

NCMCO Office Manager's Report – January 11, 2018

The New Year started with a variety of tech issues. After being closed New Year's Day I came in to discover we had no Internet because the modem had died. Spectrum did respond quickly to my call and had a tech out to replace it in a few hours. Then last Thursday I had difficulty logging into our Intuit account to update our debit card info in anticipation of renewal of our QuickBooks payroll subscription in February. So I called – always an interesting experience. After being on hold for 15 minutes I was finally connected to a Filipino IT guy in Singapore. He was a little hard to understand at times but very patient with me and by remote access he helped me update the account and at the same time I upgraded QuickBooks Pro to 2018 since our 2015 version was due to expire in April. The price was actually the same as it was 3 years ago and I remembered when Mike and I went through the process of updating from the 2012 to 2015 version it was a time-consuming so I'm glad to have that done and ready for the 2018 Payroll subscription update in February.

While I had been able all last week to print from the computer, on Friday I discovered the scanning function from the printer to the computer wasn't working. I suspected it might be a result of the new Internet modem. I called Image Solutions and they had an IT person call back, log in remotely and reset the machine to the new modem, having me run tests scans until we got it to work. And the yesterday the power went out in the building soon after I arrived! I feared a repeat of what happened back in the fall but gratefully it came back on after about half an hour – just before we opened at 10:00.

As far as a new computer is concerned I have been doing some research and think we can get something with newer and faster processor and Windows 10 for around \$600. The computer guy I have used felt the specs on our current computer are really pretty good. (I did run the CCleaner and Defragmenter which made no noticeable difference.) He said other options would be to replace the hard drive with a new one, possibly a Solid State Drive (\$175) and upgrade the Operating System to Windows 10 (\$75). I would also consider switching from MS Office 2010 that we have to Office 365 which is a subscription based office suite that would include Publisher which I use for the Meeting in a Pocket booklet and currently only have on the old XP computer in our extra room and on my computer at home. Office 365 costs between \$69 and \$99/year depending on the software included and the number of computers using it.

Our trusty office volunteers have been helping me with the inventory over the last past week and a half and we're close to being finished. So far the discrepancies between the QuickBooks amounts and physical count have been minor, usually the result of a mistake when entering an item on an invoice (like hard cover vs. soft cover) or a mistake in counting out the number of pamphlets or chips. Yesterday when we counted the plastic chips it came out to be exactly what QuickBooks said we should have – 1,593. The fact we weren't off even one was amazing!

Our Hotline Volunteers have handled most of calls after hours over the last couple of months – especially Phyllis who even took calls over the holidays. She has said numerous times that volunteering this way really makes her feel useful as she gets to share her own experience, strength and hope with callers. I think we are about to add another volunteer to the After-hours Hotline which will make three. We are using the answering service much less but I feel we need to keep them on as a backup for those days when a volunteer is not available.

Respectfully submitted, with ongoing gratitude to all the Board members, volunteers, CORs, A.A. members and Groups for your help and support,

Pam C.
NCMCO Office Manager

ICOAA Seminar Report from Oct 5-8, 2017

- *Coordination with General Service*

This Workshop was facilitated by the Office Manager for SEPIA – South Eastern Pennsylvania Intergroup Association. It's a large office which covers 1700 meetings a week, 100 prison meetings and 500 Treatment Center meetings a month. They, like many other Intergroups, have Service Committees – Treatment, Bridging the Gap, Corrections, CPC/PI – under their umbrella, while here in WNC those services are handled by General Service District Committees.

Back in the 90s all the group representatives to SEPIA came into Philadelphia for the Intergroup meetings and it was hard for many people to get there, especially from outlying areas – similar to the problem we have here. So they decided to copy the General Service Area/District structure and divided SEPIA into 5 Zones – one for each county. Now the group reps go their respective Zone meetings and the Coordinators from each Zone attend the Steering Committee meetings. This set up means they have a fairly large Steering Committee of 29, which includes the usual officers, the Service Committee Chairs and 5 Zone Coordinators (or their alternates). But they have found this structure has really increased participation on the group level.

There were complaints by some Intergroups and Central Offices that they feel ignored by General Service. One Office Manager said he was told by a past Delegate that Intergroups were not part of General Service. Someone from a group said their General Service DCM told them to only buy books from the Area or AAWS in New York, even though they were only 5 minutes away from the Intergroup Office. Racy, the ICOAA Liaison from GSO, said they ALWAYS recommend AA Groups and individuals start with “buying locally” to support the local Intergroups and Central Offices. GSO does put out the Central Office Directory and Regional Directories to assist callers in finding the local AA office or to reach someone in a group (usually the group's GSR). They have also run articles in the AAWS newsletter, *Box 459*, and they have Guidelines on the website about Intergroups and Central Offices.

I feel NCMCO has a strong relationship with the General Service Districts in WNC. We have available or will order literature for the various district service committees, selling it to them at almost cost; we have co-sponsored workshops and we post the District meetings and events in the *Mountain Doin's* and on the website. Although perhaps not true of all AA members in the area, for the most part I feel we are viewed by the Districts as a service, not as just a bookstore.

In the AA structure, General Service is the policymaking body with input from the Groups > Districts > Area > Delegate to GS Conference in NY. Intergroups and Central Offices are much more autonomous; they can make changes with the vote of Steering Committees or Boards and with input and approval from the CORs from the groups. The main function of Intergroups and Central Offices is facilitating 12 Step work.