

The Northeast Ohio Recorder

July/Aug/Sept 2018

<http://www.area54.org>

Volume XXV, Issue 7

"Let us remember that great legion who still suffer from alcoholism and who are still without hope. Let us, at any cost or sacrifice, so improve our communication with all these that they may find what we have found - a new life of freedom under God."

A.A. Co-Founder, Bill W., February 1961, From: "The Shape of Things to Come", *I Am Responsible: The Hand of A.A.*, © A. A. Grapevine, Reprinted with permission

A Word From Our Delegate

Hello to all in Area 54:

I was sent a loving invitation to give a presentation during the 68th General Service Conference. I had the responsibility of composing a presentation on "Participation in All of A.A. – Is My Triangle Balanced?" I would like to share with you some of my thoughts and the thoughts of others that have journeyed down this path of recovery.



Participation In All of A.A – Is My Triangle Balanced

In AA, this symbol represents the three parts of our program (recovery, unity, service) which are the solutions to the three-part disease of alcoholism (physical, mental and spiritual). The circle surrounding the triangle represents Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. The equilateral triangle is the strongest construction structure known to us. Because all three sides are equal, the triangle represents the balance required among all 36 principles in order for us to stay sober. The body should be triangular, stable; the mind circular, open.

The triangle represents the means for generation of good energy, and is the most stable physical posture. The circle symbolizes serenity and perfection, and the source of unlimited potential. Together they represent the perfect union of mind and body. (*Barefoot Windwalker*)

Recovery: The 12 Steps are known as Recovery and it is the entire foundation of our program. Consequently it is the bottom of the triangle, holding up Unity and Service. There are three basic principles of our Spiritual Program of Action that can be summed up in a formula of three words: Awareness, Honesty, and Responsibility. I realize that for this formula to work, I have to apply it to my entire life. There is no compartment of my life that can be immune from the application of these concepts. They are to be applied equally to my inner life, my outer life, to my personal life and my public life, to my work life, my social life, to my family relationships, to my business relationships, and my personal friendships. Recovery is absorbed rather than learned, caught rather than taught. For me this is my recovery foundation.

Unity: The concept of unity first suggests joining a home group and actually participating in the meetings. (not just sit in a chair) The group and its members are responsible for making sure that the door to the meeting is open and there for the newcomer. Tradition 1 (Long Form): "Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward".

Joining the home group and actually participating in the group conscious meetings does not mean we will agree on everything. That is when I understood that agreeing to disagree is acknowledging another person's opinion. This is Tradition 2: "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience". For me this is a practice of acceptance. Tradition 4 also plays a big part in Unity – "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole." This affords us not to lose our group individuality, However in order to follow the 12 Traditions our group should not do things that will affect A.A. as a whole. In following these Traditions we will remain unified.

Inside this Issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Editorial..... | 2 |
| Alt Delegate's Report..... | 3 |
| Area Committee Reports..... | 4 |
| 2018 Advisory Actions..... | 5 |
| Green Initiative..... | 5 |
| Upcoming Events..... | 7 |
| Contact Information..... | 8 |
| On-line issue only: | |
| Early AA Publicity..... | 9 |
| 2018 Advisory Actions..... | 14 |
| GSC Considerations..... | 20 |

While AA Structure is important and can be identified as a result of, or reflect our unity, even when AA is not structured and is apparently completely fractious our principles and common interests can and do unite us. Hence the AA Declaration of Unity: "This we owe to A.A.'s future: To place our common welfare

(Continued on page 3)

OUR LEGACIES OF RECOVERY, UNITY, AND SERVICE

I am heartened by the amount of content the area has allowed me to include in this issue of the Recorder. For those who have online access, we have included all Advisory Actions, Failed Recommendations and Floor Actions, and Committee Considerations in the summer issue. We have also included a fascinating article on the history behind early publicity within and outside of AA. All told, 31 pages of fact-filled and informational content about how your AA dollars are being spent. Do you have a voice and a vote in this process? If your home group is not sending a GSR to the area assembly on a regular basis, you are abrogating your voice in AA to some other 'yahoo' bunch of drunks from THAT OTHER MEETING...

Sending a representative to Intergroup is not the same thing. An important AA entity, but intergroups and central offices do not serve the same function as your area general service.

Want to learn about what's happening in AA beyond the church basement steps? Curious how other groups are handling problems that are common to most groups? Want to find out about those great anniversary dinners in that far away district on the east side, west side, and the countryside? We announce those at area, too.

We learn about the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts at our area assembly, workshops, and other fun events. Pot luck is often included.

Ever wonder about that alphabet-soup of acronyms that the oldtimers throw around over coffee? Come on out the area and find out—don't keep your head in the sand! Contrary to the curmudgeons, general service is not about politics. But you'll never know for yourself unless you come check us out. Grab a carload of running buddies, your sponsor, and some pigeons

and make a short road trip to Brunswick on the third Sunday of most months. We meet at the 12 Step Club on US Route 42, just south of SR 303, starting promptly at 2 pm. You can find a schedule of upcoming assemblies and workshops at <http://www.area54.org/pdfs/Area54Schedule.pdf>

Interested in corrections work? Or public information, cooperation with professionals, treatment, Grapevine, or literature? We've got it all at the area events.

Are you bored in meetings sometimes; do you wonder if this is all there is, now that you've been sober a couple years? You must not be paying attention—because the work of the area goes on 24/7/365, helping to make 12th Step work possible in corners of AA you haven't even thought about yet.

Did you know that the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous* is now available in almost 75 foreign languages?

Were you aware that a new book is being published by your headquarters in New York called, *Our Great Responsibility: A Selection of Bill W.'s General Service Conference Talks*?

This, and so much more, awaits you. Join us and we shall be with you in the Sunlight of the Spirit.

~Your editor, Jeff

We welcome your service-related contributions, comments and questions. Send topic ideas or complaints to:
newsletter@area54.org



AREA OFFICER REPORTS

(Continued from page 1)

first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives, and the lives of those to come”.

Service: “Therefore, an A.A. service is anything whatsoever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer—ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a phone call or sitting down for a cup of coffee and listening to another alcoholic,. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.” (Bill W., *Legacy of Service*)

“Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship. Vital to A.A.’s growth these services, whether performed by individuals, groups, areas, or A.A. as a whole, are utterly vital to our existence and growth.” In order for AA to continue to grow and keep the doors open for the newcomer, I have to take the responsibility of carrying the message of A.A. Alcoholics Anonymous will always need people to explain the A.A. structure to all who wish to be informed or helped. This means, answering inquiries, fostering new Groups and distributing our standard books and publications. We shall also need others who can research important questions of our general policy or A.A. Traditions. (*Third Legacy Pamphlet, October 1950*)

I have a responsibility if I want to stay sober and give back what was so freely given to me. This is where I apply the responsibility pledge: “I am Responsible. When Anyone, Anywhere Reaches Out For Help, I Want The Hand Of A.A. To Always Be There. And For That, **I Am Responsible**”!

Jamie B., Delegate Panel 67/Area 54 - Northeast Ohio



Be Encouraging in Service Work

In recovery, especially within service work, it's been repeatedly said that only a “small number of people are doing the work.” Inside the small numbers of these folks there is an even smaller percentage of folks that are consistent with “doing the work” (They keep coming back!!). So, since I've been actively a part of general service work on the area and state level since 2008, I must ask myself, am I being encouraging about “General Service Work?” What am I sharing, whether it's with my facial expressions or action and words about service work? I realize that all these factors are equally important when trying to share about general service work.

During the past few weeks, I have led a meeting or two. In one of the comment, a woman said, “I thought you were mean, at times you look so mean.” Just recently a past panel member made mention of my facial expressions during the area assembly and how stern I look. The thought being it doesn't look like I'm enjoying service work and how could that attract other to stay involved? Being a servant for the Area is work that I thoroughly enjoy, even when it's trying. So, I say, don't let my stern look sway you to the negative. Service work means so much me and I am grateful you allow me to serve the Area.

When I think how my words and actions can be encouraging, I think about the ones that came before me. Many shared by example the importance with speaking with love and tolerance, even in the difficult moments. For me that means “I must think before I speak”, before I say or do something that could detrimental. I must take a moment, gather my thoughts and then say something that will be helpful and not hurtful. The same applies to my actions too. This is what people see and notice. The example was set by past service members about taking the time to visit and connect with other districts and meetings. Matter of fact, a visit occurred in my district, that was significant in beginning my journey into service at the area level. The delegate of panel 57 showed up at a district meeting to share the importance of general service and the flame was stoked, and I have been a part of service work ever since. I truly believe being there counts, something that I observe others do.

For me, service work has been so rewarding and there is even more to do and learn. I will continue to follow the good examples that I have seen and heard, letting everyone know that service work can be worthwhile.

Love and Service, Shyrl B. Alternate Delegate Panel 67/
Area 54

—

Grapevine Daily Quote: May 14, 2018

“Why dwell on what you can't do? ... Why not concentrate on what you can do and do it?”

(Continued on page 4)

AREA OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

(Continued from page 3)

When I read this quote the other day it really made sense. What I get from this is when I finally accepted that I was right where I was needed to be and all that I had been through, I needed to go through so that I could be who I am today. Everything I am today is because of my higher power and our fellowship. I truly do believe that my higher power has a plan and had this plan for me way before I was born. Once I accepted his will and did his plan my life became better. It's kind of like watching tv shows of people buying their summer homes on a lake or somewhere remote and sitting back feeling sorry for yourself for not having that opportunity. It's basically dwelling on those should of/could of moments in life where if we would of done this or that. If we are to have certain opportunities god would put it in our path to accomplish said opportunities.

So, for me I do what the quote says and to not to focus on things I can't do (I can't change the past) and to concentrate on those things I can do and do them (do everything I can to have the best rest of a life as I can), although sometimes it's hard I do the best I can. I have true gratitude for our program and to my higher power for saving my life and I will be forever grateful for the opportunities I have been blessed with thus far. I will remain teachable always and remember the analogy "when one door closes another one opens" and to be patient for when it does. God's plan for us will happen when he wants them to happen, after all, they're his plans.

Tina C., Area 54 Chairperson

I recently participated on a service panel for an AA meeting. I was asked to talk about my service experience and my service position as Area 54 treasurer. When I stated that I was their Area 54 treasurer, I could see the audiences' facial expressions go blank. I nearly panicked but then I recalled what I thought before I knew what the Area 54 treasurer was. When I first heard the term, I knew the person was a treasurer, but 'Area 54' seemed like a description of a mysterious desolate isolated place. That thought gave me just the spark I needed to explain what the Area 54 treasurer does.

I explained that the home group is the bottom line for self-support of the home group and AA as whole. I told the group about the self-support packet and I highlighted recommended contributions that should go to the four entities. I explained that contributions to Area 54 support Area Assembly meetings, workshops and functions. I informed the group on how homegroup contributions allow Area 54 to send its panel members to other Areas' Mini-Conferences and our delegate to the annual General Service Conference in New York. Of course, I also shared how I keep track of the contributions and how I send thank letters to acknowledge each contribution that I receive on behalf of Area 54.

I then told them about how home group contributions support AA at the world level giving the General Service Office what it needs to ensure that there are plenty of Big Books and AA literature to help the sick and suffering worldwide. As I came to a close, I realized that as long as I share information to empower home groups to have a voice in A.A., people want to know more. I have to remain willing to share my experience to pass on what has freely been given to me. Just as it is in sobriety "many may need it, but it is for those who want it." If I do my part, God will do the rest.

Dawn J., Area Treasurer

Wow service...several months ago God had me volunteer to be the Recording Secretary for the Area. This is quite a experience. I am learning more about me...(what I am willing to do).

No matter what, the pride of being able to use my God-given skills (typing/speaking) is very fulfilling. My parents started me off at an early age....sitting at meetings and taking notes (God has a real sense of humor).

I travel and carry the message....does it get better?...."YES".

One last point, I have not driven since I've been sober. Not driving..... never stopped me from drinking...and I now travel when called upon.

So...if lack of transportation...is keeping you from service then hopefully this statement will transmit hope...to you.

Love & Service, Beverly F, - Recording Secretary – Area 54

I am the Treatment Chair for Area 54, and so proud to be of service. As a Trusted Servant, I visit Treatment Facilities, throughout the Area, trying to set up Bridging The Gap programs...which is getting the person in Treatment, upon release from Treatment straight to the doors of AA. I've been going into the Treatment Facilities, talking to the Director and Staff explaining what AA is and what AA does, explaining our singleness of purpose. I have visited a lot of facilities in Cleveland with a welcome from all.

Example: I recently visited the Hispanic Center on West 25th, in Cleveland Ohio. The Staff was receptive of having AA in their facility.

Thank you,

Your Trusted Servant – Michael S. – Treatment Chair – Area 54

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

The following recommendations were approved by the 68th General Service Conference:

Agenda

It was recommended that:

The theme for the 2019 General Service Conference be: "Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages."

The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2019 General Service Conference:
Yesterday's World – Our Legacies Begin Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service
Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant

The following be the workshop topic for the 2019 General Service Conference: "Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings"

Archives

It was recommended that:

The proposed new publication, *Our Great Responsibility: A Selection of Bill W.'s General Service Conference Talks, 1951 – 1970* be approved with minor editorial changes.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

It was recommended that:

The text on page 9 of the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" which currently reads:

Sharing experience as peers is the unique service Alcoholics Anonymous offers. In most instances, health

care professionals find A.A. members not only willing but eager to introduce newcomers to the A.A. program.

Be revised to read:

Sharing experience as peers is the unique service Alcoholics Anonymous offers. With no membership requirements beyond the desire to stop drinking, members are on an equal footing. What's important is getting the help that is needed, and in most instances, health care professionals find A.A. members not only willing but eager to introduce newcomers to the A.A. program.

The text on page 10 of the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional" which currently reads:

A.A. is listed in most telephone directories or

(Continued on page 6)

Let's Go Green!

Area 54 General Service is inviting you to Go Green! Get your Area flyers, information, and an EXPANDED web-only version of the *Northeast Ohio Recorder*. All the information that comes to your USPS mailbox now can come to your inbox.

The *NEOH Recorder* you're reading now is 8 pages long—that's the page limit to keep postage weight within our budget and so that it can be folded to fit in an envelop. But we have so much more Area 54 news for you! The web version of this issue of *NEOHR* is 31 pages packed with experience, strength, and hope.

Let Dustin S., your Area 54 Mailing Secretary, know that you would like to save a tree or three (and save the area some \$Green\$) with a message at mailingsecretary@area54.org

Please note: if you do nothing, you will still get your Area mail by USPS and by email (if we have your email address) as you always have.

Expanded Content (31 pages!) and a Color-Enhanced version of this newsletter is now online at <http://area54.org/NEOHRecorder.html>

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

(Continued from page 5)

local newspapers, and a phone call is all that is needed for help.

Be revised to read:

Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on the Internet at aa.org and in most telephone directories by looking for "Alcoholics Anonymous." Additionally, online

A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there are no meetings nearby.

A new section be added beginning on page 16 of the pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous," between the sections "Why Would the Clergy be Concerned with A.A.?" and "Do Any of the Clergy Belong to A.A.?" with text as follows:

What If You Are a Chaplain in the Military?

Like other members of the clergy, military chaplains are often the "safest" people a problem drinker can approach. Chaplains can help direct alcoholics to available

A.A. meetings, either on or near the base. Additionally, if no meetings are available, chaplains may be able to connect interested alcoholics with other A.A. materials, such as books and pamphlets or A.A.'s magazines, Grapevine and La Viña. Online meetings are also available for those members of the military who may be deployed, and chaplains can help get them connected electronically through correspondence groups. (A.A.'s General Service Office can provide information on such resources.)

Text be added to the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..." on page 4, first paragraph, to read (additions in **bold**):

Meetings: At the heart of the program are its meetings, which are conducted autonomously by A.A. groups in cities and towns throughout the world, **even in jails, institutions and on military bases.**

Text be added to the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..." on page 4, last section, to read (additions in **bold**):

Referrals from Judicial, Health Care, **Military**, or other Professionals

Today numerous A.A. members come to us from judicial, health care, **military** or other professionals.

Text be added to the pamphlet "If You Are a Professional..." in the last full paragraph on page 5, to read (additions in **bold**):

Or you can contact the General Service Office (G.S.O.) of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. G.S.O.'s A.A. website aa.org can aid in finding local resources. **Additionally, online A.A. meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there are no meetings nearby.**

A.A. World Services, Inc. develop a company page on LinkedIn with the following goals in mind:

To offer another digital resource, in addition to aa.org, where professionals can find accurate information about

(Continued on page 14)

UPCOMING DATES FOR THE AREA AND BEYOND

NOTE THE DATE

July 15
Area Assembly
GV Lit sales
2:00 pm

August 20
GSR/DCM Workshop
2:00 pm

September 16
Area Assembly
2:00 pm

October 21
Area Assembly (area elections)
GV Lit sales
2:00 pm

November 12
Gratitude Sunday
GV Lit sales
TBA

2019—Panel 69

January 20
Area Assembly
GV Lit sales
2:00 pm

February 17
GSR/DCM Workshop
2:00 pm

March 17
Area Assembly
2:00 pm

OUTSIDE OUR AREA

April -21-28 – New York, NY
68th General Service Conference

May 5 – Columbus, OH
Ohio State Convention Planning Meeting
11:00 am

July 27-29, Perrysburg OH
62nd Ohio State Convention

August 24-26, Kalamazoo, MI
East Central Regional Conference

November 3 – Columbus, OH
Ohio State Convention Planning Meeting
11:00 am

Self-Support

YEAR: 1962



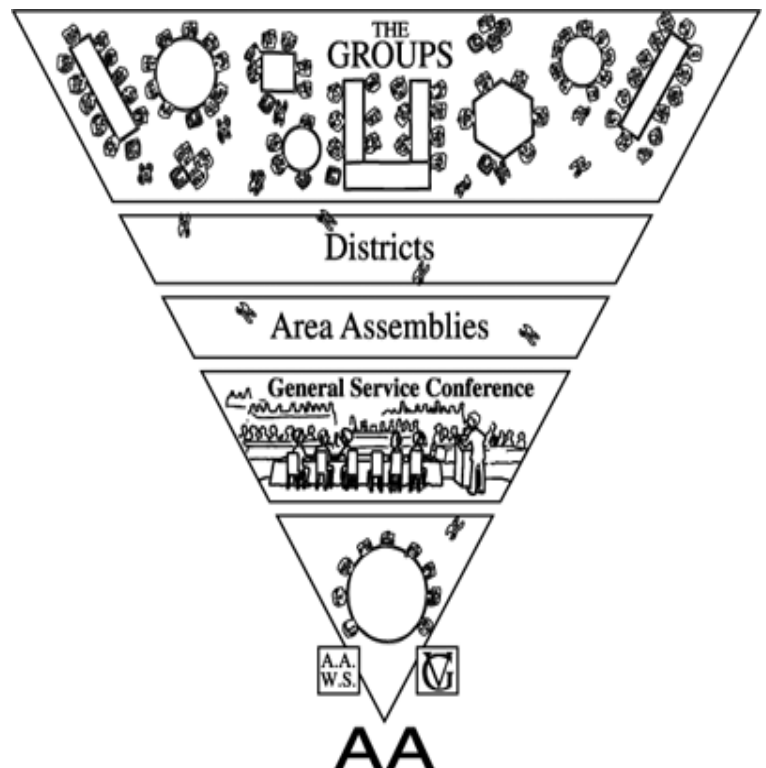
VS





VS



Next time you're at a meeting, try putting \$2.00 in the Basket. At your Home Group, try giving \$5.00 to keep it strong and FULLY self-supporting!



Unless otherwise noted, Area Assemblies & Workshops are held at The 12 Step Recovery Club, 1480 Pearl Rd., Brunswick, OH (on  about 1/4 mile south of route  Phone: (330) 273-7216



RECOVERY, UNITY AND SERVICE

These are the Three Legacies of our A.A. experience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern. God, expressed through our group conscience, is our sole authority. World Service is the heart of our Third Legacy. Our meetings are informative and educational. They are held so that the Committee Members, GSRs and all interested members may be better equipped to carry the message of World Service back to their home groups and individual members, thus giving a better understanding to our purpose, our hopes, and our work.

Confidential Contact List

Your Trusted Servants Committee 67

Jamie B., Panel 67 Delegate
1339 Kent Dr., S-1
Brunswick, OH 44212
(216) 548-5410
e-mail: delegate@area54.org

Shyrl B., Alternate Delegate
PO Box 10344 (M)
Cleveland, OH 44110
(216) 702-0572
e-mail: altdelegate@area54.org

Tina C., Area Chair
29 S. Maryland St.
Youngstown, OH 44509
(330) 318-9168
e-mail: chair@area54.org

Dawn J., Treasurer
4121 Wilmington Rd.
S. Euclid, OH 44121
(216) 339-9301
e-mail: treasurer@area54.org

Beverly F., Recording Secretary
1336 Hird Ave. #1
Lakewood, OH 44107
(216) 624-9610
e-mail: recordingsecretary@area54.org

Dustin S., Mailing Secretary
1223 N. Howard St.
Akron, OH 44310
(330) 524-5833
e-mail: mailingsecretary@area54.org

 Visit us at <http://www.area54.org>

| Committee Chairpersons 2017-2018 | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Accessibilities | Tim H. | (440) 415-2960 |
| | 1944 Jefferson Eagleville Rd. | accessibilities@area54.org |
| | Jefferson, OH 44047 | |
| Archives | Edward U. | (216) 218-9752 |
| | 1324 Addison Rd., #3004 | archives@area54.org |
| | Cleveland OH 44103 | |
| Archivist | James T. | (216) 773-0207 |
| | 19104 Maple Heights Blvd. | archivist@area54.org |
| | Maple Hts., OH 44137 | |
| Cooperation with the Professional Community | Ron O. | (330) 388-8316 |
| | 1232 Iona Ave. | ccc@area54.org |
| | Akron, OH 44314 | |
| Correctional Facilities | Calvin L. | (216) 334-4594 |
| | 3571 Riedham Rd. | cf@area54.org |
| | Shaker Hts., OH 44120 | |
| Finance | Mae R. | (216) 926-1238 |
| | 1259 Ansel Rd. | finance@area54.org |
| | Cleveland, OH 44108 | |
| Floor Management | Brian J. C. | (216) 849-5131 |
| | PO Box 31266 | floormgmt@area54.org |
| | Independence, OH 44131 | |
| Grapevine | Susan R. | (216) 407-6049 |
| | POBox 8, 50 N. Maple St. | gvchair@area54.org |
| | Orwell, OH 44076 | |
| Group Services | Mark P. | (216) 406-1169 |
| | 629 Wellesley Circle | groupservices@area54.org |
| | Avon Lake, OH 44012 | |
| Hispanic Community Liaison | Wellington R. | (216) 287-6009 |
| | 209 East 216th Street | hispanicliaison@area54.org |
| | Euclid, OH 44113 | |
| Literature | Dusty Samples | (330) 620-9642 |
| | 4414 Point Comfort Drive | literature@area54.org |
| | Akron, OH 44319 | |
| NE OH Recorder Newsletter | Jeffrey Y. | (216) 496-7594 |
| | 1076 Woodview Rd | newsletter@area54.org |
| | Cleveland Hts., OH 44121 | |
| OYPAA Liaison | Casey M. | (502) 640-1448 |
| | 4631 Deer Creek Ct, Apt 3 | YPLiaison@area54.org |
| | Austintown, OH 44515 | |
| Public Information | Robert M. | (216) 970-2333 |
| | 1367 Grantleigh Rd. | pi@area54.org |
| | South Euclid, OH 44121 | |
| Registrar | Marilyn H. | (330) 749-0110 |
| | 703 Lincoln St. | registrar@area54.org |
| | Wooster, OH 44691 | |
| Treatment Facilities | Michael S. | (330) 957-1942 |
| | 1670 Kingsley Ave | tf@area54.org |
| | Akron, OH 44313 | |
| Website | Dan M. | (440)853-6768 |
| | PO Box 264 | info@area54.org |
| | Middlefield, OH 44062 | |

SELLING AA – EARLY PUBLICITY

By Bob K.

[reprinted from <https://aabeyondbelief.org/2018/05/06/selling-aa-early-publicity/> - accessed May 14, 2018]

“The reminiscences available and those interviewed from early Akron and Cleveland all strongly testify that in the early days, at least in their area, ‘selling the program’ was a work of promotion rather than mere attraction.” (Not-God, Ernest Kurtz, p. 100n.)

When the co-founders “counted noses” in the Fall of 1937, the forty or so now sober, previously “incurables” encouraged the idea that what they were doing was working. While Bob Smith glanced backwards with gratitude and satisfaction, the visionary Bill Wilson’s focus was directed toward the future.

Dreams of alcoholic hospitals, a book, and paid missionaries were perhaps, simultaneously grand and grandiose. These schemes would require money, and lots of it. “If a world-wide movement was going to take millions of dollars to launch, no problem: they’d raise millions.” (Bill W., Robert Thomsen, p. 245)

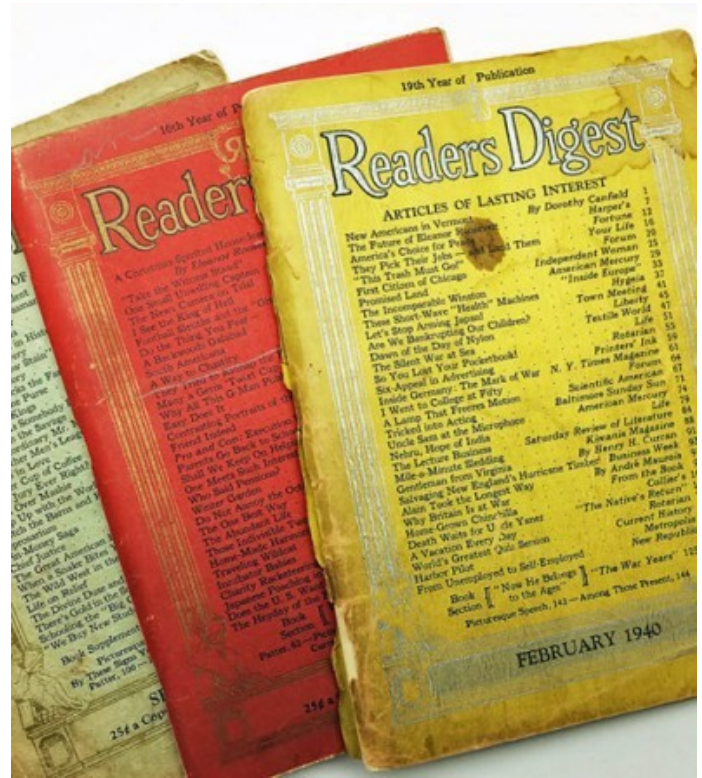
These grand schemes did not materialize, the alcoholics receiving only a pittance from the “world’s wealthiest man”. A small 1938 bequest was gone in a short time.

The Reader’s Digest

There was no Rockefeller money remaining to proceed with the book, the most modest of the envisioned projects. Bill and Hank had decided to “self-publish”, and to raise the requisite financing through the sale of shares.

They approached everyone who’d attended a meeting, every rich man they knew, and they did not sell a single share of stock... They needed some kind of inspiration and Hank P. was the

man for inspirations. Their timid customers had



“to believe the book would sell, and a book had to have one thing in order to sell – publicity, a huge spread in some national magazine.” (Thomsen, p. 252)

Then, they reported that the Reader’s Digest was interested.

The Reader’s Digest tale sparked share sales, and full-scale work on the book writing began, the funds paying the office costs and living expenses of the two entrepreneurs. It is entirely possible that the two desperate promoters may have completely exaggerated the magazine’s level of interest. When they returned, a year later, with an actual book, the “editor seemed not to remember his earlier conversation... and no article was forthcoming.” (Hartigan, p. 126)

Another version of the tale has the Digest editor reporting that the editorial board had vetoed the

(Continued on page 10)

SELLING AA – EARLY PUBLICITY

(Continued from page 9)

plan for a piece on alcoholism.

The most cynical might suspect that the entire story had been concocted.

5,000 Books. Buyers?... Not so much.

“The 5,000 copies of the Big Book lay idle in Edward Blackwell’s warehouse. For months after their publication, it seemed, that they were a waste of the paper they were printed on.” (Pass It On, p. 207)

There were some favorable book reviews, none of which led to any significant book sales. On June 25, 1939, the New York Times review said, in part, “the general thesis of Alcoholics Anonymous is more solidly based psychologically than any other treatment of the subject I have ever come upon”. (Pass It On, p. 223) The fact that the book was not available in stores was unquestionably detrimental.

A paean from Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick appeared only in religious publications. “In February, 1940, reviews in Newsweek and Time also produced some inquiries and sales, though they remained modest.” (Bill W., Francis Hartigan, p. 128)

Some reviewers were less than kind.

“Alcoholics and God”

In the summer of 1939, the fellowship’s very good friend, Charles Towns, “told the AA story to Morris Markey, a writer, who took it to Fulton Oursler, at the time editor of Liberty Magazine, a popular national weekly. Oursler accepted an AA piece by Markey entitled ‘Alcoholics and God’”. (Pass It On, pp. 223-224)

“Most members of Alcoholics Anonymous – wary of being labeled a ‘religious’ group – winced at both the heading and the article’s con-

tent.” (Not-God, p. 90) Markey’s insistence that the root of the new fellowship was religion failed to fire the imagination of the American public.

Although generally presented as a success, historian Ernest Kurtz disagrees. “The Liberty treatment was the second failure of nationwide publicity. Earlier in the summer of 1939, the irrepressible Morgan R... remembered still another well-placed friend... the popular radio journalist Gabriel Heatter (who) was willing to interview him on his nationwide broadcast.” (Not-God, p. 90)

On the Radio

The group was ambivalent, anonymity concerns battling an honest desire to bring the benefits they were sure would result should their new solution be brought to the American consciousness. There were also, of course, the unsold books sitting idly in the Cornwall Press warehouse.

Further trepidation came in the reality that Morgan’s sobriety was inconsistent – there had been some “unfortunate incidents”. The red-headed Irishman reluctantly consented to being put under 24 hour guard, for the time leading up to the April 25th radio program.

The entrepreneurial Hank P. concocted a plan to magnify the publicity value of the “We The People” appearance. Promissory notes were issued to raise the \$500.

On the fateful evening, Morgan performed brilliantly, and the expectant alcoholics waited three days before heading to their PO box, armed with suitcases, to retrieve the avalanche of reply cards. There were twelve, mostly conveying the sarcastic comments of inebriated physicians. Only two were orders for the book.

It was a crushing blow.

My Name is Elrick, and I’m an Alcoholic, Sort of

(Continued on page 11)

SELLING AA – EARLY PUBLICITY

“Elrick B. Davis, a feature writer of deep understanding, was the author of a series of articles that were printed in the middle of the (Cleveland) Plain Dealer’s editorial page... In effect the Plain Dealer was saying, ‘Alcoholics Anonymous is good, and it works. Come and get it.’ The newspaper’s switchboard was deluged”. (Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, p. 2)

Cleveland’s power-driving AA proselytizer, Clarence Snyder, told his fellow members that he had found Davis “on a barstool”. But, early Cleveland member Warren C. thought otherwise. “Clarence sneaked a Plain Dealer reporter into one of the meetings. He posed as an alcoholic. He wasn’t really. He was a writer,” Warren said.” (Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers, p. 203)

The articles appeared in the latter part of October, 1939, and were clearly one of the primary factors leading to the explosive growth of AA in Cleveland. There was an almost immediate multiplication of the city’s number of groups, “but the split had less to do with greater numbers than with the Cleveland members’ disagreement with Clarence S. over the publicity itself and so over the fellowship’s yet uncertain understanding of anonymity”. (Not-God, p. 85)

A follow-up sermon by Dilworth Lupton on November 26, 1939 – a sermon widely distributed in pamphlet form – “furnished the occasion for further favorable newspaper treatment into 1940”. (Not-God, p. 85)

AA growth in Cleveland exploded.

Rocky and Friends... Revisited

On February 8th, 1940, John D. Rockefeller gave a dinner for AA at Manhattan’s exclusive Union Club. “Bill was elated, he again started to think in millions. He assumed...that Mr. Rockefeller had changed his mind and had decided to

give AA money.” (Pass It On, p. 232)



Four hundred of New York’s “prominent and wealthy” were invited. Former ad man, and star of the Gabriel Heatter broadcast, Morgan R. provided the evening’s finest line. The impeccably dressed former tosspot was asked by a gray-haired banker who was his tablemate, “Mr. R., what institution are you with?” Morgan grinned and replied, ‘Well, sir, I am not with any institution at the moment. Nine months ago, however, I was a patient in the Greystone Asylum.’” (Pass It On, p. 233)

Bill was crowd-watching, and could tell that the 75 or so of New York’s elite who had come were “deeply impressed with what they were hearing... It was evident we had captured their sympathetic interest. Great influence and great wealth were soon to be at our disposal.” (Pass It On, p. 233)

The words of the substitute host, Nelson Rockefeller, were devastating.

“It is our belief that Alcoholics Anonymous

(Continued on page 12)

SELLING AA – EARLY PUBLICITY

(Continued from page 11)

should be self-supporting so far as money is concerned. It needs only our goodwill.’ ...after cordial handshakes and good-byes all around, the whole billion dollars of them walked out the door.” (Pass It On, p. 233) There are more reliable reports that Nelson, in fact, said nothing beyond that he was not empowered to speak on behalf of his absent uncle.

In spite of a few bizarre headlines, the Rockefeller endorsement provoked some credibility – enhancing write-ups, and an increasing portion of the public came to know, at least in a general way, what Alcoholics Anonymous was.

“In the Spring of 1940... Rollie H., catcher for the Cleveland Indians, revealed that he had been sober in AA for a year. The story, when it broke, was carried in sports pages of newspapers across the country. Because his drunkenness was a matter of public record... his sobriety was very big news.” (Pass It On, p. 236)

“Rollicking Rollie” was subsequently interviewed about his rehabilitation, in all the American League cities throughout the nation. “His full name and picture, as a member of AA, were seen by millions of fans. It did us plenty of good, temporarily, because alcoholics flocked in.” (Grapevine, Jan., 1955)

For alcoholics, these forays into the alluring limelight can be fraught with perils to the individual, and to the society itself.

“We found that we had to rely on the principle of attraction rather than of promotion... Obviously, AA had to be publicized somehow, so we resorted to the idea that it would be far better to let our friends do this for us.” (12 + 12, p. 181)

Anonymity’s “deeper purpose is actually to keep those fool egos of ours from running hog wild after money and public fame at AA’s expense”. (AACOA, p. 43.)

Nevertheless, “through the summer of 1940, the wake of the Hemsley publicity proved not only unthreatening but uniquely beneficial... Hemsley’s example contributed to the sobering of a strategically located and respected Catholic priest... Later in 1940, Wilson could and would approve the use of pictures in the Jack Alexander Saturday Evening Post story, but for which concession the story might not have been carried... (T)he foundation was laid for the later breaking of anonymity ‘for the sake of the good of others’ by Marty Mann”. (Not-God, p. 87)

Founders Flounder

Bill Wilson himself was something of an anonymity breaker himself in the forties. He later told self-deprecating tales of ego inflation, but at the time, he justified these actions. “Bill granted interviews, complete with full name and pictures. When AA members criticized his seeming thirst for publicity, his answer was that, as AA founder he should be an exception. People responded to leaders.” (Hartigan, p. 156)

He also defended his own breaches based on noble motives. “He wasn’t doing it for himself, but for the greater good of the greater number. The others weren’t buying it.” (Hartigan, p. 135)

And, “he created another firestorm in 1945 when he endorsed Marty’s decision to reveal her membership in AA in order to garner publicity for the new organization (NCEA).” (Hartigan, p. 184)

The Saturday Evening Post

In the twenty-first century, it is difficult to have a full appreciation of the magnitude of the Saturday Evening Post within the American culture. In a world of limited media, newspapers, magazines, and radio had a scope defying our imagining. The biggest and most popular of these were within the awareness of a huge segment of the population.

(Continued on page 13)

SELLING AA – EARLY PUBLICITY

(Continued from page 12)

“Unlike the fellowship’s previous media hits, this time the response exceeded anyone’s wildest expectations. Within days, meeting attendance doubled. Within weeks, these newcomers were being sent out on Twelve Step calls to other prospects.” (Hartigan, p. 143)

On March 1, 1941, an article on AA by Jack Alexander appeared in the Saturday Evening Post. The effect of the Alexander article was stunning. AA membership opened 1941 at 2,000 and closed the year at 8,000.” (Dragon, p. 178)



“It accomplished exactly what Bill had first hoped the Gabriel Heatter broadcast would do. It put AA irrevocably on the map of national consciousness.” (Pass It On, p. 248)

At the last moment, there was a real dilemma,

the editors “wanted real photographs to illustrate the article... and some of them had to be on the sensational side... We objected... Finally the Post said, ‘No pictures, no article.’ The choice was ours, and it was a hard one.” (Pass It On, p. 247)

“It was a crucial decision which happily turned out to be the right one – that is, for the time being.” Bill said.” (Pass It On, p. 247)

AA was now a national institution.

Afterword

By the early 1950s, Bill Wilson was able to write that regarding AA’s need for publicity, “it would be far better to let our friends do that for us. Precisely that has happened, to an unbelievable extent”. (Twelve and Twelve, p. 181) Overall, the press has been kind to Alcoholics Anonymous, and continues to be so. Alcoholics Anonymous can well afford, if it chooses, to follow its anonymity traditions.

Some individual members, especially in the new millennium, are opting for a different approach. Following the examples of celebrities who have gone public with previously hidden issues such as depression, some recovered celebrity alcoholics are “outing themselves” regarding their own battles with alcoholism. The obvious hope is the removal of the shame attached to such “failings”. Time will tell if this latest approach to publicity causes more harm, or more good.

Either way, non-anonymous publicity is not unprecedented.

About the Author, Bob K

Bob K. lives in the Metropolitan Toronto area, and has been a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous for 24 years, and an out-of-the-closet atheist for that entire time. He has been a regular contributor to the AAagnostica website for almost 5 years, and in January, 2015, published “Key Players in AA History” In 2013, he cofounded the Whitby Freethinkers meeting.

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

(Continued from page 6)

A.A.

To broaden the reach of the About A.A. newsletter for professionals

To offer a platform where our professional friends may recommend us

To raise awareness of exhibits staffed by local C.P.C. committees at national and local professional conferences

To expand the network of our professional friends and perhaps deepen the pool of Class A Trustee candidates

By our presence on LinkedIn, to reinforce the continuing relevance and efficacy of A.A. to professionals

tice, AA Grapevine, Inc. does not seek outside sales for magazine subscriptions.]

AA Grapevine, Inc. continue to seek opportunities to expand bulk sales. [Note: AA Grapevine, Inc. currently offers volume discounts and will respond to requests, rather than solicit sales from outside entities.]

AA Grapevine, Inc. provide notification to A.A. World Services' list of non-A.A. entities to let them know that they can now purchase AA Grapevine and La Viña books, single-issue magazines (as available) and other products.

La Viña be published at its current frequency of six times per year as a service to the Fellowship, with perfect binding, at 68 pages, and in full color.

The revised pamphlet "AA Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print" be approved and the title changed to "AA Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print and Other Media."

Corrections—No recommendations.

Finance

It was recommended that:

The Conference-approved maximum annual contribution from an individual A.A. member to the General Service Board be increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

Grapevine

It was recommended that:

AA Grapevine, Inc. allow sales of Grapevine and La Viña books, single-issue magazines (as available), and other products to non-AA entities, such as (but not limited to) hospitals, treatment centers and book stores. [Note: As a current prac-

International Conventions/Regional Forums

It was recommended that:

The following two cities, expressed here in alphabetical order, be considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2030: Indianapolis, Indiana; St. Louis, Missouri.

Up to 21 non-A.A. speakers be invited to attend the 2020 International Convention at A.A.'s expense.

Literature

It was recommended that:

The revised pamphlet "A.A. for the Woman," retitled "Experience, Strength and Hope: Women in A.A.,"

(Continued on page 15)

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

(Continued from page 14)

be approved.

The revised pamphlet "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic," retitled "Experience, Strength and Hope: LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A.," be approved with minor edits provided by Publishing regarding use of gender specific language.

The revised pamphlet "Inside A.A.: Understanding the Fellowship and its Services" be approved.

The draft pamphlet "Experience, Strength and Hope: A.A. for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues – and their sponsors" be approved.

The trustees' Literature Committee revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" to include a section on anonymity, and bring back a progress report or draft text to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

The title of the pamphlet "G.S.R. General Service Representative: May Be the Most Important Job in A.A." be changed to "G.S.R. General Service Representative: Your Group's Link to A.A. as a Whole."

The following text (originally included in the 1998 edition of *Living Sober*) be added to *Living Sober* following the section titled "Note to Medical Professionals":

We recognize that alcoholics are not immune to other diseases. Some of us have had to cope with depressions that can be suicidal; schizophrenia that sometimes requires hospitalization; bipolar disorder, and other mental and biological illnesses. Also among us are diabetics, epileptics, members with heart trouble, cancer, allergies, hypertension, and many

other serious physical conditions.

Because of the difficulties that many alcoholics have with drugs, some members have taken the position that no one in A.A. should take any medication. While this position has undoubtedly prevented relapses for some, it has meant disaster for others.

A.A. members and many of their physicians have described situations in which depressed patients have been told by A.A.s to throw away the pills, only to have depression return with all its difficulties, sometimes resulting in suicide. We have heard, too, from members with other conditions, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, epilepsy and others requiring medication, that well-meaning A.A. friends discourage them from taking any prescribed medication. Unfortunately, by following a layperson's advice, the sufferers find that their conditions can return with all their previous intensity. On top of that, they feel guilty because they are convinced that "A.A. is against pills."

It becomes clear that just as it is wrong to enable or support any alcoholic to become re-addicted to any drug, it's equally wrong to deprive any alcoholic of medication, which can alleviate or control other disabling physical and/or emotional problems.

The trustees' Literature Committee undertake a comprehensive update to the video "Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure" to reflect a contemporary presentation of the General Service and AA Grapevine offices as well as a current portrayal of the General Service Structure, and bring back a progress report or draft

(Continued on page 16)

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

(Continued from page 15)

updated video to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

The pamphlet “The God Word” (currently published by the General Service Board of A.A., Great Britain) be adopted by A.A. World Services, Inc. with minor editorial changes.

The trustees’ Literature Committee develop a pamphlet based on A.A.’s Three Legacies, with emphasis on the history of the Three Legacies, how they work together and including personal stories of members’ experiences with the Three Legacies, and bring back a progress report or draft pamphlet to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

The trustees’ Literature Committee develop a pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women alcoholics by gathering sharing from Spanish-speaking women in A.A., and bring back a progress report or draft pamphlet to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

Policy/Admissions

It was recommended that:

Valley Kalaiyappa, general secretary of the General Service Board of A.A. India, be admitted to the 68th General Service Conference as an observer.

The “Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings” be approved.

Two consultants, Andréa Pellegrino and Chris DeSantis, from the firm Impact Collaborative, be admitted to the 68th General Service Conference on Thursday, April 26 and Friday, April 27, 2018 as observers. [Note: This was a special request from the chair of the General Service Board for approval of two representatives from the firm

contracted to conduct a communications audit initiated by the General Service Board.]

Public Information

It was recommended that:

The video PSA “Changes” be approved with the following revision: That the line “That’s where A.A. came to my rescue” be replaced with “A.A. offered a solution.”

In addition to the work of local committees, the video PSA, “Changes” be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$42,000 and that the information gathered from the process be forwarded to the 2019 Conference Public Information Committee for their review.

The Young People’s Video submission be approved.

The pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity,” with expanded content on Traditions Eleven and Twelve, be approved.

The trustees’ Committee on Public Information develop language reflecting that A.A.’s anonymity Traditions are not a cloak protecting criminal or inappropriate behavior and that calling the proper authorities does not go against any A.A. Traditions. A progress report or draft language is requested to be brought back to the 2019 Conference Committee on Public Information.

The updated pamphlet “A Brief Guide to Alcoholics Anonymous” be approved.

A progress report including website analytics and the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A.W.S. YouTube account be brought back to the 2019 Conference Committee on Public Information.

(Continued on page 17)

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

(Continued from page 16)

Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

The following text be added to the Glossary of Service Terms in the A.A. Service Manual:

A panel is a numerical designation that refers to a group of delegates elected to begin serving at the General Service Conference in a particular year. Each panel is numbered for the Conference at which the Area's delegate will first serve. The two-year cycle frequently applies to area committee officers and committee members, as well.

Text boxes visually displaying the member positions on each of the three corporate boards be added to Chapter Ten of the A.A. Service Manual in the section on A.A. World Services, Inc.

In the section "AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD" of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, a footnote be added to the portion of the Resolution attached as part of the Original Conference Charter and the Current Conference Charter with the following text:

Bill uses the term "registered." A.A.W.S. neither monitors nor oversees the activities or practices of any A.A. group. Groups are listed solely for purposes of accurate communications.

Text be added to the A.A. Service Manual in the section "Trademarks, Logos, and Copyrights" reflecting the A.A.W.S. copyright statement on "The Blue People" graphic.

The General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the AA Grapevine Board review *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter biennially, only in printing years.

Following publication of the 2018-2020 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department undertake a thorough evaluation, update, and redesign of the Service Manual with a preliminary draft or progress report to be sent to the 2019 Conference Committee on Report and Charter.

Any Committee Considerations be published in their entirety in both the printed Conference *Final Report* and the anonymity-protected digital version.

Treatment and Accessibilities

It was recommended that:

The title of the pamphlet "Accessibility for All Alcoholics" be changed to "Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers."

The proposed changes by the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/ Treatment and Accessibilities to the pamphlet "Accessibility for All Alcoholics" be approved with additional revisions.

The Scope of the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities be expanded as follows (additions in **bold**):

The purpose of a Treatment and Accessibilities committee is to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in a wide variety

(Continued on page 18)

ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

(Continued from page 17)

of treatment settings, and to set up means of "bridging the gap" from the treatment setting to the A.A. **Fellowship. In addition, the committee supports the work of individual A.A. members and groups serving those who experience barriers to accessing the A.A. message and participating in A.A.'s Three Legacies – Recovery, Unity, and Service. Finally, the committee supports the work of individual A.A. members and groups striving to ensure that A.A. members who live in underserved or remote communities — communities difficult to reach because of geography, language or culture — have access to the A.A. message.**

The committee will review all aspects of service to A.A. groups/meetings in non- correctional in-patient and out-patient treatment settings, as well as to **A.A.s who experience access barriers**, and make recommendations for changes and/or improvements.

Trustees

It was recommended that:

The slate of trustees of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meetings of the members of the General Service Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any.

The slate of officers of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in April 2018, following

presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any.

The slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any.

The slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board in April 2018, following presentation at the 2018 General Service Conference for disapproval if any.

Floor Actions

It was recommended that:

1. The text on page 18 of the pamphlet "Members of the Clergy Ask About Alcoholics Anonymous" that currently reads:

Please check your local telephone directory or newspaper for the number of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Be revised to read:

Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on the Internet at aa.org and in most telephone directories by looking for "Alcoholics Anonymous." Additionally, online meetings are available, which members of the military and others often use when they are in places where there is no meeting nearby.

2. Area Service Highlights be published in their entirety in both the printed Conference Final Report and the anonymity-protected digital version.

###

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONF.

Recommendations from the 68th General Service Conference That Did Not Result in Advisory Actions

Literature

An appendix be added to the book Alcoholics Anonymous, reflecting recognition received from the Library of Congress.

The trustees' Literature Committee develop text for an endnote to be placed at the end of the chapter "Working with Others" in the book Alcoholics Anonymous which would reflect contemporary shared experience regarding twelve-step calls and working with new prospects, as well as include helpful resources (i.e., the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship," and the service material "Safety in A.A.: Our Common Welfare") and bring back a progress report or draft text to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

The trustees' Literature Committee develop a new book, combining Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions with Twelve Concepts for World Service, and bring back a progress report or draft manuscript to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

Trustees

In the spirit of A.A. parity, the process for election of the trustee-at-large/U.S. be revised so that the number of delegates voting from each region be equal to the number of delegates in the smallest region, and

that the voting delegates in each region be drawn by lot.

Floor Actions Not Resulting in Advisory Actions

The pamphlet "Bridging the Gap" be revised to be more inclusive, to apply to both Treatment and Corrections or possibly any alcoholic leaving any institution into the real world. **(Conference declined to consider)**

The 68th General Service Conference lovingly advises the A.A.W.S. Board, Grapevine Board and General Service Board to refrain from the practice of litigation for the purpose of acquiring property not previously under the direct control of A.A. **(Conference declined to consider)**

The General Service Board be censured. **(Conference declined to consider)**

The General Service Conference affirm the delegated authority of the General Service Board and operating corporations to protect the intellectual property of Alcoholics Anonymous. **(Not approved)**

The informational piece being created by the trustees' Committee on the Conference pertaining to the Conference dashboard include excerpts on How a Group Conscience is Obtained to reflect the integrity and collective conscience of the registered A.A. groups, including registered online groups. **(Conference declined to consider)**

All future reorganization and censure motions go directly to the Conference Committee on Trustees, not to be reviewed by

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

Agenda

The committee reviewed the 2018 General Service Conference Evaluation and noted that the evaluation is now available for delegates to fill out online.

The committee reviewed the summary of the 2017 General Service Conference evaluations. Noting the low number of respondents, the committee reiterated the obligation that Conference members have to fill out the evaluation.

The committee reviewed the report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference, which included the Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference 2016 Report on the Agenda Item Selection Process.

The committee noted that progress has been made on implementing the plan in the 2016 report. However, the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference forwarded a request to the General Service Board to continue to consider enhanced participation of area delegates in the process for selection of agenda items, and no action on this item was reported by the board.

The committee noted the 2016 report suggested that:

Before the January board

weekend, the entire Conference committee could have a conference call with the corresponding trustees' committee chair and staff secretary to review items submitted as agenda items and to talk about items still being considered by the trustees' committee. This way, Conference committee members would get a verbal report on the disposition of items submitted to the trustees' committee, and could share regarding those items. This would allow all Conference committee members to offer feedback on proposed Agenda items. Their feedback could be brought to the trustees' committee meeting as background for the discussion.

The committee noted that this has not happened and requested that the trustees' committee chairs implement this conference call portion of the plan starting in January 2019.

After reviewing the results of the survey of Conference committee chairs about the implementation of the 2016 plan, the committee requested that this sharing be gathered from the Conference committee chairs annually and provided to the Conference Committee on Agenda.

The committee requested the trustees' committee create a process for area delegate review of proposed agenda items that were not forwarded to a Conference committee and bring a report to the 2019 Conference

(Continued on page 21)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 20)

Committee on Agenda.

presentations are Conference members only and that the focus is not the general public.

Archives

The committee discussed a request from the AA Grapevine Board to post the audio recording of the 2017 General Service Conference presentation, "A.A. Grapevine and La Viña" on AA Grapevine's YouTube channel and took no action for the following reasons:

The request is not in accord with the current 2015 Conference Advisory Action, which states, "Audio recordings of General Service Conference final reports and audio recordings of the trustees' farewell talks given at the closing brunch be made available in accordance with Archives' policies. Access to all other General Service Conference sessions will continue to be prohibited."

The presentation mentions names of A.A. members.

The committee recognizes that the AA Grapevine Board might consider presenting the material at an A.A. event, such as a Regional Forum and post the recording of this on the AA Grapevine Board's YouTube channel.

The committee noted that the audience of General Service Conference

The committee considered a request to develop a policy on distribution of audio recordings of General Service Conference presentations and took no action for similar reasons cited in the preceding committee consideration.

The committee reviewed the Archives Workbook and made the following suggestions:

In the sections, "What to Collect?", "Financing the Archives" and "Ownership of Material," add text in the appropriate sections that distinguishes archivists from historians and collectors. In addition, add text clarifying that archivists do not appraise items for monetary value and that archives generally do not purchase items. The committee suggested that this new text also be added to the "A.A. Archives" service piece.

Cooperation with the Professional Community

The committee strongly suggested that those creating the LinkedIn company page consider adding some kind of disclaimer or explanation clarifying that A.A. is not affiliated with any of the organizations who appear in promoted content on the LinkedIn company page.

The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Pro-

(Continued on page 22)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 21)

professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities consult with health care professionals to determine if there are issues unique to problem drinkers in the military and military veterans, that would be helpful to cover in the pamphlet "A.A. as a Resource for Health Care Professionals."

The committee reviewed the C.P.C. Kit and Workbook and made the following suggestions:

That the updated sample guide letters replace the guide letters currently in the workbook, and that utilizing the guide letters be mentioned in the "Suggested C.P.C. Committee Goals and Projects" section of the workbook.

That the "Suggested C.P.C. Committee Goals and Projects" section of the workbook mention contacting military bases and veterans' facilities.

That when listing professionals whom C.P.C. committees should approach in the workbook, that list should include professionals who come in contact with active members of the military and veterans whenever possible.

That the text of the pamphlet "Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends: Friends on the Alcoholism Front" which is currently reprinted in full in the C.P.C. workbook be re-

moved from the workbook.

That the Membership Survey and the display of the Membership Survey be encouraged for use in C.P.C. work.

That we continue to look for opportunities to utilize Class A Trustees in C.P.C. work.

Corrections

The committee discussed the request to create a pamphlet for inmates who will be released after long-term incarceration and took no action. The committee suggested that correction service materials be revised for this purpose.

The committee asked the trustees' Committee on Corrections to update the service materials, "A.A. Corrections Prerelease Contact Information - For A.A.s on the Inside" and "A.A. Corrections Prerelease Contact Information - For A.A.s on the Outside" with excerpts from existing literature.

The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Corrections create a letter to corrections professionals to raise awareness about prerelease and Bridging the Gap volunteers.

The committee noted the benefits of identifying facilities with incarcerated alcoholics to effectively present A.A. to the professionals who work in these settings. This effort could inform the local Fellowship of the need for outside volunteers. The committee suggests the trustees' Committee on

(Continued on page 23)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 22)

Corrections create a checklist for local committees to be included in the Corrections Kit.

The committee noted that many correctional facilities have increased their security restrictions for paper materials and suggests the trustees' Committee on Corrections continue to work with the Publishing Department to insure access to A.A. materials for incarcerated alcoholics.

The committee noted the progress made with producing dubbed versions of the video "A New Freedom" in Spanish and French and suggested adding this video to the Corrections Kit upon completion.

The committee noted the progress made on the Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS) in Canada and looks forward to a progress report on this service at the 2019 General Service Conference.

The committee noted the value of peer-to-peer communications between corrections professionals and looks forward to the creation of letters for use in Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) and Corrections Committees.

The committee suggested that the links displayed in the video "Carrying the Message Behind These Walls" be up-

dated.

The committee suggested the trustees' Committee on Corrections discuss ways to utilize A.A. materials for incarcerated alcoholics at juvenile facilities.

Finance

The committee discussed developing a method to standardize increases to the limits on individual contributions and bequests to the General Service Board and felt that the consumer price index fluctuates by such small proportions that a change would be costly and not conducive to the Fellowship and took no action.

The committee reviewed the Self-Support Packet and made the following suggestions to the Publishing Department:

The pamphlets "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" and "The A.A. Group Treasurer" be consistent in print and revision coding on the back.

Adding language regarding group level electronic contributions, passing the "virtual" basket, to the section Passing the Basket in the service piece "The A.A. Group Treasurer" and also be included in the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" and the Guidelines on Finance.

Update illustrative material on the Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet (F-203) to reflect

(Continued on page 24)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 23)

current pamphlet covers and website.

Update birthday contribution envelopes per member per year statistics.

The committee had a discussion on the topic of AA Grapevine and suggested the following:

That there be a greater online presence.

A fact sheet on the topic of Grapevine be included in the Self-Support Packet.

That the General Service Board make available issues of Grapevine for distribution purposes through G.S.O. staff assignments.

The committee requested that when A.A.W.S. develops an A.A. app that self-support information be easily accessible. The committee also discussed having access to assignment folders containing literature relevant to the services.

Grapevine

The committee reviewed the 2018 Grapevine social media report regarding Instagram, Facebook, and Google for Nonprofits and suggests that A.A. Grapevine, Inc. continue to explore a social media strategy in their forthcoming strategic plan, taking into account issues regarding anonymity, se-

curity, affiliation, outside contributions, privacy and promotion.

The committee reviewed the audio strategy report and thanked AA Grapevine, Inc. for including it in their forthcoming strategic plan.

The committee agreed to forward to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that in the year 2019 or later Grapevine produce the following items:

Our Twelve Steps II (working title)
Stories of experience by members about our Twelve Steps (our last Step book was in 2011).

All About Grapevine Reps (working title)
Helpful and inspiring stories by A.A. members doing service with Grapevine and La Viña.

Prayer & Meditation (working title)
A collection of stories by A.A. members about the many ways they practice Step Eleven.

A.A. & Families (working title)
Stories by A.A. members that illustrate the many ways alcoholism and A.A. has touched our families.

Hispanic Members Doing Service in A.A. (working title)
A collection of stories published in La Viña magazine by members getting sober and active, doing service and carrying the A.A. message.

(Continued on page 25)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 24)

The committee reviewed the Grapevine Workbook and suggests that it undergo a comprehensive review and revision, and AA Grapevine, Inc. bring back a progress report to the 2019 Conference Committee on AA Grapevine.

The committee discussed ways groups can be kept informed about Grapevine and La Viña and suggested that all current and past delegates consider it a part of their responsibility to inform the Fellowship about Grapevine and La Viña as tools of sobriety, either through their own efforts or by recruiting others through email and area websites.

International Conventions/Regional Forums

The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums review the Guidelines for Site Selection for the 2035 A.A. International Convention and explore expanding the window of dates in which the 2035 International Convention could be held.

The committee noted that including forum attendee questionnaire summaries provided helpful information for discussions and suggested that they continue to be a part of the background for the Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums.

The committee discussed ways of encouraging interest in Regional and Local Forums and attracting first time attendees and suggested:

Compiling notes from the first-timer sharing at a Forum for later distribution to encourage members to attend a future Forum.

Reaching out at the local level to young people in A.A. committees, continuing with one-to-one communication and spreading the word as far as possible.

Exploring sending Forum informational text blasts to members receiving La Viña text messages.

Highlighting that Forums have no registration fee which might appeal to newer members to explore service at this level.

Literature

The committee considered a request to add the A.A. Preamble and Responsibility Statement to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and took no action. The committee noted that the A.A. Preamble and Responsibility Statement are adequately noted in other A.A. literature.

The committee considered a request to add an

(Continued on page 26)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 25)

endnote to Bill W.'s story in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* acknowledging co-founder, Bob S., and took no action. The committee noted that acknowledgement of Bob S. ("Dr. Bob") as cofounder is currently mentioned in two separate places in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The committee considered a request for the development of a new pamphlet for atheist and agnostic alcoholics and took no action. The committee agreed the recommendation that A.A.W.S. adopt/adapt the pamphlet "The God Word" responded to the need expressed by atheist and agnostic members of A.A.

The committee requested that G.S.O. Publishing Department add AA Grapevine literature to the list of A.A. Publications noted on the back page of A.A. literature, as additional resources, when appropriate. For example, the AA Grapevine publication *Voices of Women in A.A.* could be added to the list of publications in the pamphlet "Experience, Strength and Hope: Women and A.A." and AA Grapevine publication *Sober and Out* could be listed in the pamphlet "Experience, Strength and Hope: LGBTQ Alcoholics in A.A." and *In Our Own Words* could be included as a resource in the pamphlet "Young People and A.A."

The committee reviewed the trustees' Literature Committee report on

"Language Related to Safety in A.A. Literature." The committee requested that the trustees' Literature Committee develop text regarding safety in A.A. to be included in *Living Sober* and the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship," and bring back the draft text to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

The committee reviewed draft text for the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," and offered additional suggestions for the trustees' Literature Committee to consider. The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or revised draft pamphlet at the 2019 General Service Conference.

The committee reviewed a progress report on the revision of the pamphlet "Too Young?" The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft revised pamphlet at the 2019 General Service Conference.

The committee reviewed a progress report from the trustees' Literature Committee on the revision of the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft revised pamphlet at the 2019 General Service Conference.

The committee accepted the 2017 matrix of A.A. recovery literature.

Policy/Admissions

The committee accepted the dates April 25-May 1, 2021 for the 71st General Service Con-

(Continued on page 27)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 26)

ference since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.

The committee reviewed the report from G.S.O.'s general manager on site selection of the General Service Conference. The committee looks forward to a progress report for review by the 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

The committee reviewed the trustees' General Service Conference Committee's Report on Equitable Distribution of the Workload of Conference Committees. The committee encourages the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference to continue reviewing options in order to create a workable plan for equitable distribution of the workload of Conference committees by combining and/or creating committees. The committee looks forward to a plan or progress report on this important process for review by the 2019 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.

The committee discussed the request to develop a policy on the use of the Conference dashboard and suggested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference develop an information sheet that reflects shared experience and guidance on usage of the Conference dash-

board.

The committee discussed the question forwarded from the trustees' International Committee: "Does the U.S./Canada [service structure] have a role/responsibility in assisting the development of A.A. structures around the world through sponsoring other countries via direct invitations to observe our General Service Conference?" While wishing to remain open to requests from other country's boards/G.S.O.s, the committee agreed that the U.S./Canada service structure does not have a role/responsibility in assisting other countries *via direct invitations* to observe our General Service Conference rather than at their own request.

Public Information

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2017 annual report from the trustees' Public Information Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org.

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2018 Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan and noted the importance of the trustees' continued exploration of social media and social network platforms to carry the A.A. message to the public.

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2017 report from the trustees' Public Information Committee regarding the usefulness and relevance of video public service announcements.

(Continued on page 28)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 27)

The committee reviewed the 2017 trustees' Public Information Committee Report on the use of Google AdWords and Google Grants to carry the A.A. message and requested that the trustees' Committee on Public Information continue to develop information on the use of Google AdWords and Google Grants including information on the cost of implementing a six month trial and the cost of a full year's implementation and that a progress report be brought back to the 2019 Conference Committee on Public Information.

The committee reviewed the contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook, and suggested that the information in the P.I. Workbook in the section Approaching Local Broadcast Facilities be updated to reflect changes in how G.S.O. delivers public service announcements.

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, 2018-2020 Edition and the 2018 General Service Conference *Final Report*.

The committee reviewed a list of editorial updates from the Publishing Department for *The A.A. Service Manual* and accepted the updates.

In keeping with the 2009 Advisory Action that the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the Grapevine 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 General Service Board and the Grapevine Board.

The committee considered a request to add text to *The A.A. Service Manual* regarding standing committees from "The A.A. Group" pamphlet and took no action. The committee suggested that the Publishing Department consider adding more language regarding local service committees in possible future service manual rewrites.

The committee considered a request for changes to Chapters 2, 3, and 5 in *The A.A. Service Manual* and took no action. The committee suggested that if an extensive rewrite of the chapters is undertaken, the Publishing Department review these chapters for possible future editions of the manual.

The committee considered a request to remove the statement from the section "Area Newsletters" in *The A.A. Service Manual*, "Any group or district of the Fellowship is free to use the circle and triangle on newsletters, meeting schedules or other A.A. material" and took no action. The committee noted that the statement as it stands is informative to those with questions con-

(Continued on page 29)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 28)

cerning the circle and triangle.

The committee considered a request to update the “Third Legacy Procedure” chart on page S22 in *The A.A. Service Manual* and suggested that the chart would be updated to correct inconsistencies.

The committee reviewed a Publishing report with suggestions on how changes to *The A.A. Service Manual* could be made available to the Fellowship in non-printing years and took no action. The committee noted that substantive changes to *The A.A. Service Manual* can be found in the *Final Conference Report* and the Report and Charter Conference Committee’s History and Highlights of Actions.

The committee discussed the A.A. Directories and noted there were no requests for changes at this time. The committee also reviewed a memo from the G.S.O. General Manager informing the committee that the A.A. Directories, Canada, Eastern U.S. and Western U.S. would not be printed in 2018 due to the implementation of a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Treatment and Accessibilities

The committee requested that the staff sec-

retary forward suggested further revisions to the pamphlet “Accessibility for All Alcoholics” to the Publishing Department for consideration.

The committee reviewed the report “Cooperation with Armed Services Exploration Strategies” from the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities and suggested the following:

Review existing literature and service material with a military focus to expand on the topic of accessibilities.

Consider including in existing A.A. literature shared experience from members on active duty as well as veterans.

Consider creating A.A. guidelines with a focus on carrying the message to those in the Armed Services.

Consider whether creating a PSA as a method of carrying the message to those in the Armed Services would be effective.

Consider the need for a national veteran’s workshop.

The committee suggested that the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities focus on carrying the message to veterans in VA facilities, active service members stationed in local military facili-

(Continued on page 30)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 29)

ties in the U.S. and Canada, and active military personnel who are deployed outside the U.S. and Canada.

The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/ Treatment and Accessibilities consider producing a Remote Communities Kit and Workbook.

The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/ Treatment and Accessibilities review literature and service material to determine if experience related to carrying the message for underserved and remote communities is included.

The committee reviewed the summary of sharing from A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing from the trustees' committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community / Treatment and Accessibilities and suggested the following:

Continue exploring ways to meet the needs of A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing.

Request shared experience from A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing regarding the types of technology used for participation in A.A.

Review the A.A. website to determine if

it is accessible to A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing.

Request shared experience from groups about the ways they are lowering access barriers in carrying the message to A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing and include sharing in existing literature and service material.

Suggest the AA Grapevine develop a book that includes shared experience from A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing and are overcoming access barriers.

The committee suggested that a service piece be developed to help new committee chairs in getting started in Treatment and Accessibilities service.

Trustees

The committee reviewed the resumes and approved, as eligible for election, all Class B trustee candidates for Eastern Canada regional trustee and Pacific regional trustee.

The committee thoughtfully reviewed a proposal to censure the General Service Board and after seeking extensive additional input from the general manager of G.S.O., the chair of the General Service Board, and additional General Service Board trustees, agreed to take no action. The committee recognized that the litigation regarding the Printer's Copy Manuscript at Alcoholics Anonymous has caused

(Continued on page 31)

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS OF THE 68th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 30)

many in the Fellowship to have strong feelings on all sides of this issue. The committee believes that the unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most important treasure we have as a Fellowship. The committee also recognizes that the General Service Board and the Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Board have many legal responsibilities and must sometimes make use of the right of decision, but in the spirit of A.A. unity, the committee asks the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc. that:

All major decisions made by A.A. World Services, Inc., AA Grapevine, Inc., the General Service Office or AA Grapevine management be promptly and fully reported to the General Service Board, as appropriate.

If the General Service Board, the A.A. World Services or AA Grapevine boards need to initiate a legal proceeding as a plaintiff, that whenever possible, they will consult the members of the General Service Conference before starting such a proceeding, being ever mindful of A.A. unity and A.A.'s financial prudence. However, the committee understands that sometimes this might not be possible.

The committee recognizes that the General Service Board, A.A. World Services Inc., and AA Grapevine, Inc. could be brought into litigation by other parties and in no way wants to limit their actions required to protect these corporations.

The committee reviewed a proposal to reorganize the A.A.W.S. and General Service Boards and took no action. The committee noted that although a reorganization was not considered necessary at this time, the committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Nominating develop procedures for a partial or complete reorganization of the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. or AA Grapevine boards and that a report be brought back to the 2019 Conference Committee on Trustees, including all possible options.

The committee expressed their appreciation for the report on the regional geographic service structure from the trustees' Committee on Nominating and the suggestion that the General Service Board discuss a possible survey of past and current regional trustees regarding their workload and ability to fulfill all their responsibilities. The committee expressed their hope that every option will be considered to allow as many A.A. members as possible the opportunity to serve on the General Service Board.

###