

2022 Area 43 Inventory Assembly Report

November 19, 2022

The focus of the Inventory Assembly:

“How can we be more effective in our service responsibilities, both to each other, as well as to the sick and suffering alcoholic who has yet to come through our doors?”

page 23 Area 43 General Service Assembly Service Handbook

The A.A. Service Manual states the purpose of an Area (p.19):

- To form a local decision-making structure so groups can collectively decide on matters that effect their area.
- To carry out Twelfth Step work that may not be practical for groups, districts...to take on by themselves.

Timeline:

June 6th to July 30th: A request for Inventory questions was sent to the fellowship. A follow-up email was sent on June 26th to the Area 43 Assembly email. No responses were received.

August 22-27th: Email sent to the fellowship with the Area 43 Inventory Survey Questions. The survey was posted via a link on nhaa.net. DCMs who attended the August assembly were given paper copies of the survey for their district distribution, to mail back to the Service Office by October 1st.

October 1st to 31st: Survey results received and paper copies sent to the Service Office were entered as well (31 paper responses). Total responses: 130.

November 19th: Area 43 Inventory Assembly held in Milford, NH hosted by District 13. Our Northeast Regional Trustee Francis G. assisted with the inventory to the assembly. It was wonderful to see so many GSRs in attendance.

Area 43 Inventory Assembly Report

- 1. What district are you in?** The participation from 15 different districts was amazing! DCMs please tell GSRs to let their groups know where to find this report on nhaa.net.
- 2. In Area 43 are we seeing the same diversity in the halls of AA as in our communities?** A great pamphlet on diversity is https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/p-83_AccesstoAA.pdf. Webmaster Kyle shared that we are not as diverse in this assembly as our community. He asked: How do we do more outreach to support the needs? Question: Does your group know how to obtain literature in languages other than English? It is important to remember that diversity is not just race or accessibility.
- 3. Does Area 43 meet the needs of members who may require accessibility accommodations?** Northeast Regional Trustee Francis G. reminded the assembly that there is an Accessibilities Checklist [SMF-208](#). Examples mentioned were: crutches, canes, cataracts and hearing aids. Francis suggested using the checklist when preparing

your events, like using large font and spacing. Don't forget to check your district websites: is the font large enough, with enough color contrast? A member noticed that the Meeting Guide app only has an English filter. Has A.A. made a push to identify, for example, Spanish Speaking meetings so that they can be found on the Meeting Guide app? Area Chair Addie reported that currently there are no Spanish speaking meetings in NH. Delegate Grace F. who is the chair of the Treatment and Accessibilities committee at the General Service Conference said they hope to expand the accessibilities checklist to include non-physical barriers. An example would be hearing – which could be addressed by including close caption any time when using zoom. Registrar Pam offered that another item is that so many are not as tech savvy, or cannot afford computers or smart phones, so it is important for us all to be aware of this. An example of addressing this is sending out the hard copies of this survey, to not exclude people.

4. **The format in the N.H. Service Handbook has a “sharing session” at the end of each assembly. The purpose of the sharing session is for all A.A. members to be able to share what’s on their mind. Should we reinstate this practice?** Here is the link for “How to Conduct a Sharing Session” https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/smf-111_en.pdf Each person is given a time to share with no voting, no motions and on any topic. There is a lot of good things that can come up. This takes the pressure off the assembly to make immediate decisions.

5. **How can Area 43 best serve virtual groups?** Area 43 Chair introduced this question. Currently Area 43 has 21 groups that are online only, and registered with GSO. Are we serving these virtual groups, not just at the Area level but at the district level? The larger question is: if a group is happy in a district, is that district’s meeting run hybrid so that it is accessible to all, or we requiring them to show up in person? Some districts have had hybrid issues, and they are printing lists that show the dial in phone number for zoom meetings. Another issue is a meeting had people logging in from all over the district, country and the world. The question is: is a physical district, correct? Should we be limiting this to a physical location? The 72nd General Service Conference report states on page 119: “...*how to list and integrate online meetings into the service structure*”. Area 43 Webmaster questioned what happens when an elected group member is not longer geographically in the group’s district, or Area 43? Our Area Chair reminded all that we have no guidelines from GSO, and each group is autonomous. A reminder was put forth to remove passwords and to use waiting rooms to make meetings more accessible.

- 6. What can be done to increase unity in Area 43?** What kind of events would the fellowship want: virtual or in person? There was positive support for workshops co-sponsored by more than one district. A successful example of this was done by districts 8 and 11 on the Traditions this year. Our Delegate shared that she could see entwining the virtual/hybrid events to take advantage of bringing in outside speakers at a lower cost. Additional ideas were: GSR roundup, a weekend of camping, as well as in person events to pull people together.
- 7. What can Area 43 do to make Area assemblies more effective?** Our Northeast Trustee presented this question. He reminded all to be open to feedback, whether it's email, phone, letter, etc. The responses to the survey showed 50% in favor of more workshops on topics requested by members and committees, as well as holding assemblies in a hybrid format. It was brought up that our area is in a cycle of: Pre-Conference, Post Conference, August workshops, Election/Inventory fall assembly. The Functions Chair stated that the responses surprised her, as attendance is not always high for virtual events. Is the issue that we aren't sharing announcement with our groups? Another comment by a member noted that the 130 responses were not indicative of the whole area, as many members are not tech savvy. Our Alt. Delegate stated that over 30 of the hardcopies were submitted on paper, which had been made available. The Delegate reminded all that virtual/hybrid/in person are three distinct things. She has observed other areas and noted that it is important for the people in the room to have equal participation along with online for hybrid meetings. A DCM brought up Tradition 5 – how are we bringing the message of AA to the sick and suffering? The Archives Chair said that sometimes controversy gets us moving, like a Unity Dinner that was well attended due to the controversy of that time. Our webmaster suggested for unity that DCMs, committees, and officers look at the Events Calendar. This can help reduce overlaps as well as increase communication.
- 8. Ways Area 43 is effectively informing members in NH about what is going on in A.A. as a whole:** Assembly discussion brought up points such as if the Delegate is sending frequent emails, why would there be a need for our newsletter *The Pipeline*? There has not been a Pipeline chair for some time, and a member spoke up how folks with no internet could receive the paper copy at their meetings or from a sponsor. Members on the survey responded favorably to finding information on nhaa.net, at Area Assemblies, as well as emails from officers and committee chairs. One DCM mentioned the communication chain: Sponsors to GSRs to AA Service Structure and the communication here is key to it all reaching the newcomer. Currently only 23% of GSRs in their district are participating, which means we can't get the message to GSO if groups don't understand their role in the service structure. Larger districts sometimes use Local Committee Members to reach out in person to a region of their district.

- 9. Concept One states: *The final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.*” Do our groups understand and have everything they need to carry out this responsibility?** Northeast Trustee Francis reminded all that we are talking about the groups here. Are GSRs reimbursed for their expenses? Survey responses showed groups have business meetings, but a lower percentage for GSRs attending district and area meetings. Be sure to check out the AA Service Manual, https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/en_bm-31_3.pdf pgs 7-12 for GSR qualifications and responsibilities.
- 10. How can the Area encourage greater GSR participation?** Holding a GSR orientation after lunch was responded favorably on the survey. A GSR in attendance suggested assemblies spread out more geographically, so the driving equalize out. It’s important to realize that if a group’s GSR isn’t active then the group has no vote at assemblies. First impressions are important, and our registrar has sent out the new GSR information to respective DCMs for them to welcome GSRs. District size is another consideration, and a redistricting may be an option, as NH hasn’t done it since the 70s. Some of our districts are too large for DCMs to have meaningful connections with the groups they serve. Encourage Service Sponsorship, send District meeting reminders, and stress the importance of active GSRs who can tie the districts to the area.
- 11. Currently committees meet virtually. Has this helped or hindered their ability to do the business of their committees?** The Area Chair said that although this has reduced expenses, we must look at accessibility as well. We need to ensure that the committees must be able to do their jobs. One question: are they hindered by virtual meetings? Starting in 2023 Area committees will decide individually to meet in-person or virtually.
- 12. Where would you go to find out what committees do?** NH Area 43 service Handbook, Area website (nhaa.net) and district websites, AA pamphlets, Area and District officers, and Committee presentations at districts and area assemblies. It was included that the Area 43 Business meeting minutes are a wealth of information and posted on the area website. These are password protected, so email any Area officer for the password. Everyone needs to improve sharing the committee and district information on the website to increase communication.
- 13. Committee participation in district and area levels:** How is the spirit of rotation practiced at all levels? Northeast Regional Trustee urged people not to stay in just one position. A DCM suggested that there is a lack of training for committees or positions. A Service Sponsor or buddy system could help as well as a service panel discussion for the district with GSRs, committees, telling how they got involved in service, and what they do to encourage participation. We are never doing it alone.