



District 12 Service Forum 2010

Sponsorship (Passing it on)
The 12 Concepts (AA' s 3rd leg)



Concept I

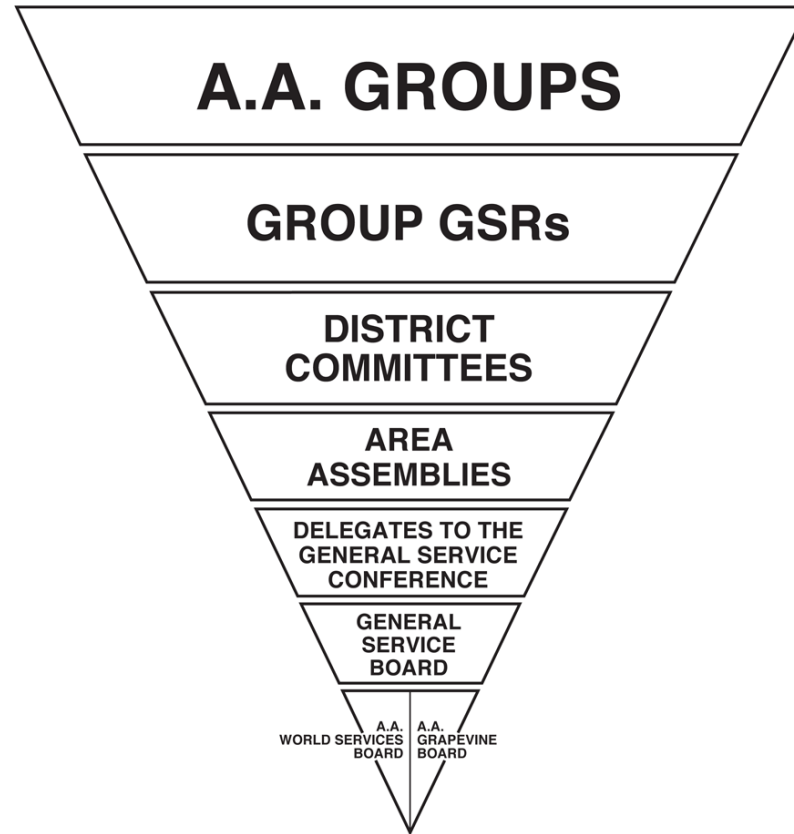
- Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.







How the AA service structure works

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





We can't hear you if you don't speak

- Every individual voice in AA counts
- Your voice starts with your vote in your home group
- A GSR is the person that your home group trusts and elects to carry the group conscience.



The District Assembly

- The District conscience comes from the collective of GSRs, Committee chairs , and district officers
- The group conscience is again entrusted to the elected District Committee Chair (DCM) who the District Assembly elects and trusts to carry the group conscience to the Area.



The Area Assembly

- The Area conscience comes from the collective of GSRs, DCMs, Committee chairs , and Area officers.
- The process continues with the Area Delegate who is also elected by the collective of the Area Assembly and entrusted to carry the group conscience to the conference and GSO.





Concept II

- *When in 1955, the AA groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, They thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the conference –excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter- the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole society.*





The benefit of participation

- Each group has the choice to participate or not.
- When a group participates within the conference the primary purpose has a broader scope of reaching all new comers and not just the newcomer walking into your group.
- The action of your group conscience can reach all groups and inspire others to become involved.
- The spiritual aspect of participation is in belonging and in knowing that we are a part of the big picture.
- All of the tools in the home group are created and distributed because of participating groups, districts and areas are doing the work to ensure the tools are there
- Meeting lists will not print themselves and literature doesn't get to the home group with out a process.



Other forms of Participation

- Getting involved
- Join a committee. Be a part of and benefit from carrying the message not just on a commitment but in ones actions.
- The 7th tradition; books, literature, committees, halls, functions, this list could go on and on.
- Attend your business meeting, your voice matters.
- Pass service on. My sponsor felt a responsibility to get me involved in service and I try to pass this on to those I sponsor.



Concept III

- To 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 Right of Decision

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

- Allowing committee chairs, committee members and officers to act as “trusted servants”.
- Knowing they will do their best to keep the best interests of AA in the forefront of all their decisions and actions.



Concept IV

- At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.



The Right of Participation

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation,” taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

- At any level of the AA service structure titles and positions do not denote or grant authority.
- At the World Service level paid staff members do not receive a vote.
- At the group level all group members have the right to vote and participate in the group’s service structure.





Concept V

- Throughout of structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.





The Right of Appeal

Throughout our world service structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

- Protects the right of the minority opinion to be heard.
- In turn this helps to ensure that the majority opinion is thoroughly thought through.
- One person’s opinion or the opinion of a small minority can often have a great effect on an AA group or at any level when the ideals of the fifth concept are followed .





Concept VI

The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.





Concept VI and the Group, District, and Area

Concept VI tells us that the trusted servants
have the responsibility to carry out the group
conscience.





Concept VII

The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purpose for final effectiveness.



Concept VII and the Group, District, and Area

The Groups and Districts have no legal status but we follow our group conscience. The Area does have a legal status, the Area is a corporation registered with the State of New Hampshire but even there we follow traditions when making decisions.





Concept VIII

The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance.

They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.





Concept VIII and the Group, District, and Area

Concept VIII talks of the custodial oversight of the Trustees. At the Group, District, and Area the custodial oversight is left to our elected servants and their understanding of the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts.



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.





Effective Leadership

“...No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the ***personal performance of those who must man it and make it work.***”





Effective Leadership



Good leadership cannot function well in a poorly designed structure. *But weak leadership can hardly function at all, even in the best of structures...*”





Continuous Good Leadership



“*With leadership* we will have a continuous problem. Good leadership can be here today and gone tomorrow. Furnishing our service structure with able and willing workers has to be a continuous activity. It is therefore a problem that in its very nature cannot be permanently solved.”





Continuous Good Leadership

We must continuously find the right people for our many service tasks. Since our future effectiveness must thus depend upon ever-new generations of leaders, it seems desirable that we now define ***what a good service leader should be***; that we carefully indicate in each level of service.....what special skills will always be required.”





Finding/Developing Leadership

- Sponsorship
 - Mentoring
- Education/Information
 - Commitment
- Nominating Committee
- Lateral Development Through Rotation
 - Realistic Assessment/Humility





Choosing Leaders: “Third Legacy”

“...Hence great care needs to be taken by the groups as they choose these Representatives. Hit-or-miss methods should be avoided. Groups who name no GSR's should be encouraged to do so. In this area a degree of weakness tends to persist. The needed improvement seems to be a matter of increased care, responsibility and education.....”







Choosing Leaders: “Third Legacy”

.....Personal ambitions will have to be cast aside, feuds and controversy forgotten. *Who are the best qualified people that we can name?* This should be the thought of all.”



Third Legacy is a possible maximum of 5 ballots until one candidate achieves 2/3 vote or then by lot: “Go To The Hat”





Considerations on Leadership

“...No society can function well without able leadership in all its levels, and A.A. can be no exception. It must be said, though, that we A.A.’s cherish the thought that we can do without much personal leadership at all. We are apt to warp the traditional idea of *“principles before personalities”* around to such a point that there would be no *“personality”* in leadership whatever. This would imply rather faceless automatons trying to please everybody regardless.







Myths & Realities; on Leadership

At other times we are quite as apt to demand that A.A.'s leaders must necessarily be people of the most sterling judgment, morals, and inspirations; big doers, prime examples of all, and practically infallible.

Real leadership, of course, has to function in between these entirely imaginary poles of hoped-for excellence.” In A.A. certainly no leader is faceless and neither is any leader perfect.”





Our Reality of Leadership

“...We have an abundance of men and women whose dedication, stability, vision, and special skills make them capable of dealing with every possible service assignment...”

“...A leader in A.A. service is therefore 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.





Guidelines for Leaders/Cautions to Us

- “...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...’*

(However)

- “...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...”



Essential Leadership

“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 discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source.”



Good Leadership

“Good leadership never passes the buck. Once assured that it has, or can, obtain sufficient general backing it freely takes decisions and puts them into action forthwith, provided of course that such actions be within the framework of its defined authority and responsibility.”





Better Leadership

“Nothing, however, can be more fatal to leadership than opposition for opposition’s sake. It never can be *‘Let’s have it our way or no way at all.’* This sort of opposition is often powered by a visionless pride or a gripe that makes us want to block something or somebody. Then there is the opposition that casts its vote saying, *‘No, we don’t like it.’* No real reasons are ever given. This won’t do. When called upon, leadership must always give its reasons, and good ones.”



Best Leadership

“A *‘politico’* is an individual who is forever trying to *‘get people what they want.’* A statesman is an individual who can carefully discriminate when and when not to do this. He recognizes that even large majorities, when badly disturbed or uninformed, can, once in awhile, be dead wrong. When such an occasional situation arises...it is always the duty of leadership, even when in a small minority, to take a stand against the storm...”



The Heart of Leadership

“Leadership is often called upon to face heavy and long-continued criticism. This is an acid test...

- **Constructive Critics**

...Our friends indeed. We ought never fail to give them a careful hearing. We should be willing to let them modify our opinions or change them completely. Often, too, we shall have to disagree and then stand fast without losing their friendship.”





Strength of Leadership

Leaders must also deal with: **Destructive Critics**

“They power-drive, they are *‘politickers,’* they make accusations. Maybe they are violent, malicious. They pitch gobs of rumors, gossip, and general scuttle-butt to gain their ends – all for the good of A.A. of course!...we ought to listen carefully to what they say. Sometimes they are telling the whole truth; at other times, a little truth. More often, though, they are just rationalizing themselves into nonsense.”

Nonetheless, true leaders must listen & discern.





The Soul of Leadership



“Now we come to the all-important attribute of vision. Vision is, I think, the ability to make good estimates, both for the immediate and for more distant future.....As individuals and as a fellowship, we will surely suffer if we cast the whole job of planning for tomorrow onto a fatuous idea of providence. God’s real Providence has endowed us human beings with a considerable capacity for foresight and he evidently expects us to use it.....”





For Our Future

.....Therefore we must distinguish between wishful fantasy about a happy tomorrow and the present use of our powers of thoughtful estimate. This can spell the difference between future progress and unforeseen woe. We shall be in continual need of these same attributes - *tolerance, responsibility, flexibility and vision* – among our leaders of A.A. services at **all** levels.”



Concept X

“Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority-the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and bylaws.”



Concept X continued..

- **Where do we get the job descriptions, and how do we know what our delegated authority is?**

- **GSR: Where should they look?**

- AA Service Manual

- GSR pamphlet,

- District 12 Service Manual

- “The AA Group...Where It All Begins” pamphlet





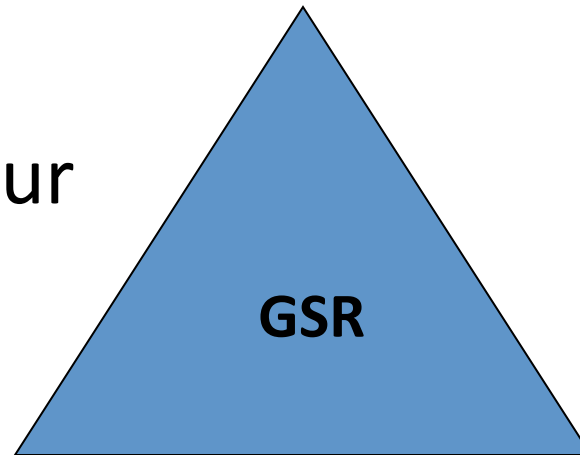
More Concept X.....

- **How is delegated authority different from final authority?**
 - “When delegated authority is operating well, it should not be interfered with.” (www.aa.org)
 - The final authority rests with the groups, to correct or reorganize.
 - We don't micromanage our trusted servants, we allow them to operate in a responsible manner.





Concept X: Key Points **Authority/ Responsibility/Service**

Responsibility
is outlined in our
AA literature.





Authority to
vote on AA
matters is given
by the group

Service = Responsibility + Authority



Concept XI (in 3 parts!)

“While the Trustees hold final responsibility for AA’s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants.”

- **The success of the Trustees will depend on the able support from these individuals.**
 - **The Grapevine, historically, has had problems in the area of Concept 11.**
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Concept XI (part 2)

“Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants,... will always be matters for serious care and concern.”

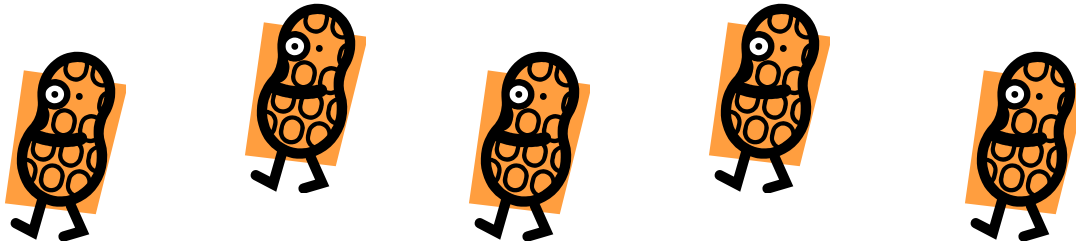
- **It is so important to bring someone into an area of service who either is qualified for the job or with the ability to learn the job.**

Concept XI (part 3)

“So....together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.”

- **The paid workers need to be compensated reasonably.**

“If you pay peanuts you will only get...”





Concept XI :



- **One of the key points of this concept is the spirit of rotation.**
- We rotate “on”, and not “out”. At the AA World Service office, they rotate on to a new position, every two years.



“Changing hats”
gives a new
perspective at the
office.





Concept XI :



Bill left nothing to chance: participation is the key to harmony; no second class citizens.

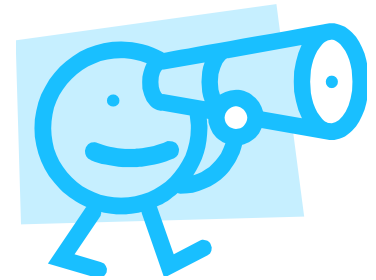
- **Full “participation” of paid workers is important.**



- **“They must be made to feel that they are on the team.”** (p.60 AA Service Manual)



Concept XI : **Check It Out!**



- **Active Service Corporations:**

AA World Services, Inc. and the Grapevine, Inc.

- **List of all the committees servicing AA and how they function:**

- **Nominating Committee**
- **Finance and Budgetary Committee**
- **Public Information Committee**
- **Literature Committee**
- **General Policy Committee**

- **There is interdependence:**

not dependence or independence





Concept XII

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others: that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.





What is a Warranty?

- An assurance by the seller of property that the goods or property are as represented or will be as promised.
- The insured's guarantee that the facts are as stated in reference to an insurance risk or that specified conditions will be fulfilled to keep the contract effective.
- A covenant by which the seller of land binds himself or herself and his or her heirs to defend the security of the estate conveyed.
- A judicial writ; a warrant.





The 6 Warranties

- *“The Warranties of Article 12 are a series of solemn undertakings which guarantee that the Conference itself will conform to A.A.’s Twelve Traditions;”*
- Unlike the other 11 Concepts, Concept 12 can only be changed by written consent of $\frac{3}{4}$ of directory-listed AA groups after 6 months of deliberation.
- They provide the spiritual underpinnings of how the conference operates.





AA “Bill of Rights”

From Warranty 3

“Many A.A.’s have already begun to call Article 12 of the Conference Charter “The A.A. Service Bill of Rights.”

This is because they see in these Warranties, and especially in this one, an expression of deep and loving respect for the spiritual liberties of their fellows. May God grant that we shall never be so unwise as to settle for anything less.”





Warranty 1

“The Conference shall never become the seat of perilous wealth or power.”

- *Wealth*

- *Limited sources of income prevents accumulation of excess wealth*

- *No outside contributions*
 - *Limited individual contributions*
 - *Groups contribute only those funds in excess of operational expenses*





Warranty 1 (cont' d)

- Power
 - Protections against accumulation of power
 - Rotation
 - Voting participation
 - Careful chartering
 - “power of the purse” and delegate voting will prevent any attempt to accumulate excess power.



Warranty 1 Examples

- Constant attention to income and budgets.
 - District and Area budgets are approved by the assembly
 - Income comes directly from groups, individual AAs or fund raisers approved by the assembly for specific needs.
- Development and maintenance of the district charter
- Bi-annual elections



Warranty 2

“Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample Reserve, should be its prudent financial principle.”

- As we freely give of our time to provide service, so must we provide funds to allow others to provide the consolidated services that our individual groups cannot.
- A Reserve fund is not the senseless accumulation of wealth. It is protection against decreases in contributions resulting from hard times.





Money and Spirituality

- For more information, read the AA pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money And Spirituality Mix (F-3)”
- Every group, including Groups, Districts and Areas, should establish a realistic budget, a prudent reserve, and strive to avoid accumulation of excess wealth.



Warranty 2 Examples

- District 12
 - Produces a detailed budget each year
 - Budget is approved by the District Assembly
 - Maintains a prudent reserve which is approximately 6 months of operating expenses
 - Sometimes runs special fund raisers, but only for special expenses, or when contributions have fallen below actual expenses.
 - The Prudent Reserve may also be drawn on in those cases, but is always replenished at the first opportunity.



Warranty Three

“None of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others.”

- Spirit underlying the “Right of Participation” (Concept 4)
- Placed in the Warranties in order to ensure that a conference action alone can never over turn it (see procedures for changing Concept 12)



Warranty 3 Examples

- District 12 Charter “voting rights”
 - *“Members of the District Assembly who are eligible to vote on issues placed before the District shall be: all duly elected GSR, (alternate GSR in the absence of the GSR), Acting GSR, District Committee Chairmen , Local Committee Members, and District Officers.”*
 - These are trusted servants who have specific responsibilities to the assembly and are granted the Right of Participation by the charter.



Warranty 4

“That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity.”



Considered Debate

- Decisions should, where ever possible be taken after careful and considered debate
- All parties should be given a chance to speak
- Minority Opinion should be honored
- In the vast majority of cases, no decision should be made in haste.



Substantial Unanimity

- An assembly can decide what the voting margin on a question is.
- The more important the question, the larger the majority should be to pass it.
- The majority can, and should, override this if the issue is sufficiently pressing.

Warrenty 4 Examples

- Passing the District Charter
 - Took many votes, many meetings, and LOTS of discussion and minority opinions to get it right
- Margins, defined in the charter, to modify the charter and associated parts based on the importance of the part



Warranty 5

“That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy.”





Discussion

- AA spiritual program makes the need to punish or engage in controversy unnecessary
 - Leads to anger, resentments, fear
 - AA' s attractiveness is more effective if we do not engage in public controversy
- Avoidance of engaging with critics or actions with respect to traditions violations at the public level
 - Personal & private communication
 - utilize our friends





Warranty 5 Examples

- Back to Basics “controversy”
 - Many saw violation of Tradition 6 (affiliation)
 - Demands to “disbar” BTB groups
 - Results in controversy, anger, hard feelings
- District referred the matter to a study committee
 - Recommended that a gentle, private note that there might be an issue with Tradition 6 be communicated
 - Movements to disbar appeared punitive and recommended that this be avoided
 - Trusted to AA’ s spiritual program, and the tradition of group autonomy (Tradition 4) to eventually resolve this



Another Warranty 5 Example

- Trademark for Circle/Triangle symbol
 - Used officially by AA from 1957 to 1993
 - 1993, the Board stopped using the symbol and switched to the phrase “Conference Approved” instead.
 - Coin manufacturers were using it. Contested AA’s request to cease.
 - The board determined that a legal battle would simply throw AA into a public controversy
 - Symbol is still universally used, just not legally trademarked.



Warranty 6

“That though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in action and in spirit.”





AA and “government”

- Reinforce the idea that the conference (and by inference, any AA Assembly)
 - Does not make laws
 - Does not direct actions
 - Does not punish or restrict
- Enforces the autonomy of the group and of individual AA's to do what they wish, trusting that the need to adhere to the AA principles in order to live will prevail.





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Opportunities for Service

District 12 Nominating Committee





13 District 12 Service Committees

- FOUR PRIMARY STANDING COMMITTEES
- AND EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT
- NINE SECONDARY SUPPORT COMMITTEES
- ALL HELP IN CARRYING THE MESSAGE OF AA



Primary District 12 Standing Committees

- PI/CPC
- TREATMENT
- WOMEN' S CORRECTIONS
- MEN' S CORRECTIONS



Secondary District 12 Standing Committees

- GROUP SERVICES
- FUNCTIONS
- NOMINATING
- FINANCE
- LCM
- WEBSITE
- NEWSLETTER
- GRAPEVINE & LITERATURE
- RECORDS & ARCHIVES