NAATW Workshop

"Public information takes many forms - the simple sign outside a meeting place that says 'AA meeting tonight'; listing in local phone directories; distribution of AA literature; and radio and television shows using sophisticated media techniques. Whatever the form, it comes down to 'one drunk carrying the message to another drunk,' whether through personal contact or through the use of third parties and the media."

Bill W.

The Road to Saint Louis

First off I would like to thank the Area Committee and the Public Information Committee in particular for sending me to the first ever AA Technology Workshop (NAATW) held in St Louis on August 8-10, 2014. It was a very informative workshop and put me together with a lot of very intelligent Information Technology professionals as well as members like myself who have some background in websites and some tech matters. I did feel at time that I was in over my head but soon realized, once again, that I was not alone.

By way of background, I have been involved in technology meetings and conversations at the last two Forums and the last two or three NERAASAs either as a presenter, moderator or participant. At those meetings I could see the development of a core group of members interested in furthering AAs application of emerging technologies to help better carry this message of hope. In particular, there is a large interest in meeting location databases, code for such search engines and the sharing of other technologies that would enhance online meetings, data collection (New Group Forms, Group Change Forms, Calendar updates etc.) and compliance with our Traditions as they relate to Tradition Five (Carrying the message) and Tradition Eleven (Anonymity).

Over the last few years this group of members (all from the Northeast Region) have establish a forum/blog for the mutual sharing of information and questions and answers. I am a participant in that forum which is password protected to avoid any breach of anonymity.

As more and more questions arise regarding AA websites at the Area, Intergroup and District levels, the importance of this collective wisdom becomes apparent. At the last Forum in Warwick, Rhode Island, a small group of members made a presentation about emerging technologies and it was well attended. Websites, Facebook, texting, Twitter etc. were all on the table. I could see plainly that there was common ground on some matters and also that many members were struggling to understand how our Traditions and these technologies will merge.

At the Warwick, RI Forum, these issues reinforced the idea of and need for an AA technology workshop which eventually led to NAATW. Two members in particular, Brouck H. and Blaine B., advanced this idea and approached GSO with the concept. It was left to these members to put it together with consultations with GSO staff and with the Southwest Regional Trustee, Clayton V., who did the Welcome presentation at the Workshop. In attendance at NAATW were three GSO employees, one Grapevine employee, three Trustees of the General Service Board and a Trustee of the Grapevine Board. I thought this reflected overwhelming support from GSO.

The St. Louis Central Service Office volunteered to host the event. Don B., Executive Secretary, took the lead and secured the location with the consent of the Central Service Office. This was particularly bold as NAATW was new and there was concern about cost overruns which would fall to the St. Louis Central Service Office to cover. Fortunately, everything worked out.

The Workshop: An Overview

Why are we here? (Brouck H.)

The stated purpose for the NAATW:

> The National AA Technology Workshop (NAATW) is committed to helping Alcoholics Anonymous service workers who are also bound by the spiritual principles of our Fellowship to...
>
> - DEMONSTRATE and SHARE technology related experience, strength, and hope with each other
> - provide a CONSISTENT INTERFACE to the fellowship on technology and assist members where practical
> - offer a useful medium for willing members and non-member friends with specific TECHNICAL EXPERTISE to help A.A.
> - SERVE OTHER A.A. SERVICE GROUPS or committees with their technology concerns

It was very interesting to hear why the other participants were attending, many on their own dime.

Who we were as a group broke down into two main categories, professional and non-professional. Non-professional being defined as those member that did not do this for a living, such as myself. Everyone was very knowledgeable. Through conversation it was apparent that many of us share the same thoughts about technology and AA. This has also been the case in the last two Forums and NERAASAs.

With 100% certainty, everyone agreed that our sole purpose here was to "help carry the message" using more modern technology then that spoken about in AA literature to date. Only recently has AA set down guidelines covering the Internet (MG18) and in particular Websites (SM F101). The conversations at this workshop covered all of those topics and went further into specific social media as in Facebook, Twitter etc.

Everyone present was trying to get a better idea of where AA was as a whole and in particular, where the Areas and Intergroups saw their needs for information and help in resolving some of the problems associated with the use of these technologies.

Personally, I was there to help advance the whole idea of "simplicity" and to get a clearer understanding of how other Areas and Intergroups structure their service as it relates to websites.

A Newcomers' View of AA Technology Use (Julie S. -Area 10)

One of the problems and concerns in AA today is how to find accurate and current locations of where the meetings are held and the use of schedules and on-line meeting directories to accomplish this.

> *"We meet frequently so that new comers may find the fellowship they seek."*
> Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous Page 15

The old tried and true method has been paper schedules and that has served us well. But today there is an even better way available thru the use of on-line schedules that also include GPS directions and maps available thru third parties such as Google Maps and MapQuest. The issues identified were the problems of infrequency and cost of printed schedules and lack of current and accurate information regarding the meetings and their location and time.

The consensus was that the advanced technology available to us today could and does provide more accurate and updated information regarding meetings then the actual paper schedule. If you look on either the ReadingBerksIntergroup.org or AALV.org websites, up-to-date locations, maps and actual street addresses are available. In Area 59 this is accomplished through the use of a linked map of Eastern Pa taking the inquirer to the actual on-line paper schedule or directly to the servicing Intergroup for that area where the digital schedule can be found.

The sense of the meeting was that as tech people we need to share info on meeting search code and the best way to show mapping. Discussion then went into the best place to store coding snippets for general use by the fellowship etc.

Mobile First (Steven C. -Area 71)

This topic centered on the use of mobile phones, smart phones and the like. Of particular interest was for proper coding so that website etc. showed up properly and worked as they were supposed to on smart phones and devices. There was a lot of information sharing about the coding process and naming conventions that help make the sites perform as expected. There are also a lot of 3rd party applications and software that are helpful in making this process smoother and more efficient.

The Facebook Topic (Curt S. -Area 09)

Everyone sees the possibilities with Facebook. There is a big opportunity to reach AA members; with 2.5 million websites integrated with Facebook, 955 million active users, 181 million just in the United States and Canada. But along with that access, comes the dangers…. Facebook pages are not websites. Brands and organizations use Facebook in a way that is different from regular users. Facebook exists in many languages, countries and is used in culturally different ways.

Facebook makes its money by selling user data to advertisers - this is their stated business model; privacy policies will and do change without notice (as we have seen). Analytics drive its media business-people are targeted for things they like, post and respond to (e.g. babies or Samsung phones, Causes etc.)

There are currently many different AA Facebook pages - but their purpose is unclear. Notice that as a Facebook user, I can see if friends 'like' an AA Facebook page, which breaks their anonymity to a good degree.

Facebook will allow AA to connect with members, providing a new place for 12th step work to happen, and become a new channel for publishing content.

However, there is critical work needed for a Facebook AA page to be successful:

- Define and articulate what AA will and won't do in Social Media (it's not a brand, it's not a person, it's not a cause…)

- Understand and imagine how AA members would interact with AA and each other on Facebook

- Develop a strategy and employ special workers (or an agency etc.) to publish content into the AA Facebook pages

- Manage the community by responding to comments, deleting offensive posts, fielding 12th step / PI and other requests. This is a full time job in multiple languages.

Respondent say they 'like' a brand on Facebook because they are a CUSTOMER (58%) or because they want to receive discounts and promotions (57%)

The anonymity risk: depending on the Facebook page configuration and current privacy policy, one person 'liking' a page could result in many other people seeing their affiliation. Facebook is **designed** to share social activity in this way - not to protect anonymity.

Discussion ensued about what constitutes an anonymity break on Facebook and it was felt that this will be and must be an ongoing topic for discussion and review at Regional Forums and Assemblies

12 Statements of Technology (Blaine B, Brouck H.)

The scope of this discussion was wide to say the least and covered all ground involving current and emerging technologies and anticipation of what is to come.

There is a special focus on 'Self-support' as it related to the scope of this topic. How will we fund, manage and use the technologies of today and by what guidelines will we navigate. Here are some of the topics and subtopics surrounding the Technology issues. Discussions on financial support and burden associated with technology usage need to be addressed.

- **Communication**
  -email/fax
  -Phones/Devices
  -remote work/broadcasting
- **Content**
  -web/cloud
  -publishing/documents
  -multilingual
  -retention/recording/retrieval
- **Software Applications**
  -Programing
  -Design/usability
- **Information Security**
  -User / password/ Identity
  -Encryption
  -Intellectual Property/Copyrights

- **Operations**
  -Monitoring
  -Maintenance
  -Storage /Hosting
- **Management**
  -Committees
  -Contracts
  -Vendors
  -Projects
- **System**
  -Inventory
  -Connectivity
- **Support**
  -Inter-Committee
  -Member users
  -Non-Member users

Here are some of the 'Management' problems surrounding these topics

1- There is currently no role in AA for focusing on technology.
2- Experience is collected across committees.
3- Service may require special knowledge.
4- How to share technical experience.
5- No common language for sharing experience
6- Slow implementation and long delivery lifecycle is way behind the always changing technology market.

Now here are some of the 'Delivery' problems.

1- Requests for technical solutions have become more complex than ever before.
2- Is reduction of duplications of effort possible and how?
3- Our model for implementing technology is as varied as the number of groups we have.
   - No one has been asked to provide central services- the upside down triangle.
   - We have not agreed to requirements
   - How would we fund them if we did?
4- Requests for technical solutions have become more complex than ever before.
5- Is reduction of duplications of effort possible and how?
6- Our model for implementing technology is as varied as the number of groups we have.
   - No one has been asked to provide central services- the upside down triangle.
   - We have not agreed to requirements
   - How would we fund them if we did?
7- There is little trust that AA can produce adequate technology.

A set of guidelines was adopted at the Technology Workshop as a way to keep focus on what is really important.

1- We suggest implementing technology **where it supports our primary purpose** of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers
2- We are responsible and assess value when using **self-support** funds for technology initiatives
3- We are responsible where **anonymity** is more vulnerable to a wider audience with increased speed or new sensation
4- An **informed** group conscience is paramount to technology decision-making
5- We strive to understand where **Individual versus Group values** are different
6- We perform due diligence and rely on **demonstrable A.A. experience**
7- We record **non-technical requirements** before making technology choices
8- We take care to understand the **property value** and **legal** implications of technology used for A.A. purposes before making binding decisions
9- We are responsible for **transparency** in discovery, process, & implementation
10- We use technology to make information **available**, not to limit it
11- We communicate and support the **intended** service level
12- We consider how best to **Pass it On**

As a member, I think these 12 guidelines are in keeping with our stated purpose, are responsible and progressive. As a technology person and consumer, I see the difficulty ahead in achieving unanimity, consent and funding, but, at the same time, the wisdom in their intent.

-Workshop: "Safeguarding our Traditions through the Evolution of Technology

The core question on the Traditions in every discussion was anonymity. The principal on anonymity broke down this way:

In any question of Anonymity, first distinguish
- Anonymity at the Public Level (Tradition 11)
    o Press, Radio, Films, TV
    o World Wide Web
    o Including social networking (Facebook etc.)
- Personal Anonymity (Anonymity of the individual)
    o All other situations and questions
    o Email, Texting, IM (and ftp, telnet, ….)

At the Public Level
- Tradition 11
  "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films. "
  - In general this means that if I am to identify myself as an AA member at the public level, I do not use my full name or face.
  - World Wide Web, including Facebook etc., is considered Public Level
  - So I do not identify myself or anyone else as an AA member on www, FB, Social Networking

At the Personal Level
- From "Understanding Anonymity"
  "At the personal level, anonymity provides protection for all members from identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers.
- In general this means:

- I can choose whether or not to reveal my AA membership as I see fit.
- You need to respect (and not assume) my choices in each situation.
- And correspondingly, I need always respect (and not assume) your anonymity choices in each situation.
- Email, Texting (SMS, MMS), IM etc.: Personal Anonymity must be protected.
    - You can reveal your AA membership or not, as you decide.
    - But, be mindful of not revealing someone else's AA membership, for example in a CC list.

Anonymity Online?
- With social networking technology, we have all become media publishers.
- We will need to be aware of the anonymity considerations
- We will need to make judgment calls based on our understanding of the principals involved.
    - When is our social networking posting at the public level, and when does personal anonymity apply?
    - How to apply the principles of anonymity in each post.
    - When to protect our own anonymity at the public level and personal levels.
    - To always be alert to protect the anonymity of others.

This kind of review sparked a ton of discussion and we realized that the questions have not changed over the years. This is something we have been struggling with and will continue to struggle with for a long time. Continued conversations on these topics are of major importance to the fellowship

-Workshop: Service Position or Professional Employee (Cris H.- Colorado Springs Intergroup; Greg G., -Area 59)

This question, service position or employee, had a number of answers. Some present combined these efforts (service professional) while others broke this out into two or three levels of service

A model emerged that was consistent with present practices throughout a number of areas. A technical person served the technical needs of the organization while taking direction from a committee of the Area or Intergroup which rotated. It was clear that having the tech position rotate would cause a number of problems, not the least of which would be finding members in service that could fulfill this need on a 2 years rotating basis.

A number of years ago the discussion at Area 59 turned to rotation of the Webservant. Upon investigation the Area realized the difficulty in doing so and identified a number of reasons why this would be a tougher road.

1- Purchasing and maintaining a computer and passing it along every two years.
2- Software expenses.
3- Transfer of ownership and credit card purchases.
4- Availability of members with the time and ability to keep the website up-to-date

In other Areas, the situation is similar in that the breakdown between Service and Professional has an additional step or another layer: Committee, subcommittee, and Webservant. This configuration would see the committee making all content management decisions which are passed along to a subcommittee for clarification, filtering (making sure the content is prepared for

public presentation) and final approval. The matter is then turned over to the Webservant for actual publishing.

-Online contributions

Few present had working online contribution capabilities on Area or Intergroup websites. Some did, however, manage that capability for assemblies and conventions of various types. The General Service Office only recently put this function on the AA website. A very good example of on-line donations can be found on the St Louis Intergroup site at aastl.org.

One of the topics of conversation had to do with implied affiliation due to the use of 3rd party programs such as PayPal etc. The concern there was that a part of each contribution ends up in the hands of the provider by way of fees per transaction. It was felt that is was a necessary evil unless a tech professional were to design a direct contribution portal through a local bank but even this type of setup saw a percentage of the transaction going to the actual bank.
There really is no free way to do this. Again the conversation fell back to the acceptance of 3rd party pay structures just as we do with so many other 3rd party services (the printer, the hall where we meet, outside catering, the purchase of AV equipment etc.) We will always be confronted with fees for services.

-From Web Servant to Technologist - How some have made the change

This was a very interesting topic and centered on the evolution of the Webservant into an all-purpose technologist dealing with everything from the website to the audio-visual equipment etc. All forms of technology used by the Area or Intergroup fall under this person's purview.

Most thought this was a daunting task and finding this person would be equivalent to finding gold nuggets in a stream.

The idea was floated of a Technology Committee of the Area or Intergroup composed of rotating DCMs or IRs and a few technical people that may or may not be paid. The Committee would be responsible for the website content, all discussions regarding technology anonymity breaks, purchases for tech equipment, the scheduling of equipment for various purposes, and the overseeing of maintenance on all audio visual equipment.

I thought this concept was very interesting to say the least. I do think that in time, with the ever growing use of technology and tech equipment, this may become the norm. There seemed to be consensus on this.

Chuck D. from Area 5 (SoCal) made a presentation on the use of video in our service groups. The subtitle of his presentation was "A new resurgence of the Audio Visual Chair." One of the more interesting ideas I heard was the "traveling AA audio-visual show". Under the leadership of the Audio Visual Chair, the committee and other volunteers went around the Area showing AA full length videos and PSAs to groups of young people, at AA meetings (both groups and service meetings) and to the Professional Communities in law enforcement, health/medical and the legal community. The response to these showings and the ensuing conversations were both active and enthusiastic and bore fruit in carrying the message. This was especially true among the Professional Community it was reported. Even in this day and age, but probably due to our misunderstanding of anonymity, so many professionals who come in contact with alcoholics still know very little about AA.

-Opportunities and Challenges (David C. -Area 57)

This was a general discussion covering all the possibilities and problems facing AA in the future regarding technology. It was both informative and educational. We saw the Opportunity as being able to use the internet and other technologies to better carry the message. We saw the Challenges as being able to understand how the traditions apply in this electronic world.

I am including this list of some things to think about when it comes to opportunities and challenges:

- Are my group and I making full use of aa.org and other more local A.A. sites?
    - Huge store of reference information on sobriety, steps, traditions, the AA Group, Sponsorship…
    - Are group events listed on the calendar?
    - Is my group's meeting schedule accurately listed in the online meeting database?
    - Online forms: Bridge the Gap Cards, DOC Application forms, Group Change forms.
- Are my group and I making use of email and texting?
    - Are emails included on the group phone list?
    - Use email or texting to send out notes or reminders to group members?
    - Area Newsletter and friendly, informative emails can be sent directly to any or all members of your group, not just the GSR.
- Could a newcomer or out-of-town visitor find AA in your town using the internet?
    - A new generation will look for AA on the internet, not in the phone book.
        1. Does an internet search turn up AA and meeting information readily?
    - Have you considered a website for your group, or for the groups in your community?
        1. Simple information about AA in your town, to help someone find AA & meetings.
        2. Can be created at little or no cost, and with no technical expertise.
        3. Your Area Webservant or Technologies Committee can help.
        4. Use GSO guidelines and examples of other group sites.
- Are we aware of the new electronic formats for AA Conference Approved and Grapevine literature? Now available in Kindle Nook and iPhone: Big Book, Twelve and Twelve, Daily Reflections, Living Sober, Came To Believe
    - How will your group react with someone reads from an iPhone Big Book at your meetings? When a newcomer chooses an electronic Big Book rather than a paper one?
    - The Grapevine Magazine online subscriptions and in Audio (mp3) format.
- Do you know someone who could benefit from Online AA meetings?
    - Useful for those who cannot make face to face meetings, or to pick up extra meetings any time of day or night.
    - A chance to sit in meetings with members from all around the U.S. and the world.
    - Over 100 listed at www.aa.intergroup.org.
    - Not a substitute for face to face meetings.

- Other ideas:
    - With Skype, your next speaker meeting could have a speaker in Japan, or Europe or anywhere else in the world! Think of the possibilities.
    - Free or low cost teleconferencing is now available. Think about where that might be useful.
    - What about social media like Facebook for carrying the message?

Some of the Challenges were:

- The Challenges in using technology to carry the message center on understanding how the traditions apply, particularly anonymity and non-affiliation.

- Of special concern are the anonymity implications in our use of social media such as Facebook.

- This is not to give rules to guide our technology use. This is to understand the principals involved so we can be aware of the implications and make our own judgment calls.

One unique example of the opportunities to use technology centered on the Bridging the Gap program in the Eastern Missouri Area 38. It was explained that the whole BTG initiative was centered on the Area website. An inmate, patient or their counselor could go to the website, to the BTG page, and request a contact. The data acquired was sent to the BTG committee and was sent on to a person nearest to or actually in the zip code of the person's intended home upon release. The website also offered an online sign up to be a contact, based on zip code locations. One of the most amazing things about their efforts was that they were able to pick up volunteers by zip code and have their entire area covered! I have attached both the on-line sign up form and the volunteer request form with Do's and Don'ts.

-Anonymity using Secure Area within Website (Cheri J. -Area 39)

Some new and interesting ideas were floated around the room on this topic. In Area 59, we do have a secured area of the website. We are not making very much use of it at the moment, the potential is there for some of the things we discussed. One in particular caught my eye and that was the use of the secure area to host a chat room which is restricted by password for Area Officers and Area Committee Chairs. The amount of funds saved in mileage, lodging and food more than paid for the actual cost of the chat room code.

Other uses were posting minutes, contact information on the area officers and committee heads, repositories for 'background information' used by committees and officers on any topic needed.

-Accessibility and New Technologies (Virginia M. -Area 06)

This topics focused almost exclusively on the deaf and hard of hearing member and how new technologies are available and being used to help in this area.

-Technology Road Map; A Discussion for A.A. (Dennis B. -Area 39)

I think that the overall thought in the back of everyone's minds were 'where do we go from here and how do we get there'.

The value of the NAATW was on everyone's mind. This collaboration across Areas of the United States, it was felt, is the spring board for resolving many issues facing us today and the potential birthplace of a new understanding and cooperation across AA as it regards technology

Everyone present realized that many people of our acquaintance, who we have interacted with on the very subjects discussed at NAATW, were missing and needed to be a part of this collective effort. The consensus was that the continuation of the NAATW is essential as we go forward.

The Business of the NAATW

Sunday morning the first official business meeting of the organization took place. A financial report was given by Blaine B. Blaine explained in detail how the finances worked in the

development of this workshop and the personal burden some of the organizers took upon themselves. Funds permitting, some of those expenses with be reimbursed.

Under new business, we dealt with 3 motions.

1- Motion 1: Approval of Interim NAATW Guidelines (See attached)
2- Motion 2: Election of Acting Officers per guideline.
   - Acting Chair Brouck H be approved as chair.
   - Acting Treasurer Blaine B be approved as Treasurer.
   - Acting Local Liaison be elected: Don M. of St Louis was elected.
   - Acting Secretary be elected: Ross D. Area 57 (Oklahoma) was elected.
3- Motion 3: "That NAATW plan and hold a 2015 Workshop"

All motions were passed and the business meeting concluded.

Some thoughts:

I believe this conference was well worth the time and financial expenditure. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve Area 59 and Alcoholics Anonymous by participating and relaying the outcomes of this workshop.

There is no stopping the onslaught of communications technology. Because our message is so critical, we need to address its usage within the confines of our Traditions. We would be negligent in our responsibilities to our fellowship to not participate in the conversation going on all over the US and Canada.

In the Northeast Region, small groups of members have come together over the course of the last three or four years in an effort to help focus the fellowship on the use of technology by sharing their experience, strength and hope. At the NAATW workshop other Regions/Areas that are trudging this road spelled out their conversations and hopes as well. Only a very small number of member from the Northeast Region were present even though there are so many very interested parties in our Region. Their absence was felt. We discussed this issue of attendance as I was not alone regarding the missing Areas and people of those Areas that have been a part of this Technology conversation. It was felt that many were waiting to see what happed the first year and make decisions based on what they heard.

The first AA Technology Workshop was a success in knitting together some of these groups to a common purpose. I hope the attendance at next year's workshop doubles or triples in number of participants to help pull even more groups together. In the upside down triangle of AA, it is within the power of groups like this to write the future, and this responsibility should be met. Our efforts to carry this message of hope should avail itself of every responsible means to get one drunk with another.

I would be very interested in attending this event next year. It will most likely be held in St. Louis again but the third year is up for grabs. It would be nice to bring it to Area 59 in 2016 thru the Area or one of our many Intergroups or a collaboration of both.

It would also be great if some of the topics or thoughts resulting from NAATW would find their way into local workshops as topics at all levels of the fellowship; an informed group conscience on these matters is critical as we struggle to find a fellowship conscience on the same topics.

I think it would be interesting to hold an Area Technology workshop. This could be an independent workshop or held in conjunction with EPGSA or set up like our Mini-Assemblies.

In the future, consider the need for the creation of a Technology subcommittee to address specific needs of the Area, to oversee the technical aspects of the website and to assist with the communications needs at area functions, all audio visual efforts and other assignments as they arise. I included a copy of Southern Minnesota Area 36 Technology Guidelines.

The list of attendees was not available at the writing of this report but I do know that the following Areas were present

Attending:

Area 5- Southern California- LA | Area 6- Coastal Northern California

Area 7- California Northern Interior | Area 9- Southern California-High Desert

Area 10- Colorado | Area 30- Eastern Massachusetts

Area 31- Western Massachusetts | Area 38- Eastern Missouri

Area 39- Western Missouri | Area 51- North Carolina

Area 57- Oklahoma | Area 59- Eastern Pennsylvania

Area 68- Southern Texas | Area 71- Virginia

Area 72- West Washington State

I will encourage the NAATW to include in future invitations all Area Delegates, Webservant and Technology Chairs along with GSO staffers.

This report on the NAATW has been written around the highly technical nature of this workshop so that anyone reading it could relate to the general questions and answers that arose from it. There were so many well informed and talented members present, lots of time the conversation bogged down into "how to" sessions and comparisons of different 3rd party applications. I tried to avoid this as much as possible in the report but at the same time, wanted the reader to know there was another element to the workshop that is specific to those actually performing the technical tasks for AA. I believe this will continue in future workshops as "asides" to the general topics of the individual workshops.

I am sorry this report is so long but in truth, I could have written much more about what took place in St Louis. I hope you got through this ok and if there are any questions I can help with, please contact me at info@area59aa.org.

In service,

Greg G.
Area 59 Webservant

NATIONAL AA TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP (NAATW) GUIDELINES

NAATW is sponsored by the Attendees of its events, and served by the committees its body elects. The workshop is National to both the United States and Canada wihtin the respective boundaries of Alcoholics Anonymous in North America as designated in the AA Service Manual.

PURPOSE

The purpose of NAATW is to provide a forum in which to share experience, strength, and hope regarding technology as it relates to AA. The NAATW and its committees should always foster the Recovery, Unity and Service legacies of AA.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee of NAATW has the sole purpose to perpetuate the Workshop, and has the overall responsibility for implementing its events. The Steering Committee members select an Advisory Committee which represents the Steering Committee in lending continuity and guidance to host committees in the periods between NAATW business meetings. The Steering Committee will provide guidelines for the local host committee. Advance planning is of great importance to an effective NAATW event. Therefore, the Steering Committee chairperson is responsible to announce the site and schedule of the next NAATW event on NAATW.org and on AA calendars and listings as is appropriate. Publish a final Treasurer's Report within 90 days from the close of the Workshop to be made available to attendees and committee members through e-mail or other approved methods.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS, ROTATION, AND TERMS

Membership need not be limited to "technology" people
The Steering Committee should have a Maximum of 5 voting members each serving a 5 year rotating term. The natural order of succession would have the Past-Chair rotate to a non-voting Member Emeritus, the Chair rotate to Past-Chair, the Treasurer rotate to Chair, the Secretary rotate to Treasurer, and other Committee members to stand as available.

- Chair position
  - Primarily responsible for the program with input from the committee
  - Will appoint ad-hoc committees as needed
  - Rotates to Past-Chair position after a one year term
  - Rotates to non-voting Member Emeritus for years 3-5
- Treasurer position
  - Primarily responsible for the Treasurer's report
  - Rotates to Chair position after a one year term
- Secretary position
  - Primarily responsible for keeping minutes of Steering Committee meetings and Workshop business meetings
- Archivist position – Vacent The Steering Committee will report back on this position and proposed scope in 2015

GENERAL

The dates for the NAATW shall be that weekend (Friday through Sunday) which includes the first full week in August which begins on a Sunday.

1. A business meeting will be scheduled for each Workshop and listed in the program, which will also encourage all AA members to attend. All AA members in attendance shall have one vote.
   a. Minutes and the Treasurer's Financial Report from the preceding meeting shall be read for approval.
   b. A proposal shall be submitted from any groups willing to host future Workshops up to four years ahead.
   c. Motions concerning internal operations of the Workshop should be presented for approval, which will require a 2/3rd majority of the AA members present and voting. Whenever possible, motions should be submitted to the Workshop chairperson in sufficient time for inclusion in the registration packet.

2. After all expenses have been paid a positive balance may exist. It should be the policy of the chairperson to keep the registration fee as low as possible to encourage attendance, particularly at the local level. A large surplus should be avoided.

3. Include a copy of the NAATW guidelines with the other pertinent information in the packet given at registration.

4. www.NAATW.org is the official web site of the National AA Technology Workshop and thus the host and domain registrations shall be the responsibility of NAATW to fund. The purpose of the site will be to provide information on upcoming NAATWs as well as historical data from past NAATWs. The custody of the site will be maintained by the steering committee

or its assignees. The website will be operational approximately six months prior to the Workshop. To adhere to AA's tradition of personal anonymity, last names of AA members and personal e-mail addresses will not be listed: photographs of AA members will not be used. Only links relating to the current NAATW should be allowed.

5. EQUIPMENT: Any NAATW equipment required for the operation of the Workshop will be the responsibility of the current NAATW host committee. The current committee will be responsible for inventory/transfer/shipping of the equipment to the next host committee. The equipment will be stored in a protected environment.

6. The current NAATW will reimburse the following year's Chair for travel to attend the current NAATW.

NAATW CHAIRPERSON
The NAATW chairperson should have a general overall knowledge of AA and experience with conventions, conference or assemblies will be helpful. He/she should be willing to devote considerable time and effort for a period of about 13 months. Some of the chairperson's many responsibilities follow:

1. Make commitments and agreements only for the specific Workshop which he/she chairs.
2. Select a Workshop committee including a secretary, and others as needed.
3. Arrange for the meeting place.
4. Arrange for adequate Internet access in all areas of the meeting place.
5. Determine how housing and transportation will be handled.
6. Produce and mail flyers at least twice, once early (four to six months prior) and again about six weeks prior to the Workshop date. The mailing list furnished by the preceding chairman should be kept confidential.
7. Notify Box 459 and the Grapevine, approximately 4 months in advance.
8. Provide literature and copies of materials needed. Good judgment will be used so that only conference-approved literature, Grapevine material, local service material and NAATW tapes may be displayed or sold, but not trinkets or tapes from other meetings.
9. Turn over to the current Steering Committee Chairperson any mailing lists and business meeting minutes; and maintain a file of all letters, reports, printed matter and other material pertaining to the Workshop.
10. Plan on providing locally available interpreters for the deaf. This service will be cancelled if no requests have been received within a deadline consistent with local practices for this service.
11. Plan on providing locally available translators for Spanish-speaking participants. This service will be cancelled if no requests have been received within a deadline consistent with local practices for this service.

THE END
The foregoing NAATW Guidelines are updated by Steering Committee members through July 2014,

LIST OF NAATW EVENTS

01	MO	Saint Louis	2014

Eastern Missouri AA - Bridging the Gap Request Entry Form

*Name _____

*Release Date __/__/____

*Sex ○ Male   ○ Female

Address _____

City _____   State [▼]

*Zip ____

*Phone ___-___-____

Email or Alt. Phone _____

Notes _____

* Required Field

Submitting this form will notify Bridging the Gap volunteers, in the zip code area, that the individual entered would like to have assistance getting to appropriate meetings.

If there are any questions you can direct them to 314-647-3677 or email btg@eamo.org.

Submit & Email

"AA" Bridging-The-Gap
Temporary Contact Program

Temporary Contact Sign-up Sheet

Suggested Guidelines for Bridge Volunteers

DO take the member to an AA meeting within 48 hours
DO carry the AA message with your experience
DO take the member to 3 – 6 AA meetings
DO provide AA meeting schedule & phone numbers
DO practice your recovery and solutions
DO discuss Bridge questions or problems with a
Sponsor

DON"T sponsor the member
DON'T loan money, housing, food, car or be a taxi
DON'T be involved in reports to the Justice System
DON'T exceed 6 meetings with the member
DON'T become emotionally involved
DON'T be responsible for Members actions or
attitudes

Take the released Inside AA Member to an AA
meeting within 48 hours of their return to the
community.

It is suggested that the first meeting with the AA
member be viewed as a "12 Step Call" and take
another AA member with you.

Use the same guidelines as you would when meeting
a newcomer, although you are meeting a member that
may have considerable long term sobriety.

Review the Bridge Program with the AA member so
there are no misunderstandings as to what this
program does and does not offer. Use this pamphlet for
reference.

Remind the Member, the Bridge is a temporary
arrangement, and you are a temporary bridge to the
local AA community.

Remember, you have a commitment of taking the
Member to 3 to 6 AA meetings. It is up to each of us to
establish sponsorship relations on our own.

Be sure the Member has a meeting list, AA telephone
numbers, email addresses, AA literature and a Big
Book.

Encourage the Member to find a Home Group, attend
AA meetings, get a sponsor and become involved in the
Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Share your experience, strength and hope as you
would with anyone new to the program or the
community.

Upon completion of the responsibilities, contact the
Bridge Coordinator and provide information on what
worked.

Name		Age	Sex
Street Address			
City	Zip		
Phone(s)			
Email Address			
Other Info			

Name		Age	Sex
Street Address			
City	Zip		
Phone(s)			
Email Address			
Other Info			

Name		Age	Sex
Street Address			
City	Zip		
Phone(s)			
Email Address			
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Other Info			

Name		Age	Sex
Street Address			
City	Zip		
Phone(s)			
Email Address			
Other Info			

Southern Minnesota Area Assembly
Area 36

Technology Guidelines

2013

SCOPE

Since its earliest days, Alcoholics Anonymous has used every technology at its disposal to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. In the beginning it was simply print media and radio. As our society matured, and technology expanded and improved, we continued to make use of any means available to continue our battle to provide AA's life saving message.

Therefore, we believe we should set forth, for future trusted servants, some guidelines by which they may chart their course for continuing to communicate our message to those who still suffer. We hope to provide in these guidelines our sense of how AA's principles might be applied to the use of technology. We realize that technology will continue to expand and improve, and our best effort is to merely point the way; leaving our future servants to determine the best course for their time and technology.

SECTION I – HARDWARE

Lifecycle of hardware
We suggest the following as the <u>minimum</u> number of years before replacement. This does not factor in operating system changes or failures, which may call for a modification of these timelines.
- Laptops – A minimum of 4 years use before replacement
- Printers – A minimum of 4 years use before replacement
- Desktop computers – A minimum of 6 years use before replacement
- Projectors – A minimum of 8 years use before replacement
    - Bulbs – As needed
- Monitors – As needed
- Audio Equipment – As needed

Replacement Timing
In considering the replacement timing of hardware, it is important to consider both the functionality of the item and the budgetary impact.
- A staggered approach we think to be the best, allowing for providing good hardware for servants while providing for fiscal prudence

Manufacturer & Model
This consideration is focused on ensuring that servants have the most widely used equipment types with which they will most likely be familiar - the goal being minimal learning impact on servants.
- For computers the current suggestion is for a PC/Windows based system
- We do not make any recommendation relative to printers

- Ideally, these purchases will be reviewed prior to purchase by the Technology Committee (formerly the Web Committee)

Request/Approval Process
It is vital to understand the 'who & how' of software upgrades. Who can request an upgrade and how is the approval accomplished?
- A request to upgrade hardware can come from anyone, and should be directed to the Technologist for review
- After review, the Technologist discusses this with the Technology Chair to determine budget funds availability
- Should the funds be in the Technology Budget/Fund, the Technology Committee Chairs approves/disapproves the purchase
- Should the funds not be available, the Technology Committee Chair will discuss with the Technology Committee whether to request additional funds from the Area Assembly

Purchase Process
As we develop a need for more software, this purchase process will become more important since the trend for software licensing appears to be moving toward subscriptions
- It is recommended that the Technologist be provided with a Debit Card (as the Area Chair current is) in order to make these purchases, deal with download practices and subscriptions

- It is also recommended that the Area Budget include a Technology Budget/Fund that can accumulate savings for future purchases

Support Services
Due to what might be considered "light use" of the hardware, it is felt that the Technologist can provide Support Services, with reimbursement for their travel. In the event this exceeds that servant's capability or capacity, service can be purchased on an "as needed" basis.

SECTION II – SOFTWARE/DIGITAL SERVICES

Vendor(s)
While it may seem to be the best course, purchasing the 'cheapest' version of needed software can often lead to future difficulties. Therefore, we believe it best to deal with reputable vendors for mainstream products for as prudent a price as possible.
- Current vendors are:
    - Microsoft – MS Office Suite (all computers)
    - Adobe – In-Design & Dreamweaver (Newsletter & Website)
    - Filemaker – Filemaker Database (Corrections and Group Records)
    - Current preferred software vendor is TechSoup.com, which provides software at reduced prices to non-profit agencies

- Future vendor/software selections to be determined by discussion between Technologist and user, with final decision by Technology Committee Chair

Ownership Type
Currently the trend is to move from purchase of software to subscriptions. Each approach has its advantages and liabilities. The decision will likely best be made on a case-by-case basis, between the Technologist and Technology Committee Chair
- Current ownership is of both varieties

Software Upgrade Frequency
Operating system upgrades, hardware upgrades or user needs can trigger upgrading software. These factors, individually or collectively, can influence the frequency of upgrading our software.
- The preferred frequency of needed upgrades should occur at the time of a hardware (computer) replacement if at all possible

Request/Approval Process
It is vital to understand the 'who & how' of software upgrades. Who can request an upgrade and how is the approval accomplished?
- See Hardware Request/Approval Process

Support Services
Due to what might be considered "light use" of the hardware, it is felt that the Technologist can provide Support Services, with reimbursement for their travel. In the event this exceeds that servant's capability or capacity, service can be purchased on an "as needed" basis.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

1. These guidelines are provided with the understanding that the Area Finance Committee will recommend the following to the Area Assembly:
   a. The creation of a Technology Fund in which to save funds for future purchases
   b. An additional line item be added to the Area Budget that will identify the amount and frequency of funds 'saved' into the Technology Fund
   c. That an additional Debit Card be issued to the Technologist   for purchases
   d. That a procedure be included in the Financial Policy to provide a 'checks & balance' for this additional card

2. These guidelines are also provided with the understanding that the Area Structure Committee will recommend the following to the Area Assembly:
   a. The change of the Web Committee to the Technology Committee
   b. The change of the Webmaster position to the Technologist position
   c. The addition of the Audio Person to the Technology Committee, reporting to the Technology Committee Chair
   d. An addition to the Trusted Servant Guidelines for the Audio Person position
   e. An update of the Webmaster duties in the Trusted Servant Guidelines as provided by the Technology Committee to the Structure Committee for their review and completion
   f. An update of the Technology Committee Chairperson duties in the Trusted Servant Guidelines as provided by the Technology Committee to the Structure Committee for their review and completion