

Hello Friends! My name is Carolyn and I am an alcoholic. I am truly thrilled and humbled to have the privilege of serving you as the Area 79, Panel 63 Delegate. I am here today to report to you about the 63rd General Service Conference that was held April 21-27, 2013 in New York City, the theme of the Conference was “The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory – Our Solution In Action”.

To begin with I would like to let you know a little bit about what the purpose of Conference is and how it is that I went to carry the voice of the Groups and Members of British Columbia/ Yukon “Area 79”.

Concept One states that: “The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.” Bill W went on to say: “The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services — those special elements of over-all service activity which make it possible for our Society to function as a whole. The groups assumed that responsibility at the St. Louis International Convention of 1955. There, on behalf of Dr. Bob, the Trustees and A.A.’s old-time leaders, I made the transfer of world service responsibility to our entire Fellowship.”

These were exciting but very difficult times in AA. We, the Fellowship, were given our 3rd Legacy of “service responsibility”; but, this took place in the shadow of the news that Dr. Bob was fatally ill which shocked everyone into the realization that our co-founders would not be around forever to fulfil the responsibilities of service leadership.....today that responsibility is fulfilled by the Fellowship through the General Service structure. In Bill’s words, “The fact had to be faced that A.A.’s founders were perishable. When Dr. Bob and I had gone, who would then advise the Trustees; who could link our little-known Board to our thousands of groups? For the first time it was seen that only a representative conference could take the place of Dr. Bob and me.”

You may be wondering what exactly “services” are, we are talking about “those special services for A.A. as a whole that could not well be performed by single groups or areas.” This includes AA literature, translations of AA literature into more languages (the Big Book is currently available in 68 languages), Public Information efforts, development of literature and videos to support efforts to Cooperate with the Professional Community, providing an infrastructure to support efforts to Carry the Message info Correctional and Treatment settings and producing the monthly AA Grapevine magazine....to name a few.

How we deliver our services is evolving in this fast changing world. We carry our message and offer our services online as well as through traditional printed materials. The purpose and the importance of these efforts remains the same. That is to fulfill our Primary Purpose and carry our lifesaving message to the alcoholics who still suffer be they here at home or somewhere around the globe. As a movement, AA needs to ensure that we are securing our future by setting needed policies and following appropriate practices for how we function as a “society of alcoholics in action”. The General Service Conference is where the voice of the Fellowship is heard regarding these matters.

At the end of Concept One Bill W said: "Therefore we believe that we see in our Fellowship a spiritualized society characterized by enough enlightenment, enough responsibility and enough love of man and of God to insure that our democracy of world service will work under all conditions. We are confident that we can rely upon Tradition Two, our group conscience and its trusted servants. Hence it is with a sense of great security that we old-timers have now fully vested in A.A.'s General Service Conference the authority for giving shape — through the labors of its chosen Delegates, Trustees, and service workers — to the destiny that we trust God in His wisdom is holding in store for all of us." This is our "legacy".

As for how it is that I, personally, came to be there and be a part of the 63rd General Service Conference.....it is simply that I am a sober alcoholic who has been willing to show my gratitude through service in Alcoholics Anonymous. My experience is that the journey in service begins and ends in the Home Group. It was through joining a group and fully participating (attending business meetings and filling service positions when it was my turn) that I came to be involved in General Service, 1st as a General Service Representative, then as a District Committee Member and then on to the Area Committee. In AA all of our service positions are meant to be shared through rotation, this prevents us from becoming "experts" and also provides an opportunity for all of us to share in the work to be done and the spiritual growth that can come from doing it. Attending the General Service Conference in New York is a long way from the desperate drunk I was. It is only in AA that passing out on public sidewalks and making the rounds of psych wards, drunk tanks, and emergency rooms can qualify someone to participate in the setting of movement-wide policy. I cannot find words to describe my gratitude for your trust in me to do participate on behalf of Area 79, what an incredible gift!!!

The Conference experience began with the Area 79 Pre-Conference Assembly that was held in Osoyoos BC April 12-14. It was at the Pre-Conference Assembly where the Area 79 Fellowship participated in the Conference by bringing their group conscious to the discussion and participating in the Area 79 committee process which closely mirrors the committee system used at the Conference. I returned home on the 14th with my pages and pages of notes from the pre-conference assembly well informed of the thoughts, ideas and concerns of our members; and wrapped in the well wishes of my fellow alcoholics. I was as prepared as one could hope to be to attend the 63rd General Service Conference.

I left Vancouver on the "red-eye" on Wednesday April 17th and arrived in New York City on Thursday April 18th. My sister Jenny traveled with me and we were able to spend a couple of days together in Manhattan before the Conference began (at our own expense). This was a beautiful gift for us to share this experience. Alcoholism has taken so much from our family; the lives of her Father, my Father, our Mother and nearly my life too. Alcoholics Anonymous has given us so much back, and my debt to AA grows bigger every day. I am so grateful; there really are no words...

Thursday and Friday were taken up with the usual Manhattan activities of shopping, eating, and sightseeing. We packed a lot into a short time and made it to the Stardust Diner, all throughout Times Square, to Macy's for their annual shoe sale, lunch at Ben's kosher deli in the garment district, the

Guggenheim museum, and walk through Central Park, Lindy's for their famous late night cheesecake to name a few.

For me the work began one day before the actual opening of the Conference on Saturday April 20th. This was the day for the bids to host the 2025 AA International Convention. Of the 5 cities bidding, Vancouver was randomly selected to go last. My part of the presentation was quite small, 2 minutes to let them know a little about AA in Vancouver and Area 79 as well as to convey our enthusiasm to host this event and our commitment to provide the needed 4000 volunteers. The other 8 minutes is for the staff member from the Convention Bureau to let them know about the city, its amenities, and the convention space and the like. We are very fortunate to have an amazing Convention Bureau who are as passionate about this opportunity as we are!

The Convention Bureau representation was their CEO Rick. He and I had met in Vancouver a few times leading up to this day and planned to meet once more in the lobby at the hotel before our presentation. I was so nervous that I was there to meet him over an hour early. After a few minutes I noticed a fellow who looked as nervous as I was. He was wearing a suit and clutching a stack of papers. After another couple minutes I decided to do what you taught me to.....and put my hand out. I am so glad I did! I met Pierre, the Delegate for Area 87 which includes Montreal (one of the other cities bidding).

We were able to share some encouragement and a much needed laugh or two. I wished my new friend luck as he went to give his presentation. Soon enough it was our turn; it went really well, and when we were finally done Rick and I were pretty excited. So excited that we raced out of the room; I left my purse, Rick left a laptop bag. One of our GSO Staff, Julio E, brought it out for us and we all had a chuckle. Julio also let me know that I would find out on Wednesday if we made the "short list" of three cities that will have a site selection visit this summer. On Wednesday, I was thrilled to learn that we made the short list, along with Montreal and St. Louis. In November, they will announce who the successful bidder is to host the 2025 AA International Convention. I'll keep you posted!

Next was the Remote Communities Sharing Session. Although this session is not officially part of the Conference, it has become customary for this session to take place prior to the opening of the Conference. This provides an opportunity for Areas to share their experience with their efforts to reach out to linguistic, cultural, and geographically remote communities. Some of you may know Corliss Burke, Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustee, who hails from Whitehorse Yukon. I was very touched to see the passion with which she shared about our efforts here in Area 79. I have already received a "loving invitation" to give a presentation at this session next year.

We then had our first "Delegates only meeting". Us new Panel 63's were asked to introduce ourselves, by Region. When my turn came it was Kim C from Area 91 and I for the Western Canada Region.

Saturday was finally over. Exhausted but excited and hungry I tracked down my sister and we went out in search of a bite to eat. We had a lovely diner at an Argentinean restaurant nearby, although I don't think I could find it again if I tried.

Sunday morning was the opening of the Conference. As I rode the elevator down, the doors opened to let someone in and lo-and-behold there was our very own Marty W, Western Canada Regional Trustee. What a joyful moment! I was able to join Marty and Joe D (AAWS non-trustee director) for breakfast and then head up to registration. I received my kit and binder and went and found a seat for the opening session. As had been suggested by many of our Past Delegates, I made the effort to sit with different people at each meal and for each session. I am so glad that I did. Not only did I meet more people that way, I benefitted from learning from them about their views and ideas.

We were welcomed by Ward Ewing Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustee and, then, Chair of the General Service Board. Next was Roll Call. Phyllis H, general manager of the General Service Office called the name of each Conference member, alphabetically, and we each replied with a simple "here" or "present". It was quite solemn and very emotional with many of our voices cracking through tears of gratitude for being a part of the experience. It went on like this all the way up to "W". When Phyllis called out "Marty W___" before Marty finished saying "here" spontaneous applause and cheers broke out. There were many tears and you could really feel the love in the room. Not everyone understood. I'm told one person quietly asked: "why are we cheering for the Canadian?" For any of you who may not know, Marty is our Western Canada Regional Trustee, and he was our Area 79 Panel 59 Delegate. Last fall he was diagnosed with a very serious illness and the prognosis did not look very good. Through many prayers and Gods grace, Marty is in much better health now and was able to attend and fully participate in the Conference.

Following roll call there was a "Greeting" from Roger S. our Delegate Chairperson, a keynote address by George M, Class B (alcoholic) General Service Trustee. We then reviewed the business procedures for the Conference, the agenda for the week, the manual and went for our 1st of 2 Regional Lunches.

After lunch there was a "Presentation/Discussion" on the topic of "Spiritual Principles for World Service". There is always at least one thing I walk away from a session like this with. In this case it was when Lela M from Area 7 (North Interior California) said "There are just two things an alcoholic doesn't like; the way things are and change." There was also interesting discussion about if we might be able to increase contributions through the increased use of technology. The GSO website has an option for "contributions online" and there was some sharing about the possibilities of implementing this at the Area or Intergroup level as well as talk about the feasibility of Groups using debit card/point-of-sale devices to enable members who do not carry cash to participate in our spiritual tradition of self-support. Food for thought.

As some of you know, there are 11 Conference Committees as well as 2 Secondary Committees. The secondary committees typically have a lighter agenda and smaller workload so the Delegates who are assigned to them participate in addition to their primary committee assignments. I was assigned to the Conference Committee on Trustees as well as to the Conference Archives Committee (which is a secondary committee). My committee work began Sunday afternoon with the "joint meeting" of the Trustees Nominating Committee and the Conference Committee on Trustees. It was a long meeting as

there was a lot of discussion and many questions regarding the proposed restructuring of the AAWS and AAGV boards into an interlocking directorate.

Sunday evening was the “Opening Dinner and Open AA Meeting”. It was a wonderful evening and I was able to bring my sister Jenny as my guest. We had a great time and this was pretty much the last time I saw her for the week.

Monday began with our 1st Conference Committee on Trustees meeting. Everyone on our committee was really quite amazing and had clearly spent a lot of time and effort preparing for this committee’s work at the Conference. Our committee chair Tom H, from Area 16 Georgia, did an exemplary job in leading the committee through the process and through the discussions. In addition to Tom’s sane and sound leadership, each committee has a staff member assigned as the committee secretary who is also there to serve as a resource to the committee, and it was our good fortune to have Adrienne B (GSO Staff) join us in this capacity. We were in very good hands.

Monday afternoon we heard the reports from the General Service Board, AA World Services Board, AA Grapevine Board, and the Finance Presentation. All of these reports are available to you through your GSRs and DCMs on the “trusted servant site” of the Area 79 website, or you can contact me directly to request a copy. I do have some hard copies of the finance presentation here, so please do come and get one and let me know if you would like to be sent any of the other reports.

Here are some highlights from the Board reports:

-The Big Book has currently been translated into 68 languages, with an oral version in Navajo in the works. 18 other translations are pending.

-GSOs website is under redesign and will include archival audio recordings, new literature catalogue with pricing and ordering information will be posted, and a “Fair Use Policy” has been approved that provides for printing single copies of pamphlets from the GSO website

-Designated members of our GSB and GSO Staff attended the World Service Meeting in October 2012 where there were 35 countries and zones in attendance....including 1st time attendees Chile, Ecuador, Hungary and Slovenia.

-AAGV has moved into a much smaller office space saving 50% on occupancy costs in 2012 as compared with 2011. They ended 2012 with a net income of over \$250,000, in spite of a year-over-year decrease in magazine subscriptions. This was achieved through the reduced occupancy costs and other efforts to reduce expenses.

-Grapevine is funded through subscriptions and GV book sales only; they do not receive group contributions. If you wish to support the Grapevine and ensure it remains available the best ways to do so are to subscribe and consider giving gift subscriptions. Grapevine is available in print, audio, and online versions so there is something for everyone.

Here are some highlights from the finance presentation:

- In 2012, only 42% of Groups contributed.
- For 2012 the cost of services per member per year was \$6.43, and per Group it was \$138. The actual Contributions received were \$4.67 per member, and \$100 per Group. The shortfall from Group contributions is covered through revenue from our AAWS literature sales.
- There has been much debate pro and con regarding if literature revenues are really “self-support”, no matter what your thoughts on that question.....the fact remains that the sales of printed materials are decreasing worldwide across all demographics. Much concern was expressed about the fact that we are reliant on this revenue and it is not a very secure source of funding for the years to come.
- An interesting figure that was provided to us, was an “inflation calculator” that illustrated that the \$1.00 that members put in the baskets in 1945 had the buying power of \$12.90 today.
- This message must be getting out there as there was an increase of 4.7% in contributions in 2012 when compared to 2011. There was much gratitude expressed for the groups and members who made this possible and I pass that on to you for you to share with the other members of your Groups.
- My personal thoughts on these questions of self-support are that AA members have always stepped up and provided the funds when they are informed about the need and the importance of the services that the funds are used to provide. It is our job; all of us....to share this information with our groups and the members we know. We can keep asking those who are already contributing to contribute more.....or we can work together to better inform the 58% of groups that are not participating that we need them. We not only need their contributions, we need their participation, and we need their voices and ideas at our district meetings and at our area assemblies. It is our job to invite them to join us in service and in the self-support of this fine fellowship (financial and otherwise) so it will be here for the next generation of alcoholics who need us. They are sure to come if we are here.

We also received some statistics on the Delegates, the average age was 57, average length of sobriety was 21 years, and average length in service was 16 years.

On Tuesday, the Conference Committee on Trustees met for the second, and last, time. Our final task was to elect a new chairperson for our Committee. I was thrilled to learn that I was elected; it is very humbling to be given this opportunity.

Tuesday afternoon included the field trip to the General Service Office and Grapevine Office. This also included a tour of our archives. It was quite amusing to see our GSO Staff attempt to get this rag-tag group of delegates safely through the New York subway system to our destination at 475 Riverside Drive. No one got lost and we were welcomed with open arms to “our office”. You will be too if you are ever able to visit the office. They will be happy to take you for a tour and introduce you around. The archives was certainly a highlight.

For those of you who know me you will not be surprised that I found my way into the mailroom (which was not part of the tour). I wanted to see where all of the packages that have been sent to me over the years have come from. This includes my GSR kit, my DCM package, many mailings as a member of the General Service Committee, and (of course) tonnes of materials as Delegate. I got to meet the “mail guys” and thank them for everything over all these years. When I introduced myself one of them commented that I had recently moved, It was really nice!

You may also not be surprised to learn that the highlight for me was the “reference room”. It was empty when I wandered in. Shelves and shelves of binders full of minutes, reference material, and polices. Chase B from Area 58 Oregon came in, as did one of our GSO Staff Mary C. They seem amused by my enthusiasm for this material but soon there were several of us with binders open on the table learning a little more about how and why we do what we do; and, of course, looking for the names of people we know who have served before us.

After this it was back to the hotel for the second (and last) delegates’ only meeting. This was an open session for anyone to come to the mic with a question. One delegate went to the mic and asked “When does this get spiritual?” several Panel 62 Delegates then shared their experience with the Conference reassuring her that they had similar feelings at their first conference. To everyone’s’ joy and amazement this same Delegate, Linda M from Area 49 South East New York, came from “the hat” to be elected as the Delegate Chair for the next General Service Conference. I guess this is when it “gets spiritual”!

The Conference theme for this 63rd General Service Conference was “The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory – Our Solution In Action”. On Wednesday morning we broke into groups, each group with a mix of Trustees, Directors, GSO Staff, and Delegates, to discuss the Inventory Questions. This was a truly amazing process....and we have only just begun, the inventory is scheduled to take place over 3 years (2013, 2014, and 2015) and I am confident that this spiritual process will result in many practical suggestions for how best to do what we need to. I am so glad that I did assign some of the inventory questions to the Area 79 committees to discuss at our pre-conference assembly. I brought your feedback to the Conference with me and it was an invaluable part of my participation in the discussions. I can assure you that your voice was heard.

Wednesday afternoon brought the elections of 3 new Trustees to the General Service Board. One of my responsibilities as a member of the Conference Committee on Trustees is to participate in the elections of Regional Trustees. At one point in the elections as I was flipping through the nearly 100 service resumes submitted for the various positions, and I was overcome. Tears were streaming down my checks in gratitude that there were so many capable, qualified, and willing candidates available to serve AA at the board level. I want to share with you that we are very blessed.

Wednesday was a working dinner for me and the other members of the secondary committees, beginning with a joint meeting with the Trustees Archives Committee, and then into our agenda items. The Conference Archives Committee also met again for a working lunch on Thursday to allow us to complete all of our committee work. Our committee was chaired Brian M from Area 18 Idaho, and our secretary was the GSO Archivist Michelle Mirza....they both did a great job! It was a fantastic experience

and little did we know that one of our agenda items would end up being the hottest debate on the conference floor.

Wednesday evening, Thursday, and Friday saw the presentation of all of the Committee reports along with the discussion, debate, and voting.

For each Agenda Item the Committees can do one of a few things:

- “Recommendations”, are basically motions that if passed still need to be formalized by the General Service Board. The role of the Conference is an advisory one while the legal and practical authority to carry out these Recommendations lies in our GSB. These Recommendations are debated by and voted on by the whole Conference when the Committee gives its report.
- “Take No Action”, means the committee did not “recommend” or wish to put forward the proposal in the Agenda Item for further action.

-“Additional Considerations”, can be suggestions for further action or to look more deeply into a subject or simply a comment that an item was reviewed and no further action was thought to be needed at this time. Although no formal action is taken on Additional Considerations it is common for them to lead to new Agenda Items for future Conferences. These items are not discussed or debated by the Conference although questions may be asked of the Committee Chair.

In addition to the Committee’s work, “Floor Actions” are motions made during the conference. These may be, and often are, an attempt to bring an item that was already discussed back for further debate. They may also be new ideas that for whatever reason were not included in the Conference agenda. Sometimes these are items that relate to business already discussed but propose to add to or reverse the advisory action already made.

The debate and questions were certainly heated at times. So much so that at one point one of the Delegates used his 2 minutes at the mic to ask for 2 min of silence and prayer. Now, when I say “heated” I don’t mean that it was nasty. People were respectful; there was certainly a lot of love in the room. Love for the Fellowship, for each other and for the alcoholic who still suffers. However, this much love can lead to a lot of passion and there were certainly some passionate moments in the debate. There was only once that I saw when a member of the Conference had what appeared to be an angry outburst. That Conference member later apologized to everyone from the microphone. Personally, I would much rather see people passionate about the business of Alcoholics Anonymous than apathetic even if that does mean there is an occasional outburst. Our primary purpose is far too important for anything less.

For those of you who would like the full lists of Conference actions, these are also available through your GSRs and DCMs on the “Trusted Servant Site” (secure area) of the Area 79 website.....and I do have hard copies here with me today for those of you who may wish.

I will not go through all of the results of all of the Agenda Items here, but I would like to highlight a few:

Agenda

-The theme for the 2014 General Service Conference will be: "Communicating Our Legacies -Vital in a Changing World."

Archives

(this was one of my committee assignments)

-The Archives video *Markings on the Journey* will be revised and updated with the proposed changes (estimated cost \$5,000) and brought back to the 2014 Conference Archives Committee.

-A commemorative 75th Anniversary Edition of the first edition, first printing of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be published in April 2014.

(I saw this book during our Archives Committee session and I can assure you that it is a very high quality replica. I was really impressed and very excited. Our Area had been in favour of this item and our Conference Committee on Archives recommended it unanimously. Seemed like a simple matter to me. Turned out that this was the longest debate at the conference. Those in favour spoke convincingly about the strong desire in the fellowship for this item, the long history of printing special and commemorative editions of AA and AAGV materials, and the fact that AA has always been supported by revenues from literature sales in addition to contributions. Those opposed were equally as convincing about the concerns around producing an item like this, some even likening it to trinkets or "drunk junk". Those opposed also expressed a strong sentiment that this project was a diversion from our primary purpose. The point was made that the fact the non-aa sources are producing similar, poorer quality, items is not a good enough reason for us to proceed. By the end, a couple hours later, the minority voice was heard and there was a motion to reconsider, the 2nd vote was finally called. I didn't know what I thought anymore. I had heard so many compelling speakers on both sides of the subject. I was very grateful for my notes from the Area 79 preconference, I was able to simply look and see what points were made in the discussion, take note that there was no new information that came up at the conference and that Area 79 was strongly in favour of this proposal. I was relieved to feel that you were all there with me and to be able to simply vote the conscience of our area.)

Cooperation With the Professional Community

-made updates and revisions to the pamphlet "If You Are A Professional" and recommended that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/ Special Needs-Accessibilities revise the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..." taking into consideration suggested changes of the Conference Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community and bring back a report or draft pamphlet to the 2014 Conference Committee.

Corrections

-Recommended that the revised pamphlet "A Message to Corrections Professionals" be approved.

Finance

-No recommendations.

Additional Committee Considerations:

-The committee reviewed the suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference and felt an increase was not necessary at this time.

-The committee suggested adding the following phase to the Self-Support Green Card (F-42): Gratitude expressed through contributions reaches the still-suffering alcoholic.

(This was an interesting item as the reason it was on the agenda was that some members felt that the "green card" is already too long. The feelings of Area 79 were also that it is already too long. However, the committees' suggestion is to add another sentence. Since this is a piece of service material, this suggestion will simply be passed on to the Publications Department for consideration. We'll have to wait and see what happens. I vote against this proposal.)

Grapevine

-No recommendations.

Additional Committee Considerations:

-The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2014 or later: Making Amends (working title), Members share their experience about making Ninth Step amends from stories previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAgrapevine.org. How I Found My Higher Power (working title), A collection of stories by AA members sharing their experience with their personal journeys with Step Two.

International Conventions/Regional Forums

Just because it is fun to say it again, here is the official recommendation: The undernoted three cities, expressed here in alphabetical order, be considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2025: Montreal, Quebec, St. Louis, Missouri, Vancouver, British Columbia

Literature

It was recommended that: The draft pamphlet "A.A—Spiritual not Religious" be recommitted to the trustees' Literature Committee for additional discussion and brought back to the 2014 Conference Committee on Literature.

(The literature committees' recommendation was that the pamphlet be approved; this advisory action referring it back to the Trustees Literature Committee was the result of an amendment. All conference members were able to review the proposed pamphlet prior to the vote but we did have to sign it out and sign it back in due to copy right concerns and an effort to keep the work of the committee within the committee until it is finished. The draft pamphlet included 13 stories, mostly of the "nature is my higher power", "I use the Group Of Drunks", and "Good Orderly Direction" varieties; and a couple representing members who practice non-Christian religions. The preface was very well written, effectively describing the purpose of the pamphlet as being to describe some of the various spiritual practices of AA members.)

The discussion on the floor included suggestions for different titles and requests to broaden both the scope and the number of stories. This outcome means that we will see this item again on the conference agenda for next year. Personally, I felt that they did a good job of a near impossible task and would have been in favour of the draft pamphlet going forward. I don't know how comprehensively the vast and diverse forms or belief and non-belief that are practiced by AA members can be summarized in a pamphlet. However, based on the discussion and the many concerns expressed on the floor, I did vote in favour of recommitting this item to the trustees literature committee. I look forward to seeing what happens with this item next year.)

This committee also made recommendations which were, ultimately, not carried by the Conference.
Including:

- (Not carried) the committee recommended that the second paragraph on the inside front flap of the dust jacket of the 4th edition of the Big Book be changed back to the wording used for the 3rd edition dust jacket.

-(Not carried) the committee recommended that “Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers” be added to the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (Blue) Card.

(After much debate, those in favour discussing the importance of maintaining our singleness of purpose and those opposed bringing up matters such as the benefits of permitting non-alcoholics such as Class A trustees and non-alcoholic family members to speak at selected AA meetings. There was also discussion regarding the importance of giving people a little time and space to decide if they are alcoholics. It was mentioned that groups who find this statement useful are welcome to adopt it at their meetings, even if has not been adopted by the Conference. Ultimately the recommendation did not carry)

Policy/Admissions

It was recommended that:

-The deadline for the submission of Conference Agenda Items be changed from January 15 to December 15, beginning in December 2014 for the 65th General Service Conference.

(Please note that this does not mean that info will go out to the fellowship faster. The background material timelines will remain the same (to the delegates mid-February) But it does mean that there will now be sufficient time to the GSO Staff to collect and organize the background material.)

The committee recommended that the alternate chair of a primary committee be eligible to serve as chair of a secondary committee only if there are no other available candidates. (not carried)

(This recommendation was basically what Area 79 suggested, it was what the conference committee recommended so it seemed simple enough that this was the right answer. However, by the time we were discussing this I had the opportunity to participate in the elections for committee chairs for both primary and secondary committees. By participating in the process I saw 1st hand how few candidates would be eligible for chair of secondary committees if alternate chairs of primary committees were excluded. I learned that it is quite rare for an alternate chair to have to step up as chair, and that in that case the secondary committee has alternate who could also step up. During the discussion, I spoke of our

responsibility under Concept IX to consider the question “Who are the best qualified people that we can name?” and shared my experience in participating in these elections. In this case, I voted differently than the area conscience. I did so because I had experienced this process at the conference and had seen it unfold in a way we had not considered at our pre-conference assembly. Ultimately it did not carry. It is my responsibility to practice Concept III, the Right of Decision....which I did in a couple cases. Part of the Right of Decision is the responsibility to report back to those we serve how we voted and why....which I am doing too.)

Public Information

It was recommended that:

-The 63rd General Service Conference affirm that the Internet, social media and all forms of public communications are implicit in the last phrase of the Short Form of Tradition Eleven, which reads: “....at the level of press, radio and films.”

(This recommendation initially failed, and was then amended and reconsidered, and then amended again. It did finally carry. The intent and result being that there is now a clear and current statement by the conference supporting the need for anonymity at the public level online....without changes to the short form of our 12 Traditions. I did vote in favour of this.)

-A.A. World Services be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of digital A.A. literature. The committee requested that the board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The committee requested that a status and financial report be submitted to the appropriate 2014 Conference Committee.

-The committee reviewed the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on establishing a Public Information Social Media Page and agrees with the trustees' conclusion that A.A. World Services, the General Service Office, and the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña cannot establish a presence on Facebook in a manner which would be consistent with A.A. Traditions.

-The committee suggested the General Service Board encourage the trustees' committees to review existing literature that discusses how A.A. members apply the Eleventh Tradition, e.g., “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” and “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated,” and suggest updates to the literature that reflect current experience with anonymity in a digital age, with an eye towards reaffirming the importance of the Eleventh Tradition to the Fellowship.

Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

-A typographical error in the article “Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need,” contained within the essay on Concept IX on page 37, fifth paragraph, third line: “...badly disturbed or **uninformed...**” be corrected to “...badly disturbed or **uninformed...**” in the next printing, noting that this typographical error has existed since the first printing of *Twelve Concepts for World Service*. (Change indicated in bold)

-The 2010 Advisory Action regarding Area Highlights be rescinded, so the entire *Final Report* may be professionally edited and published, while still reflecting the full substance of the General Service Conference.

Additional Committee Consideration:

-In light of the recent decision not to publish regional directories this year, the committee asked the staff secretary to communicate their concerns to the A.A.W.S. Board about the still existing, albeit decreasing, need for print resources by A.A. members in rural and remote areas, and those members who may travel frequently.

Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities

No recommendations.

Additional Committee Consideration:

-The committee reviewed the report on the DVD version of the pamphlet "AA for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" formatted for alcoholics who are blind, deaf, or learning challenged and availability of the item. There was concern expressed whether a DVD in American Sign Language (ASL) and with subtitles in English serves the needs of French and Spanish language-based members.

Trustees

(this was one of my committee assignments)

As many of you know, one of the more challenging items on this years' conference agenda was the proposal for the AAWS and AAGV boards to form an "interlocking directorate". For the benefit of those who did not review the background material for this committee, I'll give you a brief review of "the plan". The Plan was a proposal that came from the Chair of the General Service Board in response to issues that were identified during the GSB inventory. Matters addressed in The Plan involved the functioning of the AAWS and AAGV Boards and included sections on "Communications and Unity" and "Efficient Operations and Financial Stability" which were suggestions such as: sharing minutes, attendance and one another's meetings, shared technological resources and uniform accounting and reporting processes. There was also a section on "Governance" that proposed changes to non-trustee director service, eligibility of general service trustees, and eligibility of appointed committee members. The only item from The Plan that was on the Agenda for the Conference to make a recommendation regarding was the proposed restructuring of the subsidiary boards into an "interlocking directorate"which is basically a corporate structure which combines the subsidiary board functionally without legal changes to their structure or autonomy.

To begin with, I'll read the Additional Committee Consideration:

-The committee reviewed the General Service Board's proposed plan regarding the slate of directors for the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board and took no action. The committee did not support the proposed interlocking directorate. The committee noted that the General Service Board has

sufficient authority to implement changes in Practices as outlined in the initiatives in the sections under the heading “Communications and Unity” and “Efficient Operations and Financial Stability” and expressed their support for those ongoing changes. It was the sense of the committee that the changes in Practices could address the concerns of the General Service Board. The committee requested that, before implementation, any changes proposed in the section “Governance,” regarding “Non-trustee Director Service,” “Eligibility of General Service Trustees” and “Eligibility of Appointed Committee Members” be brought to the Conference Committee on Trustees for review.

I said earlier that there was once where a member of the conference seemed to speak in anger. This occurred when our Conference Committee on Trustees Chair presented our report and was answering questions regarding this item, and the fact that we did not support the proposal for an interlocking directorate. Now, I don't impress easily....but I need to tell you that I was really impressed when after a 10 minute question (challenging the work of our committee), Tom H (our chair) responded by simply saying “don't underestimate the preparedness of this committee”. It was grace under fire, for certain.

It is also interesting that there was a Floor Action that proposed recommending that the interlocking directorate move forward. In some cases a Floor Action can be an important expression of the minority voice, as was the case here. However, when the Floor Action was proposed the Conference voted “not to consider” it. It was then that the conference had the chance to debate this matter of great importance, remember that additional committee considerations are not debated so the conference had not yet had that opportunity. Ultimately, the conference supported our committees work when it was voted not to consider the floor action, but the importance of the conference as a whole having the opportunity to make that decision.....or choose not to....is a very important part of ensuring unity through the checks and balances that ensure our spiritual principles (as embodied in our 12 Traditions and our 12 Concepts) are always our source of guidance.

This brings us to dinner time on Friday and the farewells by the Panel 62 Delegates. I don't think there was a dry eye in the room, although there was also a lot of laughter. I was especially touched when my friend Oscar R, from Area 77 Puerto Rico shared that he “learned to cry in English, and that no matter what (English/French/Spanish) it is all the language of the heart.”

Although the conference officially closed after the business was done on Friday, Saturday is when there is a brunch and farewells from the rotating trustees. This year we had 7 trustees rotating at the end of the conference. That is 1/3 of our GSB. We heard fond farewells from Ward Ewing (Class A non-alcoholic Trustee and Chair of GSB), Rogelio Flores (Class A non-alcoholic Trustee), George M (Class B alcoholic General Service Trustee), Don Miller (Class B alcoholic General Service Trustee), Pam R (Class B alcoholic Regional Trustee), El N Pam R (Class B alcoholic Regional Trustee), and Don M (Class B alcoholic Trustee-at-large US). There were a few remarks from our new Chair of the GSB, Terry Bedient (Class A non-alcoholic Trustee).

I would be remiss if I did not let you all know what an incredible job was done during the Conference, as well as before and after since the Conference itself is simply the annual meeting but the Conference process is year-long. We are blessed to have talented, dedicated, principled Staff at GSO and GV,

Directors, Trustees, and Delegates. I have never been more certain that AA is an capable and loving hands.

On Sunday I spent an extra day in Manhattan at my own expense. I shopped, went to the Museum of Modern Art, walked across the Brooklyn bridge, found Bill and Lois's old residence at 182 Clinton Street where Ebby 1st carried the message to a still drunk Bill and wept tears of gratitude on the sidewalk. Finally I found an AA meeting and received a warm welcome at the midnite group. It was a 12 & 12 meeting, we were on Step 12. Perfect. Some pizza in Hells Kitchen and then to bed so I could be up early on Monday and get home to my fiancée who has supported me every step of the way. People often comment on the time I "sacrifice" for AA, but the true sacrifices are made by those closest to us, family, friends, sponsees, co-workers and employers who all give to allow us to serve so we can live stay sober one more day.

(see the following pages for the full detail on the outcome of the Conference business)

**CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE
63rd GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE**

The following recommendations were approved by the 63rd General Service Conference and the General Service Board:

Agenda

It was recommended that:

1. The theme for the 2014 General Service Conference be: "Communicating Our Legacies – Vital in a Changing World."
2. The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2014 General Service Conference:

Living in the Heart of A.A.

- a) Recovery, Unity and Service – Our Responsibility
- b) Passing It on Through Sponsorship
- c) Participating in Our Common Welfare through Contributions
- d) Inventory – A Guiding Tool to Our Future

Archives¹

It was recommended that:

3. The Archives video *Markings on the Journey* be revised and updated with the proposed changes (estimated cost \$5,000) and brought back to the 2014 Conference Archives Committee.
4. A commemorative 75th Anniversary Edition of the first edition, first printing of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be published in April 2014.
5. The posting of freely accessible, anonymity-protected archival audio clips on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site be done at the discretion of the trustees' Committee on Archives and G.S.O.'s Archivist.

¹Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

Cooperation With the Professional Community

It was recommended that:

6. The statement in the section Referrals From Court and Treatment Facilities in the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional...", which currently reads:

"Some groups, with the consent of the prospective member, have the A.A. group secretary sign or initial a slip that has been furnished by the court together with a self-addressed court envelope. The referred person supplies identification and mails the slip back to the court as proof of attendance."

Be revised as follows:

"Each group is autonomous. Some groups, at the request of the prospective member, have the A.A. group secretary sign, initial or stamp a slip that has been furnished by the court. The referred person provides the slip to the court as proof of attendance."

7. The statement in the section How to Make Referrals to A.A. in the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional...", which currently reads:

"Or, you can contact the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. Write:

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Or phone: (212) 870-3400"

Be revised as follows:

"You can also contact the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information at:

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
(212) 870-3400
www.aa.org"

8. The trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/ Special Needs-Accessibilities revise the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..." taking into consideration suggested changes of the Conference Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community and bring back a report or draft pamphlet to the 2014 Conference Committee.

Corrections

It was recommended that:

9. The revised pamphlet “A Message to Corrections Professionals” be approved.

Finance

No recommendations.

Grapevine

No recommendations.

International Conventions/Regional Forums¹

It was recommended that:

10. The undernoted three cities, expressed here in alphabetical order, be considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2025:

Montreal, Quebec
St. Louis, Missouri
Vancouver, British Columbia

11. Up to 21 non-A.A. speakers be invited to attend the 2015 International Convention at A.A.’s expense.

¹Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.

Literature

It was recommended that:

12. The draft pamphlet “A.A—Spiritual not Religious” be recommitted to the trustees’ Literature Committee for additional discussion and brought back to the 2014 Conference Committee on Literature.

Policy/Admissions

It was recommended that:

13. The 66th General Service Conference be held April 17-23, 2016, since these dates do not conflict with any significant holidays or hotel availability.
14. The user responsibilities in the "Guidelines for Electronic Device Users at the General Service Conference," which currently read:

"Users are responsible for insuring adequate battery strength prior to the start of sessions. No technical assistance will be provided by the organizers of the General Service Conference or Conference technical assistants."

be revised to read:

"Users are responsible for insuring adequate battery strength prior to the start of sessions. For safety reasons, extension cords will not be permitted between any seating rows or walking areas. Power outlets will be available in designated seating areas during General Sessions. No technical assistance will be provided by the organizers of the General Service Conference or Conference technical assistants."

15. The deadline for the submission of Conference Agenda Items be changed from January 15 to December 15, beginning in December 2014 for the 65th General Service Conference.
16. The timetable for the election of the delegate from Area 84, Northeastern Ontario, be revised to allow for two odd and two even panels in that province. The revised timetable for the election of the delegate from Area 84, Northeastern Ontario is to be accomplished by having the Panel 63 delegate elected for a one-year term with the understanding that this delegate would have the opportunity to stand for his/her own two-year term in the following Panel 64 election.

Public Information

It was recommended that:

17. The 63rd General Service Conference affirm that the Internet, social media and all forms of public communications are implicit in the last phrase of the Short Form of Tradition Eleven, which reads: "...at the level of press, radio and films."
18. A.A. World Services be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of digital A.A. literature. The committee requested that the board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The committee requested that a status and financial report be submitted to the appropriate 2014 Conference Committee.

Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

19. A typographical error in the article “Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need,” contained within the essay on Concept IX on page 37, fifth paragraph, third line: “...badly disturbed or **uninformed**...” be corrected to “...badly disturbed or **uninformed**...” in the next printing, noting that this typographical error has existed since the first printing of *Twelve Concepts for World Service*. (Change indicated in bold)
20. The following text describing the duties of the chairperson of the General Service Board be added to Chapter Nine in *The A.A. Service Manual* in a location to be determined by the Publishing Department.

Duties of the A.A. General Service Board Chairperson

“The chairperson of the General Service Board of A.A. presides over the trustees’ meetings, co-chairs the General Service Conference, and functions on behalf of the General Service Board between board meetings. The chairperson appoints members of the trustees’ committees, subject to G.S.B. approval, and is an ex-officio member of all trustees’ committees. In addition to board meetings and the Conference, the chairperson participates in all Regional Forums and may participate in a number of other events.”

21. The following text be added to page S23 of *The A.A. Service Manual*, after the section entitled “Stimulating Interest in General Service”:

“The Principle of Rotation

“Traditionally, rotation ensures that service positions, like nearly everything else in A.A., are passed around for all to share. Many positions have alternates who can step into the service positions if needed.

“To step out of an A.A. office we love can be hard. If we have been doing a good job, if we honestly don’t see anyone else around willing, qualified, or with the time to do it, and if our friends agree, it’s especially tough. But it can be a real step forward in growth—a step into the humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity.

“Among other things, anonymity in the Fellowship means that we forgo personal prestige for any A.A. work we do to help alcoholics. And, in the spirit of Tradition Twelve, it ever reminds us ‘to place principles before personalities.’

“Many outgoing service position holders find it rewarding to take time to share their experience with the incoming person. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. ‘status’ at stake, we needn’t compete for titles or praise—we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed.”

22. The following text be added to Article 4 in the Current Conference Charter, on page S102 at the end of the final paragraph:

“The Conference recognizes the principles contained within the Twelve Concepts, particularly the Right of Participation, and the Rights of Petition and Appeal reflected in Concepts IV and V. In keeping with these principles, the Conference may agree to hear Concept V Appeals brought by members of the Conference structure below the Conference level on the inverted triangle.”

23. The 2010 Advisory Action regarding Area Highlights be rescinded, so the entire *Final Report* may be professionally edited and published, while still reflecting the full substance of the General Service Conference.

Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities

No recommendations.

Trustees

It was recommended that:

24. The following slate of trustees be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. in April 2013:

<u>Class A Trustees</u>	<u>Class B Trustees</u>
Terrance M. Bedient, FACHE	Rod B
Frances L. Brisbane, Ph.D.	Donald C
Corliss Burke, B Ed.	Bill F
John Fromson, M.D.	Nancy H
Michele Grinberg, J.D.	Barbara K
The Honorable Ivan L.R. Lemelle	Roberta L
David M. Morris, C.P.A.	J. Gary L
	William N
	Chet P
	Clayton V
	Andrew W
	Marty W
	Robert W
	Albin Z

25. The appointment of the following officers be approved at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2013:

Officers of the General Service Board

<i>Chairperson</i>	Terrance M. Bedient, FACHE
<i>First vice-chairperson</i>	Michele Grinberg, J.D.
<i>Second vice-chairperson</i>	Roberta L
<i>Treasurer</i>	David M. Morris, C.P.A.
<i>Secretary</i>	Clayton V

26. The February 2013 appointment of the following officers by the Chair of the General Service Board be approved at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2013:

<i>Assistant treasurer</i>	Donald W. Meurer
<i>Assistant secretary</i>	Rick W*

This appointment process is in accordance with the 2007 General Service Board Bylaws.

27. The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in April 2013:

Carole B	David N
Joe D	William N
Phyllis H	Rick W*
Roberta L	Marty W
J. Gary L	

*Will be replaced at G.S.O. Staff Rotation in summer 2013.

28. The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board in April 2013:

Lynda B	Clayton V
Ami B	Andrew W
Michele Grinberg, J.D.	Albin Z
Nancy H	[vacancy]
Ed M	

NOTE: The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Bylaws state that its board shall be comprised of "no less than seven (7) and no more than ten (10) directors."

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ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

Advisory Action 40 of the 1990 General Service Conference states: "Items discussed, but no action taken or recommendation made, as well as committee recommendations which are not adopted, be included in a separate section of the Final Report." All items, listed by committee, are as follows:

Conference Agenda Committee

- The committee reviewed the Conference Evaluation Form, along with the comments and suggestions from the trustees' Conference Committee and agreed that the form was adequate and that no changes be made at this time.

Conference Committee on Archives

- The committee reviewed the Archives Workbook and expressed satisfaction with the content.

Conference Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community

- The committee discussed how local C.P.C. committees are utilizing new technologies to provide information about Alcoholics Anonymous to professionals, and suggested adding information to the C.P.C. Kit and Workbook on:
 - Using PowerPoint and Webinars.
 - Providing electronic subscriptions to A.A. newsletters.
- The committee discussed ways of stimulating interest in C.P.C. service work and suggested:
 - Using mock C.P.C. presentations at service workshops.
 - Encouraging groups to elect C.P.C. chairs.
 - Bringing A.A. members along on C.P.C. presentations.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the Cooperation With the Professional Community Kit and Workbook and suggested:
 - Adding an index of past issues of *About A.A.* to the publications tab.
 - Including a copy of the A.A. Grapevine, La Viña and La Vigne in each Kit.

Conference Committee on Corrections

- The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Corrections continue their thorough review of all Corrections materials.
- The committee discussed how to engage A.A. members in corrections service and shared about the opportunities to highlight the current available corrections literature through local area and district Web sites.
- In discussing difficulties in engaging A.A. members in corrections service, the committee recognized that some A.A. members who have not been incarcerated may feel they have nothing to offer in corrections service. The committee requested the staff secretary work with the Publishing Department and the trustees' Committee on Corrections to incorporate text in the Corrections Workbook section "Ideas to Stimulate Corrections Twelfth Step Work Within A.A." to reassure all A.A. members that they can participate in corrections service by sharing A.A.'s basic message about getting and staying sober.
- The committee discussed available resources in support of local corrections' Twelfth Step work and suggested:
 - that the committee secretary gather sharing on ways that areas fund A.A. literature for incarcerated alcoholics for an article in *Box 4-5-9* and other service materials;
 - that corrections committees be encouraged to use *La Viña* as a valuable resource for Spanish-speaking A.A. meetings and members inside correctional facilities.
- The committee reviewed a sample Letter of Introduction to Correctional Facilities, a sample Correctional Facility Fact Sheet, and a sample A.A. Program Plan for Correctional Facilities, and requested that all three samples—with suggested changes—be added to the Corrections Workbook at the next printing.
- The committee suggested that in cases when the Area Corrections Committee is inactive, communications from the G.S.O. Corrections assignment requesting prerelease contacts or outside support for correctional facility A.A. meetings be forwarded to the delegate.
- The committee reviewed the Corrections Kit and Workbook, and suggested that the service piece "Suggestions for Using the A.A. Grapevine Magazine (or *La Viña*) as a Tool in Corrections Service" be updated and considered for inclusion in the Workbook.

Conference Committee on Finance

- The committee reviewed the suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference and felt an increase was not necessary at this time.
- The committee reviewed the Self-Support packet and suggested adding the following words to the packaging sleeve: "Information from Self-Support packet also available on the Web site aa.org" and "Please Share with Your Group."
- The committee suggested adding the following phrase to the Self-Support Green Card (F-42): "Gratitude expressed through contributions reaches the still-suffering alcoholic."
- The committee thoroughly reviewed the report on self-support from the trustees' Finance Committee and urged that the work of the Self-Support subcommittee continue.
- The committee suggested that the appropriate committee reconsider the policy concerning the General Service Conference site selection ("The responsibility for General Service Conference site selection be delegated to General Service Office management, subject to approval of the General Service Board")* and that Conference members consider the spiritual and financial aspects.

*2008 Policy/Admissions Committee

Conference Committee on Grapevine

- The committee reviewed the 2013 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and made the following requests:
 - That Grapevine communications regarding the Grapevine Audio Project specify that GV is not recording meeting speakers at A.A. events.
 - That an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future, be provided to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the results of the 2012 assessment of La Viña as a bimonthly, perfect bound, black and white, 68-page magazine and concluded:
 - The committee recognized that funding La Viña as a service, through the General Fund, is an issue affecting the overall Fellowship.
 - The committee acknowledged the increase in circulation by 8.6% from January 2011 to December 2012 may be tied to the changes in format and additional content.
 - The committee acknowledged that the 2012 increase in La Viña deficit results in large part from allocation of pension funding expense.

- The committee expressed concern that funding La Viña through the General Fund of the General Service Board, while AA Grapevine Inc. has responsibility for the production of La Viña, may suggest an imbalance between responsibility and authority.
- The committee requested that the GV board submit a proposal to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine that would significantly reduce the La Viña deficit.
- The committee considered discontinuing the requirement for the current format of the La Viña print magazine (i.e., 68 pages, perfect bound) and took no action. The committee needed more background regarding La Viña's financial history and information regarding what a new format would be.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2014 or later:
 1. Making Amends (working title)
Members share their experience about making Ninth Step amends from stories previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 2. How I Found My Higher Power (working title)
A collection of stories by AA members sharing their experience with their personal journeys with Step Two, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
- The committee reviewed the revised workbook and approved the draft copy with the following suggestions:
 - Expand Appendix V to include all past Advisory Actions about the Grapevine.
 - Look into the feasibility of hyperlinks and a live table of contents to facilitate ease of navigation of the electronic workbook.
- The committee requested a report from the A.A. Grapevine Board on the feasibility of producing one book in American Sign Language (ASL) format.

Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums

- The committee discussed ways to encourage interest in Regional and Local Forums and attract first time attendees and suggested:
 - Using locally created "save the date" flyers to encourage attendance and participation.
 - Emphasizing that you do not have to be involved in General Service to attend a Regional Forum.
 - Making Regional Forums more prominent on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site.
 - Continuing to include information about Regional Forums in *Box 4-5-9* on a regular basis.
 - Encouraging local host committees to include food, treats and A.A. meetings as part of the hospitality.
 - Providing additional service opportunities for local A.A. members at each Forum.

Conference Committee on Literature

- The committee reviewed the draft pamphlet of “Circles of Love and Service” and offered additional suggestions for the trustees’ Literature Committee to consider. The committee looks forward to reviewing an updated draft pamphlet that includes their considerations at the 2014 Conference Committee on Literature meeting.
- The committee discussed a suggestion to add an index to *Alcoholics Anonymous* and took no action, noting that our Big Book is spiritual in nature rather than academic and that an index might discourage a full reading of the material.
- The committee thoroughly discussed a request to add the subtitle ‘None Left Behind’ to the newly revised “A.A. and the Armed Services” pamphlet and took no action. The committee agreed that this request was fully and appropriately addressed by both the Conference Committee on Literature and Conference members at the 62nd General Service Conference.

Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

- The committee discussed the report of the trustees’ Committee on Conference regarding the role of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions in granting international observers admission to the General Service Conference. The committee agreed that no change to the current practice is necessary.
- The committee discussed the concept of combining the Conference Agenda and Conference Policy/Admissions Committees. The sense of the committee was that there was not enough information presented to express a need or benefit to combining the committees. In addition, the amount of time currently allotted for each committee’s deliberation seems appropriate, and combining the committees might result in too heavy a workload for the combined committee. The committee was also dissuaded by the complications involved in merging the committees (revising the Composition, Scope and Procedures of committees; updating *The A.A. Service Manual* and other literature; additional responsibilities for staff, etc.).
- The committee noted a discrepancy between the description of the Conference Agenda Committee in *The A.A. Service Manual* and in the Conference Agenda Committee’s Composition, Scope and Procedure, and suggested that the 2014 Conference Agenda Committee review the description in *The A.A. Service Manual* for consistency.

Conference Committee on Public Information

- The committee reviewed the 2012 Annual Report from the trustees’ Committee on Public Information regarding G.S.O.’s A.A. Web site and requested that as soon as possible, and independent from the Web site redesign, A.A.W.S. insure that A.A. videos on aa.org be accessible on as wide a variety of electronic devices as possible.

- The committee reviewed the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on A.A. Video Public Service Announcements (P.S.A.s).
- The committee considered production of one or more video P.S.A.s to be produced in the calendar year 2013 using the current five "Young People's Videos" and took no action. The committee requested that the trustees' Public Information Committee define more specifically the target audience, the cost, the method of distribution appropriate to the targeted audience, and any format issues, and bring back a report to the 2014 Conference Public Information Committee.
- The committee reviewed all current A.A. video public service announcements and found them all to be relevant and useful, noting that "Living in Chaos," which the trustees' committee had suggested for retirement, continues to effectively portray the consequences of alcoholic drinking.
- The committee reviewed the interim report on the centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of "Tengo Esperanza," the video public service announcement for the Spanish-speaking community. The committee noted the strong performance of this P.S.A. thus far, and looks forward to receiving the final report next year.
- The committee reviewed the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on establishing a Public Information Social Media Page and agrees with the trustees' conclusion that A.A. World Services, the General Service Office, and the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña cannot establish a presence on Facebook in a manner which would be consistent with A.A. Traditions.
- The committee suggested the General Service Board encourage the trustees' committees to review existing literature that discusses how A.A. members apply the Eleventh Tradition, e.g., "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" and "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," and suggest updates to the literature that reflect current experience with anonymity in a digital age, with an eye towards reaffirming the importance of the Eleventh Tradition to the Fellowship.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the P.I. Kit and Workbook and suggested that:
 - The address of G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site, www.AA.org, be added to the front of the new P.I. Kit packaging.
 - The pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous" be included in the P.I. Kit.

Conference Committee on Report and Charter

- The committee accepted a report from the Publishing Department outlining the General Service Office process for timely and accurate preparation and publication of *The A.A. Service Manual* 2013-2014 Edition, and the 2013 General Service Conference *Final Report*.
- The committee reviewed the list of editorial updates from the Publishing Department for *The A.A. Service Manual* and suggested some revisions. The committee noted that one of the editorial updates regarded the description of a Conference Committee, and asked that a review of the descriptions of all Conference Committees for consistency with current Composition, Scope and

Procedures be made, and any suggested editorial updates be included in the annual list to be forwarded to the 2014 Conference Committee on Report and Charter. The committee also requested that a similar review of the list in Chapter Eleven of services provided by G.S.O. be made, and any suggested editorial updates be included in that list as well.

- In keeping with the 2009 Advisory Action that the A.A.W.S. Board annually review *The A.A. Service Manual* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter, the committee reviewed the updates from the A.A.W.S. Board for *The A.A. Service Manual* and suggested some revisions.
- The committee considered a request to add “Advisory Action” and “Additional Committee Consideration” to the Glossary of General Service Terms in *The A.A. Service Manual*, and forwarded suggestions to the Publishing Department with the request that draft text be brought back for consideration by the 2014 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.
- The committee considered a request that “the definition and Composition of an Area Assembly be modified for consistency and clarity in Chapter Four” and took no action. The committee believes the existing descriptions of Area assemblies accurately reflect the variety of autonomous practices determined by each Area’s group conscience.
- The committee considered a request to revise the description of “Director (nontrustee)” in the Glossary of General Service Terms in *The A.A. Service Manual*, and agreed to forward this suggestion to the General Service Board for consideration as part of the annual review of *The A.A. Service Manual*.
- The committee considered a request to update information in *The A.A. Service Manual* regarding suggested qualifications for area registrars, and forwarded suggestions to the Publishing Department with the request that draft text be brought back for consideration by the 2014 Conference Committee on Report and Charter. The committee also suggested that G.S.O. develop a new piece of service material outlining the specific abilities and resources area registrars have found helpful in assisting with the maintenance of vital information in the Fellowship New Vision database.
- In light of the recent decision not to publish regional directories this year, the committee asked the staff secretary to communicate their concerns to the A.A.W.S. Board about the still existing, albeit decreasing, need for print resources by A.A. members in rural and remote areas, and those members who may travel frequently.

Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities

- The committee reviewed the report on Spanish and French translations of the video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* and expressed the need for translated versions of audio visual materials to have improved sound production in the future.
- The committee reviewed the report on the DVD version of the pamphlet “A.A. For the Alcoholic with Special Needs” formatted for alcoholics who are blind, deaf or learning challenged and

availability of the item. There was a concern expressed whether a DVD in American Sign Language (ASL) and with subtitles in English serves the needs of French and Spanish language-based members.

- The committee reviewed the Treatment Committee Kit and Workbook contents and its current content.
- The committee reviewed the contents of Special Needs-Accessibilities Workbook and Kit and requested the following:
 - That the staff secretary produce a memo with the following wording suggested by the 2012 Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities: "Committees gather local information and identify outside local resources regarding accessibility requirements and options." This memo is to be a temporary insert in the section, "Activities Suggested for Special Needs-Accessibilities Committees," of the current Special Needs-Accessibilities Workbook until the next printing of the workbook. The memo will be sent to area, district, and intergroup/central office Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities chairs.
 - Add the service piece, "Online Meetings/Reunions a L'Internet/Reunions del Internet" (SM F-124), to the Special Needs-Accessibilities Kit.
- The committee had a wide-ranging discussion on how Special Needs-Accessibilities committees can communicate the various ways to make meeting places accessible to *all* alcoholics. Topics included:
 - Start Special Needs-Accessibilities committees and hold workshops on various topics to inform members about this service area.
 - Communicate in web-based and print meeting directories which meetings are handicapped equipped, wheelchair accessible, and ASL interpreted.
 - Consider ensuring that the entire meeting experience for those with special needs is accessible-friendly, e.g. assuring that the height of literature displays or coffee dispensers are accessible to those in wheelchairs.
 - Prepare meeting greeters to identify attendees with special needs and to help provide accommodation as best as possible.
 - Provide local special needs contact information in meeting formats and event flyers.
- The committee also discussed ways that Special Needs-Accessibilities committees might help groups prepare in advance for the arrival of deaf/hard of hearing alcoholics. Topics included:
 - Provide optimal seating arrangements.
 - Use a microphone, discourage cross-talk, and ask those speaking to stand and avoid covering their faces with hand gestures.
 - When economically possible, provide ASL interpreters or seek out capable A.A. members who can sign; some areas fund ASL interpreters.
 - Communicate with the hard of hearing in attendance that seating and other accommodations can be made.

- Encourage cooperation with local professionals serving the deaf/hard of hearing community.

Conference Committee on Trustees

- The committee reviewed their Composition, Scope and Procedure and updated the references to the trustees' committees on "Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities" and "Correctional Facilities" found in their Scope to trustees' committees on "Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Need-Accessibilities" and "Corrections."
- The committee reviewed the resumes and approved, as eligible for election, all Class B trustee candidates for the East Central and Southeast regional trustees and trustee-at-large/U.S.
- The committee reviewed the General Service Board's proposed plan regarding the slate of directors for the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board and took no action. The committee did not support the proposed interlocking directorate.

The committee noted that the General Service Board has sufficient authority to implement changes in Practices as outlined in the initiatives in the sections under the heading "Communications and Unity" and "Efficient Operations and Financial Stability" and expressed their support for those ongoing changes. It was the sense of the committee that the changes in Practices could address the concerns of the General Service Board.

The committee requested that, before implementation, any changes proposed in the section "Governance," regarding "Non-trustee Director Service," "Eligibility of General Service Trustees" and "Eligibility of Appointed Committee Members" be brought to the Conference Committee on Trustees for review.

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