

BC/Yukon Area 79

Public Information

Cooperation with the Professional Community

The Inter-Com

Edition 1—January 2014

1. This newsletter is for the exclusive use of A.A. members who wish to exchange information about PI and CPC work, so please share it only among our membership and refrain from using contact information for expressing opinions on outside issues.
2. The Inter-Com is our newsletter, by us and for us. When you are interested in sharing your experience, strength, and hope—and new ways to reach the public and cooperate with the professional community in your district—please send me a couple of paragraphs (short summary) or more, and it will be included in our next edition.
3. If you have a particular question or topic you would like to ask of others working in PI/CPC work, feel free to send it to the Editor and it will be published in a future newsletter to be answered by others with experience, strength, and hope in that area.
4. Please identify your contribution to the Inter-Com with District number, and a brief review of where your district is within British Columbia / Yukon, and PI, CPC, or PI/CPC.
5. We ask that you identify yourself by first name and last initial only, in keeping with our tradition of anonymity.
6. Your suggestions / comments / input are not only needed but are also greatly appreciated and will make our exchange successful.

Public Information Committee (P.I.)

What is Public Information? When I was appointed to this position, I was not fully aware of what Public Information really is all about. So to begin with, I looked at the history of A.A. to find the answers.

In 1939, the publication of our Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous was the first A.A. information made available for the public. Since then we have seen many articles in major publications, such as the Jack Alexander article in the Saturday Evening Post on March 1st, 1941. Today, we see our web site, www.aa.org, which has become a tremendous tool for reaching newcomers. I know this from personal experience. When I finally decided I could not quit drinking by myself, I Googled A.A., found this web site, which, after a couple of clicks of my mouse, found me a meeting within walking distance of my home.

The P.I. Workbook states: “Public Information (P.I.) in Alcoholics Anonymous means carrying the message of recover to the still-suffering alcoholic by informing the general public about the A.A. program. We carry the message by getting in touch with and responding to the media, schools, industry, and other organizations which can report on the nature and purpose of A.A. and what it can do for alcoholics.”

Bill W. wrote: “Public Information takes many forms – the simple sign outside a meeting place that says “A.A. meeting tonight;” listing in local phone directories; distribution of A.A. 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.” (Reprinted from the P.I. Workbook page 5, with permission from A.A. World Services Inc.)

The P.I. workbook lists many suggestions for how a district committee can carry the message, and is a tremendous guide for members.

While carrying out this vital work, we must always keep in mind our traditions of anonymity. We must not let our ego get in the way of the good work we are doing.

There is a lot more that I could include here, however, they are only my opinions. And we know what opinions are worth.

I always welcome calls and emails with ideas and or questions. Please don’t hesitate to phone or email me. Copies of the P.I. Workbook, and the P.I. Guidelines, as well as other P.I. service materials can be downloaded in .pdf format from www.bcyukonaa.org, click on the Area 79 tab, then Standing Committees, and then Public Information.

Larry B.
Public Information Chair
Panel 63, Area 79 BC/Yukon
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Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee (CPC)

Hello, everyone, and welcome to this first issue of the Area 79 P.I./CPC News Exchange. Thanks to the Area P.I. Committee for your initiative in getting this newsletter started, and to Larry B. for serving as editor.

My name is Lori W. and I am chair of the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee for BC/Yukon Area 79, Panel 63. My function as chair is to guide and actively participate with the CPC committee in its primary purpose: to inform professionals and future professionals about A.A. — what we are, where we are, what we can do and what we cannot do. The committee attempts to establish better communication between A.A.s and professionals, and to find simple, effective ways of cooperating without affiliating.

During the current rotation in Area 79, five District Committee Members (DCMs) are assigned to the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee. These DCMs meet at the two quarterlies and two assemblies each year, along with the General Services Representatives (GSRs) assigned for that event and any other attendees who wish to take part. At those four meetings, we seek ways “to create mutual understanding and cooperation between the Fellowship and those professional groups and individuals concerned with alcoholism and the still-suffering alcoholic, to further the acceptance of A.A. in hospitals, rehabilitation centers and similar facilities, and to bring additional help to alcoholics under treatment there.” (Reprinted from the A.A. Service Manual, pg. S69, with permission of A.A. World Services.)

CPC came into being as a distinct entity in 1970 when the General Service Board’s trustees’ committee was formed as an outgrowth of the Public Information Committee. The Conference CPC Committee was established the following year. There are inevitably areas of overlap between the P.I. and CPC committees, so we remain closely tied while carrying out our separate functions.

This newsletter could prove to be an invaluable tool for sharing information and ideas within our Area as we reach out to the alcoholic who still suffers. I sincerely hope you’ll take the opportunity to be part of this project.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding Cooperation with the Professional Community. I can be reached at cpc@bcyukonaa.org.

Yours in love and service,
Lori W.,
Panel 63, Area 79,
Cooperation with the Professional Community
Committee Chair,

I have just recently taken this chair position and am slowly gaining members. Working slowly has its benefits.

I saw in ER that there was no info on AA as well as in doctors offices. I felt it was a wonderful way to deliver the message to those suffering.

Started out by reading as much as I could and the first step was getting books to the Libraries in our area and as our Library covers another area as well as ours we did not hesitate to make books available.

We are negotiating with Hospital administration to have information available in ER waiting room and at Mental Health,

We are about to receive information on all clinics and doctors offices and will next month send out letters with postcards to mail back to us and begin a bridge. Baby steps give time for reflection and providing a good resource as indicated by AA.

Thinking also of doing a CD with the info that was shared at the voting assembly if I can work it. Have a month but it has excellent info. Will see and have to work with others ie district etc .

Every step gives me great hope that we are getting our information on AA to the people and also including professionals in this journey.

I do have to enjoy that I had so much reading to do and that has so increased my knowledge base about AA and it also affects me personally.

I am also encouraged by the many people that we meet when we take on positions . It just amazes me the valuable service sponsors and well educated people in AA that reach out to guide us.

I can only encourage others to be a part of a service as it is rewarding no matter how small or large the steps will be and we are never alone.

Thank you for allowing me to include my humble comments.

In service Natascha T.
District 38—Point Roberts WA

The city of Prince George has over 80,000 residents from all walks of life and getting the word out about AA is vital. Public Service Announcements run on the radio stations and TV, and the AA hotline has the PI/CPC chairperson's phone number to pass along to any individuals and organizations making enquiries.

Since I've been the chair, we have held two public AA meetings. The first was for a group of 40 physicians at a local conference. We set up a literature rack and had order forms available for anyone interested. Fifteen members sat at the front of a room while physicians observed and we used one of our meeting formats to proceed. Members were asked to speak about what it was like, what happened and what it's like now. After the session many AAs hung around to answer questions. In hindsight, we could have cut the meeting short by ten minutes and had a Q & A session then.

The second public meeting was part of an Alcohol and Drug conference. The venue was much bigger with 150-200 in the audience. We had ten members on stage and a podium for speakers, with a mic. Again, we held an open AA meeting. Before we started we invited any AAs in the audience to join us if they wished and were happy to welcome a member from out-of-town. Literature was available in the lobby for the duration of the conference for people to take.

In District 56 the PI/CPC does not have a committee. Attempts to set one up failed, as only one person came out to the initial meeting and none to the next. As the chair, I go to different meetings and when it's time for announcements, I mention the opportunity for service and stick around after to get phone numbers and determine volunteers' interests and availability and their length of sobriety, as some organizations require X amount of time sober.

Our most regular outreach is through the Nechako Adult Detox Program. Every Friday for an hour, three or more members go to detox and talk to patients about the program and tell our stories. Two years of sobriety is required. For more than a year, one member showed up diligently and was the anchor. He recently moved so part of my commitment is to phone members to attend. The spots can be tough to fill, but slowly I am building up a list.

There is also an eight-week day treatment program and so once every 8 weeks, AA goes to their location and introduces the program. We use one of the AA pamphlets, *Speaking at Non-AA Meetings*, for our format and bring in meeting cards, the Membership Survey poster and other literature suitable for newcomers.

One of the things I am so grateful for is getting people to attend one-off PI and CPC events, like the conferences mentioned above. If the organizations give us enough notice (a week or more is ideal), we usually have a great turnout and members are generous with their time, stories and honesty.

At the Northern Lites Round Up last year PI had an hour so we played PI Bingo. We used regular BINGO cards numbered 1-83 with corresponding balls in a cage. When a number dropped, we read out a true statement taken from AA approved literature corresponding to the number (see attached list of statements). Winners had to get a straight or diagonal line. Prizes were AA books of their choosing.

As ever, I would like to do more as PI/CPC chair and have a ton of ideas. The work requires member support, so we do as much as we're able to and trust that our Higher Power puts all the pieces together as needed. It is very rewarding to work in this capacity for the good of AA and I welcome the chance to serve.

In love,
Carol W

PI/CPC Chair District 56—Prince George

My name is Sean and I am an alcoholic. I am a member of the CPC/PI Committee for District 18, serving North and West Vancouver, and Bowen Island. Around 7 years ago, some newly sober members of AA decided to take action in service to inform the public and professional community about Alcoholics Anonymous. At first as little as two members met to carry the message to public high schools. We began by contacting school counsellors and staff and were given opportunities to speak to grade 10 classes as part of their Career and Personal Planning course.

The information that we provide to teenagers is about the disease of alcoholism and the AA solution that is available for them and their families. Our message is simple: if you or anyone you know has a problem with alcohol, Alcoholics Anonymous has a solution. This message resonated with the staff and students and we were slowly welcomed at more high schools in District 18.

Over time, we began to carry the message of AA through literature and other speaking engagements to youth centers, police departments, courts, probation officers and the medical community. We currently provide Big Books, Twelve and Twelve's, as well as other AA literature to public and school libraries.

Today, our CPC/PI Committee averages 8 - 12 members and has approximately 60 members trained and willing to carry the message wherever we are welcomed.

Some of our accomplishments in 2012/2013...

- Have liaisons for CPC and PI Sub-committees at Vancouver Intergroup
- Spoke at every Public High School on the North Shore in 48 classes with over 1400 students.
- Visited all local Libraries (Public, College and School) to ensure they have a Big Books, 12 & 12 and other AA literature.

Dropped off literature (pamphlets &/or meeting guides) to:

Probation offices (youth & adult), Women's center, Neighborhood House, Cap University Counseling Center, Community Policing Centers, Harvest Project, Stepping Stones, Lookout Society, Parkgate Community Center, John Braithwaite Community Center, Harry Jerome Community Center, Ambleside Youth Center.

- Spoke at Lions Gate Hospital to Doctors and Support Staff.
 - Spoke with NV RCMP Watch Commander and WV Police Departments
 - Held two Workshop on "Speaking at Non-AA Meetings"
 - Building a relationship with the North Shore Division of Family Practices
- Dropped off North Shore Meeting guides at Hotels and Motels on the North Shore

Happening in 2014:

Adding Private Schools and grad classes to our speaking engagements.

In love of service

Sean A

District 18 CPC/PI Committee Co - chair.

A Message fro the Editors of this newsletter:

Thank you for your contributions to this, our first edition of our newsletter! And thank you to those who are reading this first edition. Please share this with your PI and CPC Committees. This is a forum for sharing. We are here to help facilitate this sharing, and help others in the same positions as you, to learn and grow. Together, we can reach the alcoholics who are still out there, as well as the professionals who come into contact with them in their daily work.

The goal for this newsletter is that eventually we can make this a quarterly publication. We can only do this with your help and guidance.

Yours in Love, Unity and Service

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