

Chapter Twelve: AA Publications

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12.1 Introduction

AA produces a number of different publications in support of our primary purpose. The Fellowship has two monthly magazines - Share for our whole Fellowship, and Roundabout with a focus on Scotland.

A diary and a calendar for members are produced annually. AA Service News is published four times a year and carries news of service developments and opportunities within the Fellowship.

In addition, AA produces a number of leaflets and pamphlets devoted to specific topics or aimed at particular audiences, under the auspices of the Literature Sub Committee of the General Service Board (GSB).

This chapter seeks to give information about each of these aspects of our publications.

12.2 Share magazine

Share magazine is produced and published monthly by the GSB. It is written by members for members, and its primary purpose is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous in print. There are many AA members who find it difficult to get to a meeting, such as the housebound, those in the armed services, on oil rigs, in prisons or hospitals. There are lots more who rely on our magazine as a supplement between meetings, or instead of one.

Share's first issue was dated October 1972, succeeding the AA 'Newsletter', which was started by AA members in London in October 1949. Since then, it has gone from strength to strength and is now lovingly known as 'Our meeting between meetings'.

Group Share Representative

Groups elect a Share representative to encourage members of the group to purchase the magazine. It is the job of the group representative to subscribe to the magazine on behalf of the group and to purchase an agreed number of copies using the group funds (Tradition Seven). As issues are sold the money returns to the pot, allowing the subscription to be ongoing.

The representative is also responsible for raising awareness of the magazine in their group by announcing when new issues are available, making sure the magazines are conspicuously on display, and encouraging members to submit articles, photographs and cartoons. Of course, Share can also be purchased individually by group members if there is no Share representative in position.

Intergroup Share Liaison Officer (ISLO)

The ISLO provides essential contact between members, groups and their region. The main aim is to inform the Fellowship via the groups that the magazine exists. This can be accomplished by visiting groups in the intergroup area, providing subscription forms and helping to set up a subscription. The ISLO is invited to attend an annual Share workshop. They may also attend conventions or other AA gatherings to raise awareness, encourage the sale of the magazine and seek contributions of articles, photos and cartoons from members.

The length of sobriety required for this position is usually two years, and the officer is expected to serve for two years - up to a maximum of three if no successor is forthcoming.

Region Share Liaison Officer (RSLO)

It is the responsibility of the RSLO to keep in touch with the intergroup Share liaison officers and the Share editorial team. This can be done by holding a bi-monthly meeting for all the intergroup Share reps in their region where they can swap news and ideas. Officers are also asked to attend and submit a report at their region meetings.

The length of sobriety for this position is usually three years, and the officer is expected to serve for a maximum of three years.

There are many ways in which a RSLO can raise awareness of Share - attending conventions and AA public information events, visiting intergroups or groups locally to spread awareness of the magazine, helping with subscription forms, or supporting people who would like to submit articles but aren't sure how to go about it. Once a year there is a meeting at the General Service Office (GSO) in York to which all RSLO's are invited.

Share Sub Committee

The Share editorial team is a sub-committee of the GSB. All roles are appointed through interview by the GSB.

The Share Sub Committee is made up of:

- GSB Trustee (as chair)

- Editor
- Assistant Editor
- Four editorial readers (one of whom will serve as secretary)
- Fellowship Calendar & Diary Editor (If eligible - see below)

The sub-committee can meet up to four times annually, depending on workload. Generally, there will be two face-face meetings at GSO in York and two online.

All prospective sub-committee members should have at least five years' continuous sobriety at the time of application, have a good level of literacy skills and relevant proven service experience at intergroup/region. All positions on the sub-committee are for four years. For more information on how to apply, see AA Service News or vacancy ads in Share.

How to contribute to Share

Articles

When a Share officer encourages a member to submit an article, they may want to bear in mind the following tips:

- you don't need to be a polished author;
- all grammar and spelling will be amended for you if needed;
- you can write just a few lines or up to 1,000 words;
- personal stories and experiences are welcome;
- we don't publish poetry or obituaries.

Photographs

We receive lots of pictures of flowers and trees and that's great, but how about something a little more quirky? Any photo that catches the members' attention is great. Pictures need to be 2MB in size for printing.

Cartoons

Can you create a cartoon that expresses your experience of alcoholism, or where it took you? If so, Share would like to hear from you.

Note:

If the magazines are taken into public places (e.g. prisons/hospitals), the events pages (centre) should be removed where telephone numbers are on display.

Magazine scrolls and banners are available for use at local conventions/gatherings/workshops from GSO and the Southern Service Office and should be returned to the office after an event.

12.3 Roundabout magazine

The primary purpose of Roundabout, the Fellowship's Scottish magazine, is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous in print. The magazine can be a

lifeline for sick and housebound members, and may also be taken to prisons and hospitals. It is written by members, for members. Without contributions from members, there would be no Roundabout!

Roundabout is published monthly by the GSB. It is produced by the Roundabout Editor with the help of the Roundabout Sub Committee. The first printed edition of Roundabout was launched in February 1951 by the Fellowship in Scotland.

Group Roundabout Representative

Groups are asked to elect a representative to encourage members of the group to purchase the magazine. The representative would explain that they would purchase magazines for the group with primary purpose money, in accordance with the Tradition Seven belonging to the group. This will be returned monthly to the primary purpose money, allowing them to purchase more magazines when the subscription lapses. The representative can also suggest that people contribute, and encourage them to submit articles, photographs and cartoons.

Intergroup Roundabout Liaison Officer (IRLO)

When the intergroup elect an IRLO, the main aim is to inform the Fellowship via groups that the magazine exists. This can be accomplished by the IRLO visiting groups in the intergroup area, providing subscription forms and helping the group set up a subscription. The appointee should attend an annual Roundabout Workshop in Glasgow. They may also attend conventions or gatherings (where possible) to promote and encourage the sale of the magazine.

Region Roundabout Liaison Officer (RRLO)

Elected at region level, the RRLO would contact the IRLOs and ask them for a report on how well the magazine is doing with subscriptions. RRLO's may also attend intergroups and conventions to inform members about the Roundabout.

Roundabout Sub Committee (RSC)

The RSC is a Sub Committee of the GSB. All RSC roles are service posts, and are appointed through interview by the GSB.

The RSC comprises an appointed GSB Trustee who acts as chair of the sub-committee, plus a maximum of eight members of the Fellowship of as follows:

- Chair (GSB Trustee)
- Editor
- Assistant Editor
- Secretary
- Link Liaison Officer
- Four Proofreaders

The RSC can meet up to four times annually, depending on workload. Generally, there will be two face-face meetings at the Northern Service Office in Glasgow and two online.

All prospective sub-committee members should have at least five years continuous sobriety at the time of application, have a good level of literacy skills and relevant proven service experience at intergroup/region. All positions on the subcommittee are for four years.

Roundabout Link Officer (RLO)

The RLO is one of the members of the Roundabout Sub Committee. The RLO's purpose is to act as a regular link between the Editor and all IRLO's and RRLO's, keeping channels of communication and support open across the service. The Link Officer also offers feedback to the RSC.

For more information on service within the RSC, and how to apply, please see AA Service News, the vacancy ads in Roundabout or AAGB website.

How to contribute to Roundabout

Articles

When a Roundabout officer encourages a member to submit an article, they may want to bear in mind the following tips:

- you don't need to be a polished author;
- all grammar and spelling will be amended for you if needed;
- you can write just a few lines or up to 1,000 words;
- personal stories and experiences are welcome;
- we don't publish poetry or obituaries.

Photographs

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Cartoons

Can you create a cartoon that expresses your experience of alcoholism, or where it took you? If so, Roundabout would like to hear from you.

Note:

If taking the magazines into public places e.g., prisons/hospitals then the events pages need to be removed where telephone numbers are on display.

Roundabout scrolls are available for use at local conventions/gatherings from the Northern Service Office which should be returned.

12.4 Fellowship Calendar & Diary Editor

This position is a four-year rotation with the responsibility of producing the Fellowship calendar and the Fellowship diary on an annual basis. The editor reports direct to the GSB Trustee. The position can be based in any region. If the region is in Scotland, it will be part of the Roundabout Sub Committee; if in England or Wales, it will be part of the Share Sub Committee; and if it is Continental European Region, the position will be shared between the sub-committees.

Calendar Photographs

The Editor's job is to review photographs submitted by members of the Fellowship and select 13 for publication in the annual calendar. The criteria for consideration are:

- the digital photograph files submitted need to be at least 2MB in size - most smartphone cameras take pictures in excess of this size, and meet this criterion;
- the calendar is produced in landscape (horizontal) format and the photographs submitted should be in this format.

Portrait (vertical) photographs are more suitable for the magazines. We get a lot of nature and animal pictures - alternatives that stand out, match the month, or have a connection to AA, can have a better chance of being published. Neither identifiable faces nor product names should be visible and photographs should not have been previously published.

Files can be sent to GSO via the following email address:

AAShare.Roundabout@gsogb.org.uk

The sender of the photograph must own it. They should either have taken the photograph themselves, or have been given written permission by the owner to submit it for publication.

All copyright transfers to GSO on submission, but the photographer will be credited as such in the calendar, using their first name and initial. If anonymity is preferred, please state this when submitting photographs.

Please note: material submitted neither be returned, nor can it be guaranteed to be published in any specific publication or within a specific timescale. All submissions will be deemed to be free from copyright and will become the copyright properties of The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Limited, Registered Charity Nos. 226745: SCO38023, unless prior licensing arrangements have been agreed.

The Calendar & Diary Editor selects suitable quotations from Conference approved literature for both publications, updates the important dates (bank holidays, conventions etc.) and then submits the final draft to the Share and Roundabout trustees for approval, before sending the finished product to be printed.

12.5 AA Service News

What it does for you and others

AA Service News (AASN) is the Fellowship magazine which promotes the benefits of service across the whole of AA Great Britain and Continental European Region. It helps meet our primary purpose by carrying the message across the whole Fellowship.

AASN showcases active service throughout the Fellowship, the benefits to those that do service, and the outcomes for other alcoholics. It is delivered free of charge on a quarterly basis to over 4,000 groups, over 200 intergroups and 16 regions. It is also available digitally.

Every article is written by an alcoholic for alcoholics. From group level down to board level, AASN provides each and every member with examples of service that work, and that are being delivered throughout the Fellowship.

AASN carries your voice

In addition to articles about service, AASN includes:

- Conference questions and recommendations (winter and summer editions respectively)
- a regular message from the General Secretary
- board meeting bullet points
- job adverts for sub-committees.

There are also occasional requests for shares on particular topics for AA pamphlets such as Mental Health, Sponsorship into Service etc. Look out for the adverts!

What you can do for AASN and for others

Without your articles on service, AASN would only be half the magazine it is today. We are always looking to you to share your service experience with others. You never know, your shared service experience may help another AA put in place the same activity, which in turn, may change or save someone's life.

Perhaps you can write to the editor at AA Service News with your experience. We are looking for both short and longer articles up to a maximum of 750 words. Your articles don't have to be perfect either - that's the editor's job! Leave something for them to do...

You can also send us your pictures of service, other pictures that you really like or ones that are really distinctive and may catch the eye of another alcoholic. All we ask is that they are a JPG and at least 2MB.

Please send your articles to the editor.aasn@aamail.org or contact them for any further information.

It's over to you now!

12.6 Literature Sub Committee

Aims

The Literature Sub Committee ensures that our literature remains current and always available for AA members to use in their recovery, so that the message is carried to still the suffering alcoholic in a clear and concise way.

Objectives

Under the guidance of Conference via the GSB, the Literature Sub Committee is responsible for drafting new literature. It collaborates with other service disciplines by offering help with reviewing and updating literature.

Do you have...

- five years continuous sobriety?
- an understanding of traditions and concepts?
- a love of words?

Are you able to...

- commit for a period of four years?
- work with others who have a similar creativity?
- attend meetings as a group up to five times a year - twice in York and at least twice online?
- be part of smaller working groups online?

If so, would you like to apply to join the Literature Sub Committee?

What's in it for you?

- new challenges;
- discovering how exciting it is to create AA literature;
- seeing that it can make a difference;
- creating and reviewing pamphlets as directed by Conference;
- experiencing the excitement of brainstorming ideas to which people listen;
- working with like-minded people as part of a team;
- developing skills such as active listening, flexibility and assertiveness;
- learning in a practical way the value of the Traditions and Concepts;
- forming friendships and growing through service;
- remembering principles before personalities!

If you are interested, then please apply either through the AA website alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk or through the current vacancies page in AA Service News.