

May 14, 2011

**DELEGATE REPORT AND
PRELIMINARY GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE REPORT
2011 NIA SUMMER COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thank you for the privilege of serving the Fellowship of Northern Illinois as your Delegate to the 61st General Service Conference. The theme of this year's conference was "**We Are Responsible for AA's Future – Let it Begin with Us.**" The summer edition of *Box 459*, sent to members of the Area Committee and General Service Representatives will contain a summary of the Conference.

The theme for the 62nd Conference is "**Anonymity: Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age.**" It will be held in Rye NY during the week of April 22-28, 2012.

AAWS AND AA GRAPEVINE/LA VINA FINANCIAL CONDITION

The audited financial reports provided at the 2011 General Service Conference did not materially differ from those unaudited figures that were the basis for my report at the Spring Assembly. When presented at the Summer Assembly, my Final General Service Conference Report will include presentation and discussion of those audited figures.

The AA Grapevine 2012 budget as previously presented for approval will require revision on the basis of the actions taken at the 2011 GSC. On an unaudited basis, the AA Grapevine, Inc. incurred a loss of approximately \$28,000 in the 1st Quarter of 2011.

2011 GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

Keynotes

I selected the following items as keynotes reflecting in some way the tone and breadth of your 61st General Service Conference:

1. Grapevine

To move the Grapevine forward under the guidance of the new Executive Editor/Publisher, the General Service Conference addressed several issues:

In the spirit of being self-supporting while protecting our Traditions of attraction, anonymity and non-affiliation, the AA Grapevine was permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products. The GV Board was asked to ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions with the option to discontinue any contract at any time and to submit a status and financial report to the 2012 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine. (GV Comm AdvAct)

To adhere to our spirit of self-support, it was suggested that the Grapevine Board only propose balanced operating budgets to the General Service Board. (Add'lCommConsid) Because circulation of similar journals among AA Fellowships in other countries is much higher on a percentage basis, it was suggested that the AA Grapevine Board look at distribution techniques of such journals. (Add'lCommConsid)

2. Improved Communication

Among the General Service Board and its Affiliated Corporate Boards:

The Conference Committee on Trustees, my primary assignment, was presented with a slate of directors for the AA Grapevine Board containing seven proposed candidates. In an apparently unprecedented action at the January Board weekend, the trustees' Committee on Nominating and the General Service Board rejected two new candidates who had been proposed by the Grapevine Nominating Committee based on its search to fill two vacant non-trustee director positions. After careful consideration of information requested by our committee, lengthy discussion of the disapproval of the originally proposed slate and thorough examination of our options, our committee recommended approval of the slate of seven. It went on to "note with grave concern the lack of communication between" the two boards regarding "the size and composition of the Grapevine Board." Based on this expressed concern, we recommended that "the General Service Board take action to improve communication and cooperation among all its Boards" and bring a report to the committee. The slate of seven was approved by the GSC despite an effort to reinstate the two candidates. After substantial discussion with regard to the latter recommendation, the Chairman of the General Service Board and the incoming Chairpersons of the AAWS and GV Boards expressed a willingness to improve communication and cooperation among the corporate entities. The latter recommendation failed to receive substantial unanimity with a vote of 78 for and 48 opposed.

Combining Services to Achieve Efficiencies and Objectives

Considerable discussion occurred on the Conference floor by those serving on the AAWS and Grapevine boards concerning which entity should bear which elements of cost for inserting an introductory letter and copy of the Grapevine or La Vina in the new GSR packet. In order to ensure that all such discussions going forward occur within the spirit of unity and cooperation, the Conference Committee on AA Grapevine recommended that the Grapevine Board, in consultation with the AA World Services Board and under the guidance of the Chairman of the General Services Board, is to "continue to investigate what efficiencies and objectives can be accomplished by combining services, including Concept XI, while still maintaining editorial and corporate independence." This recommendation was approved by the GSC with substantial unanimity.

3. Improvements to the GSC Process and Procedures

For the first time in its more than 60 year history, the GSC will conduct an inventory of itself over the next three years. The Inventory Plan approved this year was developed as a result of an Advisory Action considered and approved at last year's GSC. (Note: In his report to the GSC, Chairman Ward Ewing stated that the General Service Board and its corporate affiliates will take an inventory of themselves this year.)

Concept V confers a Right of Appeal throughout our service structure. To date there have been only two such appeals to the GSC by those on the inverted triangle of the AA service structure *below* the GSC level, the first of which was by Bill W. Until now, there has been no procedure established for such an appeal to the GSC. This shortcoming was recently highlighted when certain trustees found themselves in the minority on an action of the General Service Board. On the recommendation of the Conference

Committee on Policy and Admissions, the GSC approved with substantial unanimity a procedure for the submission of a Concept V appeal.

In order to improve communication and cooperation between the trustees' and Conference committees having responsibility for establishing the agenda for the General Service Conference, the Conference Committee on Agenda requested that the trustees' Committee on the Conference meet or confer with it prior to the winter quarterly Board meeting to address matters concerning the Conference week agenda.

Other Activities of Conference Committees

Archives

- At future GSCs, the Archives Conference Committee will meet outside of the time allotted for their joint meeting with the trustees' Committee on Archives (Policy and Admissions AdvAct)
- Accepted addition of a new section "Tools and Suggested Activities for Archives Committee" to the workbook, which will provide sharing and suggestions for Area and local committees. (CommConsid)
- Requested solicitation of new material and stories for the "Shared Experiences" section of workbook, so that this section can be updated in a future printing. The committee requested that this section be updated every five years. (CommConsid)
- Requested development of an informational piece on basic archival preservation procedures intended to provide guidance to local archivists responsible for maintaining the physical and intellectual integrity of the collection (CommConsid)

Cooperation with the Professional Community

- Agreed to the concept of a replacement CPC literature compilation CD/DVD with background as very useful in CPC service work, with a suggested list of included material; report and draft to be presented to 2012 committee. (CommConsid)
- Suggested that draft service piece regarding use of AA Grapevine and La Vina in CPC endeavors with minor revisions be included in CPC kit. (CommConsid)
- Suggested that a list of goals and projects for CPC committees be added to the workbook. (CommConsid)
- Requested that a summary of shared experience from CPC committees and professionals for one-on-one CPC contact with professionals be included in the workbook. (CommConsid)

Corrections

- The pamphlet "AA in Correctional Facilities" will be revised with respect to Big Book studies, Step and Tradition meetings as possible meeting formats. (AdvAct)
- Agreed with the suggestion that the pamphlet "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" include content that would appeal to the young incarcerated alcoholic and requested that the Publications Department consider a more standard pamphlet-sized format, if feasible, while preserving the easy-to-read format. (Add'lCommConsid)
- Requested that the trustees' Committee on Corrections explore the need for a comprehensive survey of AA activities in correctional facilities similar to the one conducted in 1990. (Add'lCommConsid)

Finance

- The pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” will be revised to include a sample worksheet for distributions including two spaces for “other AA service entities” and a blank pie chart referenced “To be determined by YOUR group” with lines identical to the above worksheet. (AdvAct)

Grapevine

- The revised pamphlet “The AA Grapevine and La Vina: Our Meetings in Print: will be released. (AdvAct)
- Suggested that in 2012 or later the AA Grapevine produce collections of Grapevine stories with working titles “Working the Program,” “Happy, Joyous and Free” and “Young and New to AA.” (Add’lCommConsid)
- Suggested that a single issue of Grapevine or La Vina be included, with an introductory letter in the new GSR packet. (Add’lCommConsid)
- Encouraged each home group to purchase annual subscriptions. (Add’lCommConsid)

International Conventions/Regional Forums

- Accepted the report on the 2010 International Convention, noted a profit of \$850,423 and expressed appreciation to Convention Coordinator Rick W.
- Noted that flyers for the upcoming forums are sent electronically from GSO to Delegates and DCMs, and the information is accessible on the AA website.

Literature

- The revised pamphlet "Medications and Other Drugs" will be released. (AdvAct)
- Development of literature that “focuses on spirituality that includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are sober in AA” will continue. The committee expressed support for the trustee’s efforts to develop “a pamphlet which reflects the wide range of spiritual experiences of AA members.” (AdvAct)
- Language in the pamphlet “GSR General Service Representative” will be replaced to clarify the GSR’s responsibility since 1950 to select their area Delegate. (AdvAct)
- Revision of the pamphlet "AA and the Armed Services" continues. (Add’lCommConsid)
- Revision to the booklet *Living Sober* continues. (Add’lCommConsid)

Public Information

- The 2011 AA Membership Survey will be conducted on a random basis as was done in 2007. (AdvAct)
- AA videos that “include actors portraying AA members of potential AA members shall not show the actor’s full face,” unless the General Service Board, by substantial unanimity, agrees that the proposed video is “consistent with the AA tradition of attraction rather than promotion and that such use of an actor or actors does not in fact or in appearance place personalities before principles.” The General Conference also must authorize, by substantial unanimity, production and distribution of such video. (AdvAct)
- A culturally sensitive Spanish-language Public Service Announcement will be developed at a cost not to exceed \$40,000. (AdvAct)
- The pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" will be revised to include text on the topic of anonymity in the digital age and answers to the question “What should I tell my loved ones about protecting the anonymity of the AA members they may meet?” (AdvAct)
- Supported the development of a comprehensive media plan. (Add’lCommConsid)

Report & Charter

The *AA Service Manual* will be revised as follows:

- A section entitled “Trustees Emeriti” will be added to Chapter 9.
- Language regarding an area’s submission of the same name for regional trustee and trustee-at-large in the nominating procedure in the section on Regional Trustees will be amended for clarity.
- Text on “inactive service workers” will be revised and sections on “inactive General Service Representative” and “Inactive District Committee Member” will be added where appropriate.
- Text in the section “What Goes on at the Conference” will be replaced with revised text. (Advents)

Special Needs

- The recovery pamphlet “AA for the Alcoholic with Special Needs” will be released. (AdvAct)
- Suggested that formats of “AA for the Alcoholic with Special Needs” for alcoholics who are deaf, blind or have learning challenges be produced as soon as fiscally possible. (Add’lCommConsid)

Treatment

- The name of the committee will be changed to “Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities.”
- The name of the pamphlet “AA in Treatment Facilities” will be changed to “AA in Treatment Settings” and the term “treatment facilities” will be replaced with a more appropriate reference wherever it appears. (AdvAct)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The **39th Illinois State Conference**, hosted by Area 19 (Chicago), will be held on August 5-7 at the Holiday Inn North Shore in Skokie. Chairman of the General Service Board Ward Ewing, General Manager of the General Service Office Phyllis H. and East Central Regional Trustee Pam R. will join us at the conference.
- The **East Central Regional Forum** will be held on November 11-13 in Miamisburg OH at the Dayton Holiday Inn.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray M.
Delegate
Panel 60/Area 20
(Northern Illinois)