversee the successful and ongoing functioning of our Area Committee: a treasurer to pay bills and collect contributions, a secretary to record the minutes and Area actions, an Area Chair to set up and facilitate all the events, an Alternate Delegate to set up the Winter Workshop and Zonal Forums and be informed on everything the Delegate knows in case they need to stand in for the delegate, and a Delegate to carry our conscience to the General Service Conference once a year in NY to share our Area's conscience and fulfill the responsibility given to us by Bill and Dr. Bob: **to be responsible guardians of our world services and Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.**

Then we have Area Action Committee chairs who also provide various services and fulfill duties that help the Area to function successfully as a whole. **The chairs' purpose is to serve the groups by ensuring that AA, as it relates to their committee, is healthy.** The group records chair records all Area 35 group information and updates GSO as well as encourages groups to get registered; the webmaster updates and maintains the Area websites which list all the registered groups and events in the Area; the archivist maintains an awesome stock of archival materials for the Area; the literature chair orders and provides literature; and the Northern Lights editor compiles and edits our newsletter which we use to communicate with the groups. The Area also prints and distributes the Northern Light, a newsletter outlining the activities of the Area. Other Area Action Committee chairs regularly chair meetings with participants from the districts to discuss issues related to doing Twelfth Step work and meeting the groups' needs. These include the archives chair, public information chair, corrections chair, literature chair, grapevine chair, CPC chair, and treatment chair. You will find these chairs meeting at the four area committee meetings (located in Aitkin) and two assemblies. They also frequently hold workshops to assist and inform AA members.



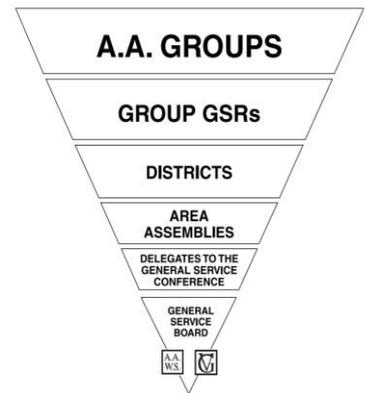
Maintaining a strong service structure through self-support and participation is vital, for without it the groups become disconnected from the Area and from the General Service Office. Then, the groups can no longer communicate their thoughts, opinions or ideas to the Area or the General Service Office. When this happens, we are

no longer responsible for our third legacy; instead of a fellowship, we have the seeds of a dictatorship or tyranny where the few govern for the many.

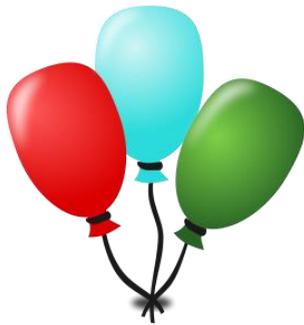
Perhaps one of our most important services to our groups is our role of the link to the General Service Office. It is our responsibility to ensure that the General Service Office and Conference remain committed to the Traditions and serving the fellowship, while never becoming the “seat of perilous wealth or power.” This is only accomplished through the sharing of our group’s consciences at Area events, which are only possible with the ongoing financial support received from the groups. So you see, all area chairs are there to serve the groups, but to fulfill our duties of service, funds are required.

If each registered group would contribute **\$1.00 a month to GSO**, our Office would be fully self-supporting. Similarly, in Area 35 if each of the 232 actively contributing groups (41% of the 555 registered groups) would contribute **\$12.88 a month or \$2.86 per week to Area 35**, it would fully cover the Area’s monthly financial needs of **\$2,900.00**.

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



THE BIRTHDAY PLAN



provides an opportunity for individual AA members to show their gratitude for their sobriety each year on their AA birthday.

AA members who take part in the **BIRTHDAY PLAN** send money on the anniversary of their sobriety as a way to show their gratitude.

Please share this wonderful plan with your group members, and encourage them to show their gratitude for all AA has given them by sending a birthday contribution to:

Northern MN Area Assembly

Remember, financial contributions to the Area are simply another way of extending the hand of AA to the alcoholic in need! So, I encourage each of you to discuss the importance of self-support at your groups and emphasize the **BIRTHDAY PLAN!** We certainly are so fortunate to have the lives we do, what better way to show our gratitude, than through a monthly group or **BIRTHDAY CONTRIBUTION!**