



WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AREA 60 NEWSLETTER

SEEDS OF SERVICE



VOL. XXXIII, Issue 2
Summer 2022

“GOING BEYOND FEAR”

“Infinite God, or Finite Self?”

Anonymous Member, Area 60

A big mistake I hear a lot of us make in AA is the mistake that we are “working” on our defects of character.

Nowhere in our literature does it tell us that “we” change our defects. We do not bear down on our problems with hopes to transform them.

What it **does** say in “How it Works” is that we should be “fearless and thorough from the very start.” When we are addressing our 4th step inventories via the instructions in the Big Book, Bill W. speaks of the word fear. On page 67, he writes, “It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it.”

The solution is found on page 68. We inventory our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, and ask ourselves why we had them. Wasn’t it because self-reliance had failed us?

When we talk about moving beyond Fear, we do. But we do not do it based on our own willpower or trying. We are now living on a different basis. The basis of trusting and relying upon God.

“We trust infinite God, rather than our Finite selves”

Fear is a result of threatened instincts, Sex, Security, and Social. When I am caught up in fear, one of the three is threatened:

Security – Physical or Financial

Relationships – Biggest Pains come from a broken heart

Society- What do other people think about me? Where do I fit in?

There are two ways to handle this, rely on ourselves to handle our fear, or we rely on an Infinite Power, greater than ourselves, to transform us.

Today, we get to choose- Infinite God, or Finite Self ?

Seeds of Service

The WPA Area 60 newsletter is published quarterly by the Area Committee. It is for AA members only. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily that of the Area Committee or Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

We hope *Seeds of Service* will be a useful reference for GSR reports.

Distribution

Paper copies are distributed to DCMs at each quarterly meeting for redistribution to AA groups through their GSRs. A PDF copy of the newsletter is available at www.wpaarea60.org. It can also be sent electronically to DCMs and GSRs, if the Area Registrar has a correct email address.

Write for SoS

The 2022 theme for the General Service Conference is “A.A. Comes of Age 2.0– Unified in Love and Service”

- ◆ Winter Topic: **How Do AA’s Go to Any Length to Recover, Unify, & Serve?**
- ◆ Spring Topic: **Going Beyond Fear**
(deadline 4/15/2022)
- ◆ Summer Topic: **How to Reach Anyone, Anywhere.**
(deadline 6/15/2022)
- ◆ Fall Topic: **To be Determined**

Submission Guidelines

Suggested text length is **150 to 300 words**. Artwork should be **b&w**, less than half a page (3”x5”), and **300 dpi**. Material should be generally relevant to the theme, and may be edited for clarity and length. All material submitted on time is reviewed, selected by topic, and may appear, based on available space. The newsletter does not publish song lyrics, tributes to individuals, prayers, plays, or anything unrelated to AA or that violates the principles of AA.

Please include your first name and last initial, district, and home group.

Submissions may be emailed to:

newsletter@wpaarea60.org

“Faith over Fear”

Meagan C, Area 60 Newsletter Editor

I heard in the rooms that fear can stand for two things, F* Everything and Run, or Face Everything and Recover.

It has taken me numerous stumbling blocks in recovery to realize underneath most of my unrest is some form of dependency upon external, human, 3D forces. Usually the need for validation, acceptance, or approval.

But how do I face everything when fear is crippling me?

On pg. 80 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous there are sclear instructions regarding making amends. I reference these often when fear is cropping up:

1. **Obtain permission (to invite in new perception)**
2. **Consult with others (talk with my WE)**
3. **Ask my Higher Power for help (release control)**

I heard my neighbor talking about a hornet’s nest that she kills each year. She observed that even though she destroys the nest each summer, the hornets always return to the same spot the following year, and re-build their nest.

This reminds me of fear in my life. I am not called to expel fear entirely from my existence. One thing I am promised is a daily reprieve contingent upon the maintenance of my spiritual condition. When I have the courage to move through my fear with faith, the results are always achieved.

“Is this Love, or is this Fear?”

“The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear—primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded. Living upon a basis of unsatisfied demands, we were in a state of continual disturbance and frustration. Therefore, no peace was to be had unless we could find a means of reducing these demands.”

- As Bill Sees It
January 22, Fear As a Stepping Stone

♦ **Step 8**

“Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.”

♦ **Tradition 8**

"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

♦ **Concept 8**

“The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs. (b) But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the Trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.”

“Letting Go of Fear”

Raymond V., GSR, Vandergrift 12x 12 Group

All hope seemed lost. I barely recognized myself in the mirror, I didn't know who I was. All I knew was that I was **not** who I wanted to be. Yet, I continued to drink. My free time was consumed with demons, and I wondered why my life never seemed to change. I had no sense of direction and realized I was falling closer to the bottom, rock bottom.

My sobriety date is 7-15-20. I started attending meetings and got connected with my Sponsor. Little did I know, I was 12 Steps away from getting out of the hole I dug myself into. Today I have a choice. I choose my Higher Power. Today I know that the forces for me are stronger than those against me. Today I know God didn't bring me this far to abandon me. Today I know God has the solutions that I used to look for in the bottom of a bottle. All I must do is let go absolutely. God's way might not always be my way and that is perfectly fine. What I choose to do is remain faithful and do the next right thing.

Working the Steps allowed me to get to know myself for the first time. Instead of running and hiding in the bottle, I faced myself for the first time. I was able to identify the resentments I carried for so many years. I have learned what “my side of the street” means.

What a liberating feeling it is to know that all I have to control today is my choice to not drink.

Not having to try and control other people, just my reaction to them. I am forever grateful to the AA program and everyone in the rooms. They have taught me what love really can be. I've been given a new attitude and outlook on life.

Today I have serenity. I actively show up today and participate in the program. This helps me give back what was so freely given to me. At night I take my inventory and thank my Higher Power for the day. When I wake up, I ask God to show me his will and to remove mine. I then practice outside of the rooms what I was taught inside of them, to the best of my ability. And like anything else, with daily practice, I get better.

Do the next right thing!

“The foundation stone of freedom from fear is that of faith: a faith that, despite all worldly appearances to the contrary, causes me to believe that I live in a universe that makes sense. As faith grows, so does inner security. The vast underlying fear of nothingness commences to subside. Therefore, we of AA find that our basic antidote for fear is a spiritual awakening”

This Matter of Fear, January 1962, Bill Wilson

“Treating Uncertainty Like a Friend”

Larry B., Area 60

When I was sober 20 months, the job opportunity of a lifetime surfaced. Needless to say, I was nervous and my self-esteem still hadn't fully developed. I went to one of the "old heads" in my group and told him how much I wanted the job but was still unsure of myself. The old timer, a retired New York attorney told me ***"Treat the unknown like a friend."***

“Everything common to you today was once unknown. Today doesn't seem odd does it?” This was exactly what I needed. I aced the interview and embarked on a career which would last many years. When I closed the door to my new office, I looked out on Madison Avenue and let out with a big laugh. This program WORKS!!!!

What Does it Mean To Go Beyond Fear?

Jody K., A60 Delegate, Panel 71

I just returned from the 72nd General Service Conference, and while there, I wrangled with several different kinds of fear. I hadn't been on an airplane in more than 30 years, and that fear was soon overcome when I remembered that I enjoyed flying; I just don't enjoy airports. I also have a deep-rooted fear of rodents, and I had to make peace with the city rat—affectionately named Chuck by someone without my phobia—who roamed around like a feral cat. It took a few days, but I also conquered my fear of escalators. So, on those fronts, the irrational phobias I've picked up and carried around with me, I did okay "going beyond" them. None of them kept me from doing what was in front of me to do.

But there are other forms of fear. We have all had to contend with the uncertainty, which can be fearful, that the pandemic has brought to our recovery meetings and how we do our A.A. business. Our 71st General Service Conference was held virtually for these reasons, and when it seemed as though the worst of the pandemic was behind us, the 72nd General Service Conference was scheduled to be in person. Once there, once through the airport and up the escalator, I settled in, getting acquainted with our larger A.A. family. The first couple of days went smoothly, spiritually, and lovingly. By Monday, however, two positive covid cases were reported among staff. By Friday, these two cases had increased to at least twenty. Post-Conference, it's risen even more.

Our initial feelings that we were safe were quickly replaced with a great deal of caution in some, fear in others, and some just seemed to go about their business. I had spent significant time with at least five who were now in quarantine in the hotel. After prayer and consulting with my family and the Northeast Regional Trustee, I left the Conference floor and returned to my room to listen to audio of the Floor Actions, along with all the other Conference members confined to their rooms. This article is not intended to talk about going beyond the fear of becoming ill. It's about something else that happened, or rather, didn't happen, and it's vital when practicing our principles in all our affairs. There are times when our trusted servants' actions should be questioned. Because someone has the experience of floating to the bottom of our triangle does not mean that their decisions are infallible. We have a responsibility to speak when those decisions don't appear to be sound. Our chair announced that the Conference was "mask optional." This statement was not questioned. I did ask for a full list of those who were positive so that we could all gauge our risk of exposure, but it was not provided. Someone else asked that we also be told how many were voting members to determine a quorum and the ratio of delegates to trustees and staff (recognizing that the total number of delegates should be at least 2/3 of the voting body¹). We were never provided a full list.

Dedication to transparency was cited multiple times from the podium, but on this issue, all was opaque.

We asked how those members could continue to participate, if they felt well enough to do so.

We were limited audio only. We could not speak on any of the items under discussion. We could not vote.

I was asked to consider petitioning the Conference to cancel a bus trip to GSO, based on Concept V, Rights of Appeal and Petition.

"In the light of the principle of the 'Right of Appeal,' all minorities—whether in our staffs, committees, corporate boards, or among Trustees—should be encouraged to file minority reports whenever they feel a majority to be in considerable error. And when a minority considers an issue to be such a grave one that a mistaken decision could seriously affect A.A. as a whole, it should then charge itself with the actual duty of presenting a minority report to the Conference."²

¹ "Conference Membership." The A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, Box 459, New York, New York, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2021, p. 40.

² W., Bill, author. "Concept V." The A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, Box 459, New York, New York, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2021, p. C16.

Knowing that so many were at risk, it seemed a reckless decision to continue. Could this affect A.A. as a whole? Yes, it could. If someone were to come to serious harm as the result of action or inaction by those tasked with the daily care and maintenance of our beloved fellowship, it could cause a major schism. I was so wrapped up in self that I did not speak up. Part of me feared that I would not be heard, or that I didn't have a right to ask that an event I did not intend to participate in was any of my business. One quarantined delegate did voice his concerns, reaching out to another delegate by phone and having that delegate hold the phone up to the microphone. I admired his courage, and I was not alone.

Returning to the issue of participation – Concept IV:

“It is our shining ideal that the ‘spiritual corporation’ of A.A. should never include any members who are regarded as ‘second class.’ Deep down, I think this is what we have been struggling to achieve in our world service structure. Here is perhaps the principal reason why we should continue to ensure ‘participation’ at every important level.”³

Sitting in a hotel room, constrained to merely listen, not speak and not vote, any quarantined or concerned delegate, trustee, or voting member of staff could not participate. We were a minority by virtue of our relationship to this issue of the virus and “second class” A.A.s by virtue of our inability to express a voice and vote. We could have pressed harder, as the creative delegate cited above, but most of us did not. We were not exercising the duty bill spoke of in Concept V. There were, at minimum, fifteen missing votes on the Floor Actions. Others in quarantine earlier missed voting on committee recommendations as well. Most were well enough to participate, if a means were provided for that to happen. One member submitted a Floor Action from his hotel room, though he could not take part in the discussion of that Floor Action, nor could he vote on it.

Going beyond fear means finding a voice, even when we fear that our voice will not be welcomed, or when our voice is asking for accommodations that may put others out. Going beyond fear means doing what is right even when it's hard.

There will be communication between delegates, trustees, and staff with the General Service Board, praising what was done well—and pointing out what was not. This is not an easy thing to do. We love our trusted servants and special workers, and the instinct is to accept and say, “They did the best they could.” But Conference members and staff were put in harm's way. Conference members were disenfranchised. This was extraordinary circumstances, but in a Monday morning quarterback kind of way, I can say we should have requested a pause in Conference business until these issues could be resolved.

There's a movie from the late 90s that begins with a group of thieves who have a moment of clarity and find themselves in a position of protecting others. In it, there's a scene about doing something that's dangerous. I wouldn't quote it if the story wasn't so much like many of ours (and if Bill W. can quote De Tocqueville, I can quote George Clooney). In response to someone voicing fear, the protagonist says,

“The way it works is, you do the thing you are scared s***less of, and you get the courage **AFTER** you do it, not before you do it.”

***May we all find a way to go beyond the fear
and get the courage.***

³ W., Bill, author. “Concept IV.” A.A. Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, Box 459, New York, New York, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 2021, p. C15.

Upcoming Events

District 65 humbly invites you to join us

Saturday, August 27th ♦ 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

at St. Paul's Episcopal Church
112 N. Water Street, Kittanning, PA 16201

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Speakers invited by District 65 talk about:

- Clearing Away the Wreckage of the Past
- Working with Others

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP!!
Enjoy a lunch of pulled pork, chicken, potato salad and other delicious side dishes

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Area 60 Traveling Workshop

- Guardians of the 12 Traditions
- 12 Concepts of Alcoholics

DISTRICT 15 DAY OF SHARING

Sponsored by Area 60

WHEN

October 22, 2022

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Doors open at 9:30 AM

WHERE

Christ Lutheran Church

875 Sunflower Drive,

DuBois, PA 15801

SERVICE DISPLAYS:

- ✓ Grapevine
- ✓ Literature
- ✓ Corrections
- ✓ CPC/PI
- ✓ Treatment

50/50 Drawing

"...When all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day."
--BILL W

COST

Suggested Contribution
\$5.00 – if you have it

REGISTRATION

9:30 AM

INTRODUCTIONS

10:00 AM

PANEL I

10:30 AM

AA Service, returning the gift.

LUNCH

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

PANEL II

1:15 PM

Higher Powered, our need for reliance upon a power greater than ourselves.

PANEL III

2:30 PM

— CALL FOR STORIES —

Fifth Edition of the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*

Deadline: October 31, 2022 The Preface to the Second Edition of the Big Book explains that revisions to the personal history section of the book were made in order "to represent the current membership of Alcoholics Anonymous more accurately, and thereby to reach more alcoholics."

In that spirit, the 2021 General Service Conference recommended that: "a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect the current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action:

"The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion', 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare', and the Appendices remain as is."

In response to this Advisory Action, the trustees' Literature Committee is seeking a wide range of A.A. recovery experience of members in the Fellowship.

Recognizing that all stories are of value, the Literature Committee is searching for recovery stories that are from a broad cross-section of our local communities. As Bill writes on page 29 of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*: "Our hope is that many alcoholic men and women, desperately in need, will see these pages, and we believe that it is only by fully disclosing ourselves and our problems that they will be persuaded to say, 'Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing.'"

It is the Literature Committee's shared hope that any new stories from our current membership will help future alcoholics to identify and find recovery in the pages of a Fifth Edition.

Further information on where to submit your story will be provided to the Fellowship through Box 4-5-9, the A.A. website and more. If you have any questions, please write to 5BBStory@aa.org.



Send your questions to our **Virtual Ask-It Basket** at newsletter@wpaarea60.org or from the Area 60 website Newsletter page at <https://www.wpaarea60.org/newsletters/>.



Get to Know Area 60!



Two Types of Area Meetings

1. **Quarterly Meeting:** Decides area business. DCMs, Area Officers and Coordinators, past Delegates vote.
2. **Area Assembly:** Elects officers, provides pre-Conference group conscience, hears the Delegate's post-Conference report. GSRs, DCMs, Area Officers and Coordinators, past Delegates vote.

ALL members of the Fellowship are welcome at meetings and assemblies. GSRs are especially encouraged to attend even when they do not have a vote.

Every GSR is potentially a future DCM.

Rules of Order at Area 60 Meetings

- Items for consideration are put on the **agenda**.
- Items are posed to the meeting in the form of a **motion**.
- All motions require a **second**.
- Motions can be *amended, tabled, or moved to a vote*.
- A vote is taken and the **results** are announced. The **minority vote** is allowed to voice its opinion.
- If a member of the majority (those who "won") wishes to **change their vote**, a second vote is held on the motion.
- The result of the second vote stands and the meeting **moves to the next item** for consideration.

What's the "Point of Order?"

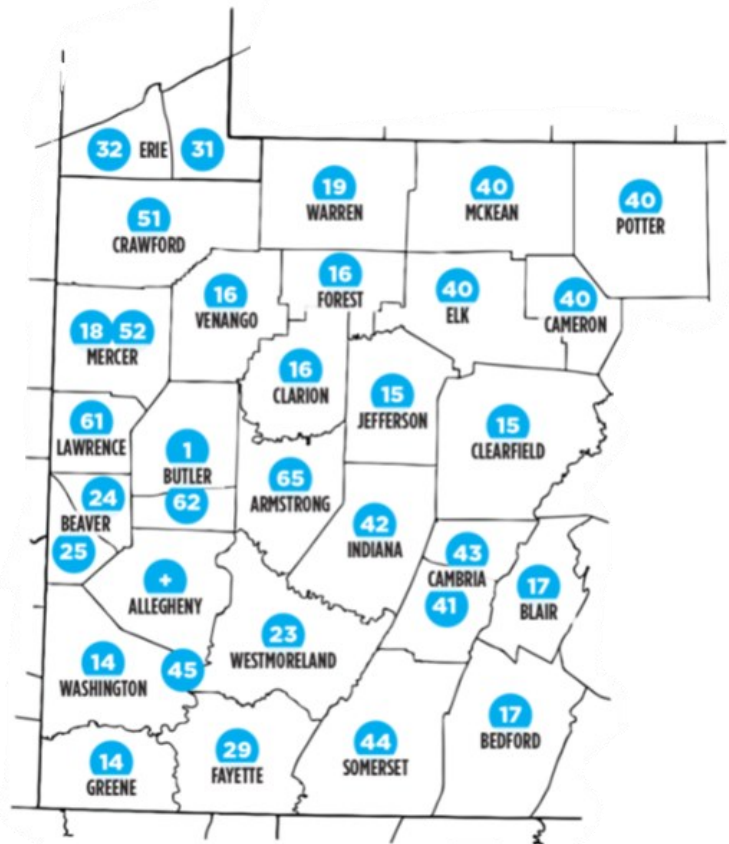
- ◆ To ensure that all voices that wish to be heard are heard.
- ◆ To ensure that no one voice dominates all others.
- ◆ To ensure that everyone gets to speak **once** before another speaks **twice**.
- ◆ To ensure that everyone understands the content of the vote.
- ◆ To ensure that it is clear what actions were taken.
- ◆ To ensure a thorough record of the actions taken.

Motions requiring substantial unanimity of the meeting require a two-third majority for approval. In some cases, the minority opinion (the people who "lost" the vote) may be larger than 50% of the vote.

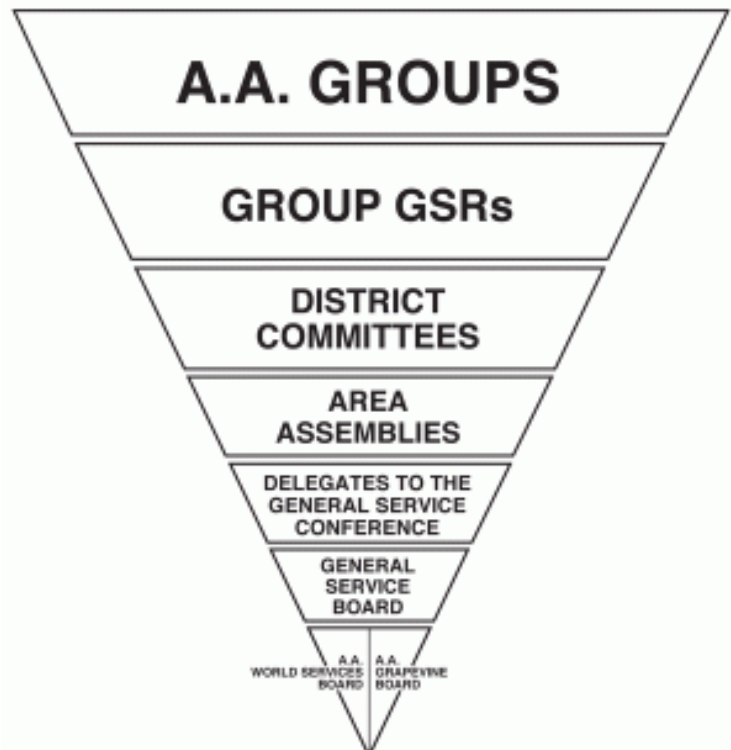
Area 60 Web Calendar

<https://www.wpaarea60.org/calendar/>

Our website has an updated online calendar, which lists service events (Pre-Conference Assembly Weekend, the General Service Conference, assemblies, etc.) in **green**; Area 60-sponsored events (quarterly meetings, Days of Sharing, etc.) in **blue**, and other events of interest to AAs (district-level events, recovery community events, etc.) in **red**.



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



2022 Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, Area 60 meetings are held at the Comfort Inn, 699 Rodi Road, Penn Hills, PA

DATE	TIME	EVENT
July 10, 2022	9 am via Zoom	Officer/ Coordinators Meeting
July 23, 2022	9 am—12 pm	District 15 and 40 Traveling Workshop
August 14, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	3rd Quarterly Meeting
August 27, 2022	10 am—2pm	District 65 Traveling Workshop
September 18, 2022	9 am via Zoom	Officers/Coordinators Meeting
October 16, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	Fall Assembly Election
October 22, 2022	10:00 am—4:00 pm	District 15 Day of Sharing
November 6, 2022	9 am Via Zoom	Officers/Coordinators Meeting (Zoom)
December 4, 2022	8:30 am registration 9:00 am workshop 10:15 am meeting	4th Quarterly Meeting (Grand Ballroom)
December 18, 2022	9 am Grand Ballroom West	Officers/Coordinators Mtg. PCAW Planning Meeting

See All Those _____s to the Right?

Several service opportunities are available throughout Western PA Area 60.

When by devoted service to family, friends, business, or community we attract widespread affection and are sometimes singled out for posts of greater responsibility and trust, we try to be humbly grateful and exert ourselves the more in a spirit of love and service.

-- 12th Step Twelve, p.124

Area Committee members, DCMs, and GSRs are welcome to help *spread the word* to fill open, *needed* positions in our service structure, or to *volunteer* to serve themselves.

For more information on any open position, please feel free to contact secretary@wpaarea60.org or newsletter@wpaarea60.org.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AREA 60

ELECTED OFFICERS:

Delegate: Jody K. delegate@wpaarea60.org
 Alt Delegate: Jon C. altdelegate@wpaarea60.org
 Chairperson: Walter G. chairperson@wpaarea60.org
 Alt Chair: Dani M. altchairperson@wpaarea60.org
 Secretary: Sherri Lynn D. secretary@wpaarea60.org
 Treasurer: Becky C. treasurer@wpaarea60.org

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AREA 60 WEBSITE

There are many resources on the Area 60 website, including: back issues of the newsletter, flyers for Days of Sharing, the Area 60 calendar, Area 60 Guidelines, pamphlets, service documentation, and more. Direct questions or suggestions to the Website Coordinator at website@wpaarea60.org.

DONATIONS TO AREA 60

Support from groups and individuals is always welcome and appreciated! Make checks payable to:

Area 60 Treasurer
 PO Box 425
 Apollo, PA 15613