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Dear Area Delegates and Area Chairs,

It is that time again when approximately half the areas in the United States and Canada are holding elections and preparing for rotation. So we here at the GSO thought it would be a perfect time to talk about the Area Registrar position and how we might be helpful.

About five and one half years ago we rolled out a new database called Fellowship New Vision (aka FNV). This database allows area registrars access to their own area's records 24/7, access which is virtually identical to that of the GSO Records Department. Along with the access to the area's information come a variety of methods in which information can be exported, printed, sorted, and sent to interested parties.

The majority of the 93 areas use FNV to update records of groups and trusted servants in their area. The few areas that do not use FNV submit paper forms to the GSO Records department. However, these areas can still benefit from the FNV database by using it as a research tool. Often Change of Group Information and New Group forms are submitted to the registrars and the information has already been changed or updated in FNV records. Using the database to check records saves everyone additional effort. If the record is already updated or revised, the registrar does not have to send the paper form to the GSO Records Department, and the latter does not have to spend time checking an already updated record.

While FNV provides many different ways to use available information, we have found that not every Area Registrar has been prepared to use the database to its fullest extent. In some cases the result has been that area records have not been updated, which can cause GSO's ability to communicate with a group to be interrupted.

We understand that many area registrars have more to do than update records in the database. However, we can only speak to that portion of the responsibilities and skill that can help every area registrar maneuver the database more effectively.

We reached out to current and former registrars to get feedback on which skills would be helpful for new registrars in performing the database portion of their responsibilities. While it would be nice if everyone who stepped into the area registrar position was already instructed in all there was to know about the position's responsibilities, we know that is not realistic. However, a willingness to learn is a great attribute.

Below are some of the basic skills that would benefit an area registrar's work with the database:

**Computer Skills:**

Advanced working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite programs with the ability to perform the following tasks:

- Perform a Mail Merge
- Create PDFs
- Create and edit Excel spreadsheets
- Create mailing labels
- Compile and Export of Group Information Sheets
- E-mail proficiency

**Communication Skills:**

Establish a working relationship with area DCMs, the Delegate and the Records Staff at the GSO.

Be willing to communicate directly to group contacts and provide basic information such as:

- How FNV works.
- Explain the 30-day New Group pending process.
- Assist the GSO Records department/follow up on e-mails for additional or missing group records information.
- Explain the 6<sup>th</sup> Tradition (as it applies to naming a new group)
- Provide basic group information to GSRs/Groups
  - Status Codes and what they mean
  - Group service number

**Management Skills:**

- Ability to problem solve/resolve such questions as why a group is not listed in the directory.
- Time management
  - Process group/individual updates in a timely manner.
  - Meet GSO directory timelines.
  - Meet deadlines imposed by the area

### **A.A. Skills:**

- Understand the area and district structure
- Know A.A. position acronyms
  - GSR-General Service Representative
  - DCM- District Committee Member
  - LCDC-Literature Committee District Chair, etc.

For a newly appointed Area Registrar to do well, he/she should have training time with the outgoing area registrar to become familiar with the responsibilities attached to the position. While the database is a very important part of this, it is not the only part that is important. A sitting area registrar can provide a wealth of knowledge to an incoming registrar that only someone who is serving or has served in the position can share.

In addition to the information provided above there is a need to have the correct type of hardware and software available to complete the tasks associated with the record keeping portion of the area registrar's responsibilities. Most areas maintain a laptop that is designated for the area registrar's use but that is purely an area decision.

### **Miscellaneous Needs:**

- Retain a copy of the FNV User's Manual for reference *(Can be printed from the FNV site)*
- Broadband/High Speed Internet access
- Laser Printer
- Highly recommended-*(Maintain off site back up of database such as external hard drive or a service)*
- Laptop or PC with a Microsoft operating system- 2003 edition or newer
- PDF writer program *(Strongly recommended)*

As always the GSO Records department looks forward to working with the new panel of area registrars and building on the relationship with the existing registrars and serving the Fellowship as a whole.

Regards,

*Karen*

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