

WRITTEN DELEGATE REPORT

76th GSC

FOR DISTRIBUTION

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Hello friends, my name is Drew and I am an alcoholic, privileged and honored to serve you as your Panel 75 Area 79 Delegate, serving as Chair of the Conference Committee for Treatment and Accessibilities at the 76th General Service Conference.

I attended the 76th General Service Conference in midtown New York April 26-May 2nd The theme this year was Humility in Action.

I want to acknowledge that your 7th tradition contributions are what make the General Service Conference possible as well as my travel. THANK YOU and please thank your groups for all they do for our life saving fellowship.

My first assembly was 14 years ago! The past 14 years in General Service have been the best “delegate training” a guy could ask for. We are blessed to have so many members participate in our Area 79 General Service Structure. The enthusiasm we share when we get together to make better twelve step possible is what kept me coming back to general service events.

The conference is a full-on experience. It’s hard to put into words. It’s a 7-day conference (starts at 8:30 am and goes until 9pm or 10pm at night), full of amazing discussions, with many opportunities to learn

from others, opportunities to connect with new service members, and opportunities to forge new life changing connections and friendships.

Thank you for all the work each of you put in to helping inform me ahead of the 76th GSC. We had an amazing event in Burnaby, and I fully appreciated the informative conversations we had regarding each of the conference agenda items.

I brought your report backs with me, and the amazing journal with all your warm wishes.

GSO TOUR

I arrived in NYC early on my own dime to partake in some sightseeing.

On Friday before the conference, I joined many other conference members to partake in a tour of the GSO. The retrofit at the General Service Office is now complete. The conference members were the first to do the tour since the office reopened. That was a special experience.

Your GSO communications department and AAWS Publishing are now back on the 11th floor with rest of the GSO office. Previously they had been on the 8th floor. So now we are consolidated onto one floor.

A typical tour of the GSO includes a visit to the Archives Repository, however the Archives were closed as they were busy working on moving their entire collection to a new storage space down the hall.

In preparation for this report, I wanted to look back on our history. Thanks to the good work of our Area 79 Archives Chair Pauline D. I had a chance to read the very first Area 79 delegate report from our first ever Delegate Charlie Brown.

Charlie wrote about the office in his report stating that "many problems arise and each one is dealt with immediately" examples were given about anonymity breaks in the media at that time stating "while they can't stop it, a very friendly letter will be sent to the AA member, newspaper or radio pointing out our tradition of anonymity.

He goes on to point out that "Many hundreds of screwball letters are received, and all are answered, for instance wives have written in that since joining A.A. their husbands suffer from itch, red nose, bad breath etc. and want to know what we are going to do about it. "

This cracked me up, it's written exactly like that in his report.

In terms of our current office activities, in 2025 GSO staff services responded to 232,211 emails and 2777 phone calls. I wonder if any of those were complaints against sober husbands smelling bad???

My intention in this presentation is to take you with me on my journey through the 7-day conference. I will go over the business of the conference – what decisions and policies were made, as well as share my personal insights as a second year Delegate and AA member.

Although we do the business of Alcoholics Anonymous at the conference, there is so much more that happens in the moments between meetings - at gatherings, sharing sessions, shared meals, and experiences you just can't plan for.

WHO MAKES UP THE CONFERENCE?

- 136 Voting Members
- 93 Delegates
- 21 Trustees
- 5 Non-Trustee Directors (3 AAWS, 2 GV)
- 14 GSO Staff
- 3 GV Staff

A lot of work gets done during conference week. Here is a high-level view which I will dig into more detail shortly.

- 22 Advisory Actions
- 3 recommendations that did not carry
- 6 Floor actions - 3 became advisory actions

Last year I talked a lot about my daily ritual of walking in Central Park every morning to stay grounded and connect to my HP. Since the conference was held at the same location as last year, this daily morning ritual continued.

The park provides tranquility in the morning ahead of all the hustle and bustle of the day. Even when I was dead tired, I went for this walk. Getting fresh air and getting outside of the conference bubble was impactful, even if it was only a short walk, it really helped me.

...(especially now that I'm an island guy, I get outdoors in fresh air a lot more than I did in Vancouver, so this time in the park helped me feel more like myself each day).

CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS

A lot happens in a day—let alone seven. Opening day at conference there is an energy in the room. We are all a little excited/nervous/curious

Last year I spoke about the teamwork of our Co-Chairs Bob W. (our GSO manager) and Scott H. (our GSB Chair) and how they carried us smoothly through the work of the conference with grace and principled leadership. This year was no different.

ROLL CALL

Before we hear any reports, a roll call is taken of members present.

I've heard past delegates describe the feeling of hearing their name during the opening session roll call. I was sitting with Carolyn W. and John W. so that our names were called one after the other - the 3 W's! That was a neat experience.

Drew - PRESENT!

Our Sunday session opened with our General Service board Chair welcoming remarks. There was a tone of respect, love, safety & inclusivity –

We heard Scott's vision for Alcoholics Anonymous - one where we can imagine no locks on our doors, where everyone is welcome. Scott shared:

"What if our singleness of purpose was an inclusive invitation, a warm embrace with a hot cup of coffee and a piece of literature that says we already thought of you, and we were waiting for you to get here. Read this, you may hear your story."

We also heard a full report of the General Service Board activities on Sunday

BOARD SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES –

For those who would like to read the full GSB report, it will be printed in the final conference report later this year, or I can email you a PDF copy.

Scott reported on the board:

- Strategic planning sessions
- Workload challenges
- Resources/Financial challenges
- Strategies to improve communication within the GSB itself, the boards, the board and the conference, and through our entire service structure and fellowship.

The day wrapped up with Presentations and a Workshop on - "Keeping Our Own House in Order", followed by our evening Gala dinner and AA Speaker meeting.

A few quotes from the presentations:

"Don't live in the imagined wreckage of the future of AA"

"We all have a voice, it's a level playing field, the highest level you get here is sober"

"You can't create unity, you build unity, one interaction at a time"

WESTERN CANADA REGION

I am very proud to be from the Western Canada Region. The Western Canada Regional Delegates I have the pleasure of serving with:

- Dave S. Panel 76 Area 78 (Alberta) Delegate.
- Alison GT is my Panel 75 buddy she is the Area 91 Delegate.
- Kathy M. is the Panel 76 Delegate from Area 80 Manitoba.
- Gail, who was our Panel 67 Delegate is now serving as our Western Canada Regional Trustee for her second conference as a trustee.

During the conference week the Western Canada Region shared a few regional lunches together - I found this to be a very unifying and grounding experience. The bond we have is deeper because of our conference time together.

MY JOURNAL – A few reflections

I used the same journal as last year to capture my thoughts at the end of each day. I still had plenty of pages left, so I brought it back with me for my second Conference.

I've always thought our Conference process is brilliant. As a Delegate, you only ever get one first Conference and one last Conference, and they're meant to be different experiences.

Coming into my second year, I noticed that difference almost immediately. There was a sense of familiarity with the process. It reminded me of being a second-year GSR. The first year I was learning the ropes—figuring out the language, how everything worked, how to report back, and how to contribute to committee work. It was exciting, but it's also a lot. By the second year, there's a rhythm that I settled into. I've experienced that in every service position I've held, and being Delegate was no different.

What stood out even more, though, was the spirit of this year's Conference.

The Panel 75 Delegates were focused on finishing the term in unity. There were no major conflicts on the floor, no censure motions, and none of the tension around the Conference process that had marked previous years. At the same time, the Panel 76 Delegates arrived full of enthusiasm, excited to serve and focused on our primary purpose.

I can't tell you how refreshing that felt. You all know the feeling — (I'm preaching to the choir here), when Area 79 comes together with a shared focus on carrying the message, there's an energy that's hard to describe, but it's palpable. I've always been drawn to that in General Service, and this Conference reminded me why.

I found myself feeling grateful for our General Service Office staff, Trustees, and Directors, who were able to spend their time supporting the work of the Conference instead of navigating another major conflict.

The result was a Conference that felt uplifting. The conversations in the hallways were warm, welcoming, safe, fun, and full of genuine sharing. Members were exchanging ideas, listening to one another, and trusting the process. There was a spirit of cooperation that I hadn't experienced before, and it made this year's Conference feel very different from my first.

FINANCE REPORT

Let's talk about where Money and Spirituality mix, shall we?

AUDIT RESULTS

Our professional auditors have given our books the highest level of approval.

They found nothing that needs to be brought to the attention of the internal audit committee.

Quote from our auditors:

- *"There is excellent governance of your corporations."*
- *"Nothing needed changing – speaks to the job that management has done to reconcile and keep things in order."*

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD (GSB)

Contributions were down year over year from \$11.2 Million to \$10.5 Million

With contributions trending downwards 6%, the 2026 budget has kept its projected estimate for contributions in 2026 flat at \$10.5 million

From the very First Delegate Report in Area 79 from 1951 Delegate Charlie B wrote that - *"Only one-third of all groups in the structure at that time contributed to our HQ's."* Back then it was suggested \$1.00 per member per year be raised to \$2.00 per member per year.

Looking at the numbers from 2025, 34% of groups contribute to the GSB – Area 79 is at 44% which is good to see. This is a good reflection of our participation and how we continue to talk about where money and spirituality mix. But please do not put on the brakes. WE need to continue the momentum as our services to carry the message require our contributions to fund them.

One way to help is by doing a monthly contribution of ANY amount to the GSB here:

<https://contribution.aa.org/>

No contribution is too small. On average, the individual member contribution in 2025 was \$50 USD. That is approx. \$4 USD a month. or \$7 CAD roughly per month.

On Season 2 Episode 6 of the GSO podcast Our Primary Purpose, Terry Bediant, non-alcoholic Class A trustee and former interim treasurer, was interviewed to speak about the spiritual aspect of self-support. I encourage members to listen to his view on the 7th Tradition: <https://www.aa.org/gso-podcast>

An update on something that's new at our General Service Office - The Self-Support Desk.

You may have noticed the new monthly self-support letters that have been distributed by this service desk. These letters are written by AA members and are part of this new initiative.

The purpose is really to help keep self-support front and centre in the Fellowship. It's about encouraging conversations around the Seventh Tradition and helping us remember that everything we do—from literature and corrections work to public information, treatment, and carrying the message—is made possible because AA members support AA.

From an operational standpoint, the Self-Support Desk has become the central point of contact for finance and self-support questions. It also provides staff support to the Conference Finance Committee and is updating and organizing self-support resources for the Fellowship.

Call for sharing

GSO is inviting members to share their stories about the ways the Seventh Tradition has had a positive impact on each members sobriety and the Fellowship. Members can participate by recording a brief (one minute) message sharing how GSO/AAWS essential services supported members and how contributions have touched your recovery or helped you or your group Carry The Message.

selfsupportfinance@aa.org

The self-support fact sheet has been updated F-203 – please share with your groups, you can download it and share it electronically as a PDF or print it and bring to your homegroup. This sheet gives members a chance to see how our 7th tradition dollars are used for various initiatives to carry out our primary purpose.

➔ <https://www.aa.org/seventh-tradition-fact-sheet-your-seventh-tradition-contributions>

RESERVE FUND

The Reserve fund is different than a prudent reserve. It is a place where contributions and literature profits, in excess of current year requirements, are held. A groups prudent reserve is mostly for emergencies or shortfalls.

The reserve fund can fund shortfalls, but it is also available to fund more.

Recent examples include

- funding the payment of employees during the pandemic rather than receiving government funding,
- the retrofit of our office to allow more efficient provision of services
- shortfall in net revenue for both the GSB/AAWS and AAGV operations.
- funding capital projects which require a larger amount of cash at the start

Our Reserve fund balance is just above 5.72 months and is projected to drop down to just above 4.5 months in 2026. This has to do with our contributions and literature profits not meeting expenses as well as the reality of rising inflation costs everywhere.

One thing to note: Our boards are doing everything they can to keep our operating expenses well controlled and under budget.

I've heard it said:

"We have a prudent reserve – its in our pockets"

One trustee shared a perspective on self-support that really stuck with me. He asked himself, *"What is my personal contribution plan to AA? Or is it just something that's in my head?"*

He realized he had never actually written it down. So he made a list of all the ways he wanted to support his recovery and the Fellowship—supporting his home group, attending service events, contributing to another group, subscribing to the Grapevine, giving to convention scholarship funds, and other forms of service and financial support.

Then he looked at the list and asked, *"What have I committed to that I'm not actually doing?"*

It made me think. If more of us approached self-support the same way we approach a personal budget—with a plan rather than good intentions—we might be in a much better position to keep up with rising expenses and continue supporting the services that carry the message.

Things to consider:

Services provided like the meeting guide app help us locate meetings anywhere we go... keep in mind that the meeting guide app is FREE to use, but NOT free to maintain.

Budget to upgrade Meeting guide app is approx. \$100k

For fun, (service nerd fun that is), I took a look at our Advisory Actions from the past and found this:

In 1955 the Conference Committee on Finance had a few additional suggestions in their advisory action that were tackling plans for increasing contributions and consisted of the following suggestions:

1 . Earmarking specific meetings for Headquarters contributions.

2 . Piggy banks possibly in the form of empty whiskey bottles with the notation “Pour it in, Don’t pour it out”

or

“Are you a piggy backer or piggy banker?”

I like that that was in an advisory action and found it humorous. We were direct in those days with our advisory actions, and they felt this was necessary to get the message across to sober members of our fellowship that it’s our responsibility to ensure AA’s doors stay open for the sick and suffering to find help.

BUDGET CUTS

Budget Cuts were talked about at conference, for example:

- During Conference - buffet vs seated dinner, no guests invited to banquet, being mindful at the buffet to only take one drink as they are very expensive.
- New this year – members will now have to pay for their printed Final Conference Reports this year, they will no longer be printed and shipped for free. Digital copies will remain available.
- There were concerns regarding cutting the cost of ASL services at forums due to budget constraints.
- CPC event budget cuts happened as we can not afford to send Trustees and GSO staff to as many professional events to share information about our 12 step recovery program. These are just a few examples.

TUESDAY

On Tuesday afternoon we heard a report back from the Conference Inventory implementation committee.

As some of you may recall, the GSC took an inventory last year for the first time in 13 years. As a result of that sharing, an implementation committee was tasked with reporting back a summary of the findings to serve as a means for the conference to make suggestions on what ideas or actions to implement.

This conversation was tricky. There was a misunderstanding about the committee’s scope of work. It took about an hour for the conference to share about whether or not the committee's recommendations would be considered.

There were members who felt the committee overstepped in their authority and were not to be making recommendations to the floor as they were not an official conference committee.

Our GSB chair Scott H. was able to handle this portion of the conference with care, and led us through a sharing session where we could agree on a path forward. The conference ultimately decided to refer many of the items back to the General Service Board for further consideration.

Part of the sharing from members touched on the importance of that inventory and how many of the outcomes that were listed were not the full voice of the conference. I'm glad the conference was able to

get to a resolution as to how to move through this portion of business, it was unfortunate that there were misunderstandings about the scope of work and that many of the shared ideas from the inventory did not make the report back. To me it felt like there were missed opportunities for growth in our conference process.

AAWS REPORT

The AAWS board has a broad scope with the most noticeable being the oversight of the General Service Office, our “headquarters” and home of our services and support operations.

They are responsible for the operation of the office, which includes all of those support services that we enjoy as a member and in our AA group. But they also oversee all of our publishing operations.

Ken T AAWS Board Chair and Class B Trustee touched on many items that I will report in more detail later.

BUDGET CUTS

The AAWS board had to make significant budget cuts this past year. The budget went through 6 versions – each version had significant cuts

The following decisions were made:

- \$179K reduction in meals at the 76th GSC
- Savings of \$79k in printing and shipping costs by not producing a print version of our final conference report to mail out free copies to each of the 93 Areas
- \$49k reduction in spending on a number of Co-operation with the Professional events
- \$42K in savings by reducing eliminating travel and participation of those Appointed Committee Members (ACMs) at the GSC
- Savings of 35k by moving AAWS March and June in person board meetings to virtual board meetings

Note:

- The board had various strategic planning sessions including taking an honest board self-inventory.
- AAWS is targeting a 54% margin on sales and will endeavor to perform an annual review of their literature pricing policy to ensure they don’t let too much time go by before they raise prices

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Can you believe the Intl Convention was just over a year ago?

AAWS gave an update on the event highlighting the enormous success of the 2025 International Convention in Vancouver

It was a success in every way. There was so much that happened behind the scenes to help make this event a success.

July 3-6 2025 AA members gathered from around the world to celebrate 90 years of Alcoholics Anonymous, and by every account the experience was memorable and unifying.

Incredible CPC and PI opportunities with many interviews given by our Boards, delegates, and office staff. Our Class A trustees were especially put to work in these interviews.

Our Volunteer Welcome Committee and the 4000 Volunteers really shone a light on what we can do together. The committee organized members all over the city from bus stations, airports, hotels, convention centers, street parties, etc.

We have huge gratitude for you folks for making this all happen so smoothly and really for making us look so good to the world. Outstanding dedication and work. We love you and thank you!

The event met budget expectations despite a tremendous number of challenges with border crossing barriers for some, with strong collaboration among staff, vendors, and Fellowship volunteers

WEDNESDAY

AAGV BOARD REPORT

Now let's talk about our other corporation, the AA GV

From our first Delegate and first delegate conference report, Charlie B. 1951 wrote:

"In many cases the group members have never been informed of the existence of the Grapevine, thereby denying the group members the right to decide for themselves whether they wish to subscribe to the publication or not."

he goes onto write...

"What does the GV mean to A.A.? It is a reporter, open forum, an anchor for the newcomer. It helps to promote good meetings, and is of tremendous value to the lone A.A."

In that same report Charlie B. took notes from a session on - What is the solution of the

A.A. GV deficit? He made notes about needing to communicate to the fellowship to increase subscribership or else the magazine would have to increase its pricing, or the service would have to be vastly curtailed.

Delegates were asked to consider and promote ways and means of at least doubling the circulation of the AAGV and to work closely with all Intergroups and group secretaries being "very careful to offend no one."

HUMBLE BRAG - He goes on to say BC leads all states and provinces in GV sales per capita. I wonder if that's true today?

GV BOARD REPORT

- David S. General Service Trustee gave the AAGV board report.

David shared "I heard it said that GV is turning the Queen Mary around, it's in transition, and things are improving."

In terms of year on year, the GV Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) look good, percentages are higher than budget and higher than last year. Overall, the net deficit is \$284k before the official audit was completed, and since the conference and audit has been completed it has been reported out that GV had a net loss at 299k. It is an improvement compared to actual deficit of \$854k in 2024 and as a result the GV Board is feeling optimistic.

A new milestone this year – in 2025 GV revenues surpassed the cost to produce the app, meaning that the app is now cost neutral. It took a few years, but we got there.

NEW in 2025 – AAGV Greeting Cards - sales were approx. \$31k revenue with a 56% margin

David mentioned that he wondered if the fellowship might not be aware of everything the GV are offering, or not aware of how to support GV. He reminded us that the Grapevine provides the fellowship access to publications with contemporary stories of what is happening in the fellowship today. Stories of all varieties ranging from the homegroup, the steps, recovery principles, traditions, service work, sponsorship, spirituality, the concepts, and many other topics and themes in each monthly magazine.

The GV 5-year plan and 2026 budget will continue to focus on converting subscribers from print subscriptions to digital subscriptions moving forward. There are better margins on digital subscriptions, and as we are aware, print publishing is in decline in our modern society today.

What does self-support look like when it comes to the GV?

What can members do to support it?

I think this is where the spiritual principle of self-support comes into play. I encourage each of us to take a look and ask ourselves - If we are enjoying the 'free services' GV provides, like the app, the podcast, the daily quote, the funny cartoons - what are we willing to do to ensure these services stay available to all who need them?

These services are not free, they do have costs to produce - staff resources, app maintenance etc. If you enjoy the services, perhaps it's time to take a look at how to do our part to be self-supporting. If not yet subscribed, one could do a monthly recurring subscription or give a gift subscription to an AA friend or sponsee. There are of course many new GV books on topics relating to our recovery – the latest was a book on Gratitude published this year.

Another way to support GV is to contribute a story, a cartoon, a caption, become a GV rep and let your district or HG know about what's happening with GV.

In terms of conference items, the big one for GV this year we discussed at our Pre Conference Assembly in April. The Conf Committee on GV discussed the agenda item that "GV inc. accept contributions" and took no action.

The conference committee felt that the GV was already halfway through a 5-year plan and wanted to see the plan come to fruition and felt this was not a good time to introduce a new self-support model for this corporation.

If you wanted to purchase a gift subscription to the GV there are two ways to that:

1) Carry the Message a subscription where the subscription goes to someone in need - this is managed by GV office staff

or

2) Give the gift of a GV subscription to a friend, sponsee or for a bday gift. you can buy a GV GC at the GV store.

Really this lies with us. If we say we want the GV board to continue to provide services, then its up to all of us to keep it going and support it and it's up to us to help raise awareness of these products that are meant to carry a message to the alcoholic who needs it.

THURSDAY & FRIDAY

Thursday and Friday is where the conference gets into the bulk of the committee work discussing those recommendations that come from each of the conference committees.

ELECTRONIC VOTING ROCKS! It's so efficient and I love that you don't know how members voted on items as there are no hands raised.

This is where I really felt like a second-year Delegate. Having one Conference behind me, I had far fewer jitters and a much better understanding of the process. One of the biggest lessons I learned was that the key to voting on committee recommendations is listening carefully for new information.

That helped me make decisions based on the full discussion rather than just the first few opinions I heard.

I was listening to learn what was best for AA as a whole.

+++

How I showed up for the report backs:

Took to heart some advice I got from John W.

When it came time to hear the report backs and recommendations, John W's questions helped me,

- Does it need to be said by me?
- Does it need to be said now?
- Am I adding something new to the discussion?
- Are we talking about the right things?
- Have I voiced my 'minority' opinion during the initial deliberations?

During conference week each committee carefully discusses and considers each agenda item and one of three things happen:

1. They decide to take no action
2. They can provide feedback via a committee consideration - these serve as some insight into the committee's discussion on the item but is not intended to be a directive to the corresponding trustees committee. Its serves as a way for the trustees to have a look and think about these ideas that came from the committee. The trustees committee may or may not decide if there are any actionable items in the committee consideration lists
3. or they make a recommendation

Recommendations that come out of committee are automatically motions on the conference floor and will be discussed and voted on by the entire conference.

Once a recommendation passes with substantial unanimity from the entire conference, it becomes a conference advisory action, and the appropriate trustees committee is charged with making it all happen.

TREATMENT & ACCESSIBILITIES

I had the enormous privilege of serving you in our Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

Here is a map that illustrates the diversity in geography we had in our committee.

Each conference committee has 8 Delegates made up of First-year Delegates from Panel 76 and second year delegates from Panel 75.

- Jo - Northeast Quebec P75
- Mike – Utah P75
- Bryan – Oklahoma P75
- Jon - Central Michigan P75
- Michael GSO staff – New York
- Merri Beth - Puerto Rico
- Pamela - Delaware
- Adrian - San Diego

Much like the committees you may have attended at a district or area level, a higher power is found in the group conscience. In our committee we had 6 agenda items to discuss.

Below are a few highlights.

Accessibilities has a LOT of resources for members and groups. I encourage you to visit the website to learn how to help remove barriers for these members whether it be at the group level or district or area level.

We all can benefit to learn more about some of the unseen challenges people face.

One thing I am loving about this committee assignment is how fulfilling it is to help members in AA who face barriers that I do not face. It helps me with my compassion and empathy to continue to be responsible to ensure the hand of AA is always there for those who need it.

MILITARY PROJECT

The committee reviewed and accepted the progress report on the Military/Veteran Interview Project and noted the completion of the project, expressing gratitude for the work that went into the project from the appointed committee members (ACMs) and the General Service Office (GSO). The committee discussed ways to continue to expand outreach to both active duty and veteran members of the armed services and made several suggestions: (in committee considerations document on website)

NEW: a video from a professional in the Military. Lt. Gen. Lise Bourgon - CAD Armed Forces Chief of Military Personnel shares her support for AA military outreach in a new video. This was a really amazing video showing a professional who is non-alcoholic recommend AA to her military personnel.

Agenda item:

Review locally produced safety-related video service material and provide input on the potential for this video service material to be adapted for use by GSO.

The committee TOOK NO ACTION

The committee expressed gratitude to the local service district for its work in producing the original videos, as it inspired a vital Fellowship-wide discussion on this important topic.

However, the committee determined that the videos needed more than minor editorial adjustments and would require more substantive changes.

The committee discussed that for broad use throughout the US and Canada a video with a format and content more closely aligned with current service material would be more effective.

Rather than spending resources to adapt these videos, it was the conscience of the committee to request that AAWS create a new video based on existing content found in our safety service materials, and, as budget permits. The committee requests that AAWS consider all available cost-saving technologies, including AI, for content production and language services.

You can find this in the full list of Committee Considerations from the 76th GSC on our website.

We had some concerns about ensuring the video stay animated using more visual content than text. Members can look for a report back at the 77th GSC on this item to see if the board was able to discuss this idea any further. Moving on to other committee items now...

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)

I don't know if you all remember - but we had an item on the agenda that was a carried motion here in our area and forwarded to the conference for consideration.

A79 HOMETOWN PRIDE!

OUTCOME:

Conference outcome: Committee consideration

- The committee considered a request that standalone audio/visual clips be created when developing any new/revised videos for professionals and took no action.

The committee encourages the ongoing development of outreach material with short-form content. and recognized the need for shortform content and noted that the office is already working in this direction.

PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI)

We were able to view the draft of the updated pamphlet Understanding Anonymity. Almost an hour discussion on this revision. This draft update to the pamphlet passed with substantial unanimity.

A few updates:

- Reference to the guidelines MG-18 was added
- Anonymity in the digital age changed to Anonymity online
- Entire section on Anonymity on social media

POLICY & ADMISSIONS

I wanted to take a moment to highlight one procedural item from the Policy & Admissions Committee. This agenda item took two-hours to fully explore and discuss.

Recommendation read: *"The committee recommended that following the 78th GSC that the Equitable Distribution of Workload (EDW) process be discontinued"*

This recommendation generated nearly two hours of discussion. Motions to amend, recommit the item back to the committee, and table the discussion were all defeated before the Conference reached a decision.

For those who are newer to service, Equitable Distribution of Work (EDW) began nine years ago as a three-year trial. After the trial, it was adopted as an ongoing Conference process.

The goal was simple:

- Balance the workload between Conference committees.
- Give every committee meaningful agenda items to discuss.
- Create a more consistent Conference experience across committees.

From both an Area 79 perspective and during Conference week, EDW generally worked well. It allowed work to be shared more evenly, and committees had meaningful agenda items to discuss regardless of which committee members were assigned to.

Where the challenges emerged was outside of Conference week. The Conference is only one part of a year-round process. Behind every Conference committee is a GSO staff assignment and a corresponding Trustees committee.

Those staff members serve as the non-voting secretaries for both the conference committees and the trustees committees. As the result of their staff assignment, they are uniquely aware of matters pertaining to their assigned committee as they deal with the related correspondences, requests and questions to GSO.

The GSO Staff also work closely with the related GSO departments (literature>publishing, PI>communications services) and have knowledge of the internal workings related to their area of responsibility.

Think of it this way: EDW changed who discussed some agenda items, but it didn't change where the work ultimately belonged. The work still flowed back through the same GSO staff assignments and Trustees committees after Conference.

That meant the people supporting the discussion during Conference weren't always the same people responsible for carrying that work forward afterward, creating gaps in continuity and institutional knowledge. This added to overall workload.

For example, if a Literature agenda item was assigned to the Corrections Conference Committee, the GSO staff member supporting Corrections would be the secretary during that discussion during Conference. However, they wouldn't necessarily have the same information that comes from spending the entire year supporting Literature and responding to literature-related questions from the Fellowship.

After Conference, that same agenda item would still return to the Trustees Literature

Committee. At that point, the GSO staff member assigned to Literature resumes supporting the work, even though they weren't part of the Conference Committee discussion that shaped the committee's thinking.

This creates a break in continuity. The person with the subject-matter expertise wasn't involved in the Conference discussion, while the person who was involved isn't the one supporting the work as it moves forward.

So in the end, this really came down to a trade-off. EDW did what it was designed to do—it balanced the workload and gave committees a more even Conference experience. But over time, it became clear that it also created more work, reduced continuity, and introduced inefficiencies throughout the rest of the Conference process.

After a lot of discussion, the Conference decided the benefits of returning to the original committee assignment process outweighed the benefits of continuing EDW. Much was learned from the EDW efforts and discussion continues about how best to balance the work during the conference and ensure effective year-round processes.

CORRECTIONS

Conference Committee on Corrections discussed pamphlet P-11 The pamphlet "The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs" (Item P-11) be revised and that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2027 General Service Conference.

The committee suggested the pamphlet "The A.A. Member — Medications and Other

Drugs" (Item P-11) include updates to better reflect the current landscape of medications and other drugs and provide a more inclusive and representative cross-section of A.A. recovery stories, keeping in mind the intended audience is both alcoholics and the professionals with whom we cooperate.

OTHER PAMPHLET UPDATES

At previous Conferences, advisory actions were passed to update two pamphlets: Asian American Alcoholics in A.A. and A.A. for the Transgender Alcoholic.

Two separate working groups are currently developing these pamphlets, and each group provided a progress report to the trustees' Literature Committee. Both progress reports were included in the Conference background material.

The committee recognized that the writing workshops and efforts to increase awareness of the calls for stories have been helpful in getting the word out to the Fellowship and encouraging participation.

The committee requested that progress reports or draft pamphlets be brought back to the 2027 Conference Committee on Literature for further review.

LITERATURE

The Plain Language Big Book: A Tool for Reading Alcoholics Anonymous

By January 2026, *Plain Language Big Book* sales had reached 228,363 copies, and approximately 7,500 e-books generating just over \$2 million in revenue.

The book holds a 4.5-star rating on Amazon, and the response from members has been deeply moving. One letter received at the General Service Office described a member living with a brain injury who, for the first time, felt able to fully appreciate the spiritual depth of the program. Letters like that remind us why this work matters.

Did you know? The PLBB audiobook (production is estimated at approximately \$10,500) and was published last month, get your copy now!

There was a Proposed Agenda Item (PAI) to discuss the PLBB review process on the agenda this year. The Conference Committee on Literature emphasized that the PAI process is the recommended path for submitting suggestions to Conference-approved literature.

While anyone can submit a PAI, ideas that come through an area have the benefit of broader discussion and group conscience before reaching the Conference. It's also important to remember the purpose of the Plain Language Big Book. Whether a proposed change is editorial or more substantial, it should be considered through the lens of plain language. The goal isn't to rewrite the Big Book for those of us already sober—it's to make the message more accessible for the newcomer.

One way to think about it is this: if we can't build consensus within an area that a change is needed and improves the book, it's difficult to make that case to the entire Conference. Any future changes should always support the primary purpose of making the Plain Language

Big Book more effective and accessible.

12 STEP ANIMATED VIDEO

A separate advisory action passed regarding the pamphlet *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated* (Item P-43).

The Trustees' Literature Committee was asked to explore producing an animated video based on *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*, with a progress report to be brought back to the 2027 General Service Conference.

This item was amended from moving forward with producing the video to instead exploring its production. The Conference clearly supported the idea, while also recognizing the importance of being prudent about adding new projects and potentially overloading the trustees and staff responsible for carrying out the work.

The intent is to explore the feasibility of the project, including potential costs and production considerations, and bring that information back to next year's Conference. With another animated video already in process, there will also be an opportunity to learn from that experience and use those lessons to help determine the best approach should a future Conference decide to move forward with producing *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated* video.

So, stay tuned to see where this idea goes next.

12 STEP STUDY GUIDE

The committee considered a request for a Twelve Step study guide or workbook and took no action. This item was given to the Finance Committee as an EDW item. The committee noted these efforts currently exist locally.

The committee expressed support of the efforts already taking place on the Corrections desk at the General Service Office to provide shared experience, literature and template language that specifically addresses how other members have utilized the book Alcoholics Anonymous for Step work.

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

5th Edition of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

Lets dive into this agenda item:

History - From the 71st GSC (5 years ago)

That a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that: "The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion,' 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare,' and the Appendices remain as is,"

Pending its development, the draft Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new Foreword, an updated Preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

Emphasis was placed on selecting stories with depth and weight that would help a newcomer identify and find hope. The committee paid close attention to the 4th Edition process, rather than what stories they personally liked or disliked. Subcommittee referred to the box 459 article regarding the story selection process of our 4th edition. This article was published in 2001. The article states:

In developing guidelines, the sub-committee was mindful of A.A. co- founder Bill W.'s observation that *"the audience for the book is people who are coming to Alcoholics Anonymous now. Those who are here have already heard our stories."* . . .

"We are looking for personal narratives which describe the drinking history, how the newcomer arrived in Alcoholics Anonymous, how A.A. affected him, and what A.A. has since accomplished for him."

On Tuesday evening before dinner, it was announced that the Conference Committee on Literature had recommended the approval of the 5th Edition Big Book Draft as a recommended item for discussion for the conference to be discussed on Friday when the Literature Committee would be presenting their full report with recommendations.

In order for each conference committee to make an informed decision, we had to be able to read the recommended draft as a full conference body. Each conference member was given access to a digital copy of the draft to read ahead of the Literature Conference

Committee Report back on Friday. I was soooooo excited to read this draft! I would rush to my room at the end of conference sessions each night to read the draft. I was up until the wee hours of the morning

(tues/wed/thurs) reading it until my eyes wouldn't stay open. I wanted to absorb every word and not miss out on the full experience of reading a draft copy of our primary text.

Here are my reflections from that experience:

This was one of the most moving and memorable service experiences I have had in my recovery. I was able to be one of the 136 members voting conference members who had the privilege to read this draft before publication. I will never forget it and will never fully ever be able to put it into words what I felt, saw, and heard as I got to read the draft line by line.

Although the story sample is something unique, it was clear that the committee did amazing work in selecting stories that better reflected our current membership and included stories that we haven't had in our basic text before. It is impossible to ignore the spiritual experience each member had in sharing their recovery journey in alcoholics anonymous. I cried when reading it many times.

In reading the stories, I felt that AA was the HERO. It was our fellowship at its best, it was our membership working hard to support those who were once hopeless to help them find the freedom we experience through our common solution in our 12 steps and principles.

A BIT OF BACKGROUND ON THE DRAFT....

From the subcommittee report in the background: regarding the 26 new stories:

These stories reflect A.A.'s geographic diversity and include stories of those who got sober as young people and those who got sober later in life. The stories also reflect different kinds of lived experiences, including those who identify as being part of remote communities, those who came to the U.S. or Canada as immigrants, members who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community and those who have served in the military. These new stories also include members who got sober during periods of incarceration and some who struggled with the notion of a Higher Power. All found sobriety, hope and a new way of life through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The subcommittee consulted with the trustees' Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) Committee in review of "The Medical View on A.A." (III) and "The

Religious View on A.A." (V) appendices. Past and present Class A trustees were very helpful.

In the end, the draft passed with substantial unanimity!

In AA we are encouraged to act along spiritual lines when motions come to completion with an outcome. We are expected not to cheer when a motion passes, or clap when it fails.

That said - out of pure enthusiasm....

When the motion to approve the 5th edition carried, I leapt out of my seat and hugged my new delegate friend Lori who was sitting beside me. It was like an excitement black out.

We then quickly snapped out of it and sat down to quietly reflect on the historic moment that just happened.

I wept in my seat, and so did Lori. Maybe others too but I didn't look around. The pure raw emotion that I felt is very hard to describe.

I was so grateful for the sheer amount of work that so many people were able to contribute to this publication (which lived mostly in the hands of the subcommittee of trustee's literature committee, supported by the publishing department). Many hands touched the pages of this book before I even read it (our directors, trustees, GSO staff, and appointed committee members).

I was fully in my heart when I leapt up, not thinking about me, but thinking about what

Bernard Smith talks about in Why we need a conference - to help that alcoholic stumbling in the dark who has not found us yet, or as I've heard before - to give hope to the hopeless.

I was thinking about those who haven't found us yet, and about that sentiment and how this new piece of 12 step literature will help so many. The 5th Edition will now have stories that reflect more of our current membership. My hope is that many of those still suffering alcoholics out there who have not seen or heard their stories in our literature or rooms of AA, will now be able to relate to this fatal illness and think, me too.

When will the 5th edition be published? Hopefully by the end of this year or early next year. It is too early to tell. We will receive updates as they happen and will inform everyone as we learn more in the months to come.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE - NEW BUSINESS:

Immediately after the 5th edition passed, the second recommendation was read by the Chair of the Conference Committee on Literature.

The Committee recommended that the word "Eskimo" be removed from "Chapter 7: Working With Others" and replaced with a neutral, non-racial term.

This was a 2.5 hour discussion, meaning it was thoroughly considered and discussed before we voted. A Canadian Delegate serving on the Conference Committee on Literature (CCL) was approached by members in his area asking that the conference consider this request.

It came from Inuit members who felt this word was not only offensive, but racist and a barrier to members joining AA. It was a very disunifying experience for these members (and potential members) and a barrier to entry. The Delegate brought it forward as new business for the CCL to discuss. The CCL felt it was a recommendation that needed full conference participation to discuss it.

This is where the wording appears - Working with Others pg 101 of the 4th edition of our Big Book

"We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status. His only chance for sobriety would be some place like the Greenland Ice Cap, and even there an Eskimo might turn up with a bottle of scotch and ruin everything! Ask any woman who has sent her husband to distant places on the theory he would escape the alcohol problem."

A fact to consider: The 5th Edition will be a public facing book with a press release. This was another part of the reasoning for bringing this forward. The 5th edition of our Big Book, would allow for this change in our basic text to naturally happen ahead of the bulk print order.

Those in favor:

- Many members were having 'ah ha' moments – many conference members were not aware that this was a racist word
- Some felt we needed to stay out of public controversy and have this word removed to be current with the times and current practices of other organizations
- Canadian members shared that one of our Canadian football teams in the CFL removed this word from their team name and replaced it to Edmonton Elks
- A Canadian Delegate, who was First Nations, shared how this word has affected members in his community and his hope is that we remove it and restore unity to members who need it.
- Some members shared that while they don't need this word changed for them, they need it changed for those who are not here so that they feel as welcomed as they did when they got here.
- I shared about the importance of the principle of AA being always inclusive, never exclusive and shared about the powerful example the Our Stories book has had on our Indigenous members here in Area 79.

Those opposed felt:

- Concerned about changing the text in any way, fears expressed. If we change this then what next?
- What would the new term be? Some members wanted to know what the change would say instead. Perhaps it could read the way it reads in the PLBB page 96: "And even there, someone might show up with a bottle of scotch and ruin everything!"

This motion passed with substantial unanimity with the minority voice fully explored. As a result, all new printings of our 4th edition, and the 5th edition will no longer have the 'E' word in the text.

FLOOR ACTIONS

Floor actions are new business that are brought to the floor during conference. They are introduced at the beginning of a session and must be seconded. The motion bringer is given two minutes to read a rational statement behind why they think the floor action is warranted. Then the Chair asks if there is a motion to decline to consider the floor action. If the motion passes to decline to consider the motion, the body does not discuss it. If the motion fails, it is treated as any other recommendation and discussion takes place.

FLOOR ACTION:

The word "Eskimo" be removed from the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, chapter essay on "Tradition Eight" and replaced with a neutral, non-racial term.

12 & 12 Tradition 8

"Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers."

Page 164 from our 12& 12 book:

"At the Foundation, the same story repeats itself. Eight tons of books and literature per month do not package and channel themselves all over the world. Sacks of letters on every conceivable A.A. problem ranging from a lonely-heart Eskimo to the growing pains of thousands of groups must be answered by people who know."

This discussion was still lengthy as there were some conference members in the minority expressing concern about the first 'E' word motion for the 5th edition and feelings were heightened on both sides of the discussion. The passion in the room was palpable. There was an amendment proposed that took some time to flush out, it was defeated. The main motion carried.

FLOOR ACTION:

The suggested area contribution for delegate expense to attend the Conference be increased from \$2,200 to \$3,000.

This item had gone through one round of amendments as the original motion was a higher amount. The conference settled on \$3000 and it carried. This Advisory Action does not have any impact on our area as we have a motion here that says we FULLY pay for the cost to seat the delegate at each General Service Conference. Our area does not send the minimum, we send the exact amount it costs for our Delegate to participate.

FLOOR ACTION:

AAWS offer a print version of the 2026 Final Conference Report (FCR) to be available for purchase. If production costs of the project are not covered by sales, the FCR print version will end for the 2027 General Service Conference.

This item had about a thirty-minute discussion and carried. I will be ordering a small amount of these reports for our Literature Chair to put in our area inventory. For now, we have ordered 2 per district. We do not have the final pricing on these reports yet as it will depend on what bulk discount AAWS will receive from our printers. Stay tuned!

AND THAT WAS A WRAP ON CONFERENCE BUSINESS...

What a difference a year makes! Last year we ran out of time to do a proper closing of the conference business. In contrast this year, we were able to get through all the items on the conference agenda, and floor actions, on time, so that we could hear the Panel 75 Delegate Farewell talks.

Each Panel 75 Delegate was given one minute to share about our conference experience. Lots of gratitude was expressed, and a real sense of unity for what we just walked through. Lots of tears too!

SATURDAY

The Final day of conference is a half day with farewell talks by rotating Trustees and our GSB Chair.

This year was special. It was Carolyn W's last year serving as a General Service Trustee. Carolyn served as MY delegate in Panel 63. Carolyn's service on our board started 8 years ago as a Non-Trustee Director on our AAWS board. After 4 years as a Non-Trustee Director her name was put forward for consideration as

a General Service Trustee on the AAWS board. During that time, she served as our AAWS treasurer, Chair and Secretary. Her 8 years on the board started before COVID, during COVID, during the PLBB publication process, an International Convention in our home area, and the completion of our 5th edition Big Book. There were many other committees and projects she was able to participate in that had an immense impact on our operations behind the scenes. With such a big body of work completed, and a servant who travelled to almost every area in our structure to provide workshops, attend Regional Forums, and other service assignments, her contributions were tremendous. I am so proud to have served alongside at the conference, but more importantly, to walk alongside a friend, a mentor and to witness the personal growth and 12 step program that never quits. Carolyn is an inspiration to many, and to me, someone with whom I am lucky to walk with in recovery. She is the real deal.

Being able to witness her farewell talk was special. The trustees get 5 minutes, so it goes by fast. I know many of us here in Area 79 have had so much hometown pride sharing Carolyn with all of AA. Now that she is a free agent, I'm sure we will all continue to keep her busy here at home. Carolyn you are loved by many. Thank you for your service to our life saving fellowship!

STEPPING STONES TOUR

Shortly after the farewell talks, GSO organized a tour for those members who wanted to pay on their own dime to go see stepping stones. This was a really cool experience, about an hour from downtown Manhattan.

In touring the house, you are only allowed to take photos in a few places.

The kitchen table from their house on Clinton Street in Brooklyn where Ebby came and carried his message to Bill is now at stepping stones. When I was in that kitchen I was really in my heart. It was very emotional for me - thinking about what it would have been like to be an alcoholic before our program of recovery began. The despair each alcoholic must have felt all the time with no solution in sight. I have a photo of myself sitting at that table. It was special for me.

When I was in the kitchen looking around, I noticed that Bill left a note for Lois. Lois chose to leave it on display for AA's to read. Bill wrote her a letter right after Ebby visited and he was motivated to go to treatment at Towns one more time.

Excerpt from the note (as I couldn't take a photo of it...) December 11, 1934

My Dearest Lois,

... a glimpse of a newfound life and I shall not delay a moment..."

I think of that moment in his life - we've all had it - where we get a moment of grace that gives us the willingness to want to recover. For Bill, it Ebby's message, and he was off to Towns hospital, which started his journey in recovery before AA began. In that moment Bill said yes to life.

I believe this was his 4th trip to Towns hospital and became his last.

Lois shared that she was actually upset that he didn't wait for her and went on his own. I chuckled as she was poking fun of herself being a true Alanon. She wanted to take care of him, and he knew he had just a moment of willingness to act on before the obsession to drink would get him again.

In my personal recovery journey, it was my ultimate defeat after my last relapse in Manning Park calling my sponsor and saying I was willing to do anything to stay sober that I finally surrendered to our life saving program and began taking the 12 steps.

THAT'S A WRAP!

I will never be able to repay AA for the life I have been given.

Thank you for your trust in allowing me the privilege to serve you as your Panel 75 BC/Yukon Area 79 Delegate.

AND FOR MY BIG SOBER LIFE!

Love,
Drew.