

# AREA 15 DELEGATES REPORT

## 67<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference Highlights

April 22-29, 2016 at the Rye Hilton, Rye, NY



### Why do we need a Conference at all?

One of the last things that Bill W. and Dr. Bob agreed on before Dr. Bob died was the need for a General Service Conference to provide final responsibility and ultimate authority to the groups themselves for the future of our Fellowship. Pg. S-20 of our A.A. Service Manual (in part):

**“...We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in darkness one short block from this room.”**

### Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community

#### Approved Recommendations (summary)

- The pamphlet “Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W.” be retired.
- The title of the pamphlet “Is there an Alcoholic in the Workplace?” be changed to “Is There a Problem Drinker in the Workplace?”
- The trustees’ Committee on CPC review the pamphlets “A.A. as a Resource for the Health Care Professional”, “If You Are a Professional”, and “Members of the Clergy Ask About A.A.”, develop text to include information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, including information on how to contact A.A. worldwide, and bring a report or draft text to the 2018 Conference Committee on CPC for review.

#### Considerations (summary)

- The Committee took no action on request to consider development of a LinkedIn page and requested the trustees’ committee on CPC and Treatment/Accessibilities continue exploring establishing a presence on LinkedIn as a tool for CPC efforts; develop a full report including complete exploration if feasible within our Traditions; and provide implementation plan to the 2018 Conference CPC Committee.
- Suggested materials be developed to aid and encourage CPC & Treatment/Accessibilities committees to reach out to professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services.
- Suggested an update of the CPC Workbook to include information about carrying the A.A. message to professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Service.



#### GENERAL SERVICE BOARD-----Three new trustees

- 3 Class B (Alcoholic) – East Central Regional.....Mark E.
- South East Regional.....Cathy B.
- Trustee-at-Large/U.S.....Newton P.

**Annie C. Panel 67 Delegate  
Area 15 South Florida  
delegate@area15aa.org**



## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE on FINANCE

### **Approved Recommendations (summary):**

- The suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the GSC be increased from \$1,600 to \$1,800.
- Review every other year with the next review to take place in 2019: suggested area contribution for delegates' expenses to the GSC; Conference-approved level for bequests to the GSB from A.A. members; and Conference-approved maximum annual contribution to the GSB from individual A.A. members.
- Add to pamphlet: "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix": "Question: Can an individual or group make a recurring online contribution? Answer: Yes, online at aa.org"

### **Committee Considerations (summary for 5 of 10 items):**

- Requested trustees' Finance Committee consider utilizing the Fellowship new Vision database to provide communication to the Fellowship on the spiritual message of 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions and the role they play in carrying AA's message, being certain not to convey a solicitation of funds.
- Requested GSO research how AA may utilize an APP to further increase carrying the message of recovery and self-support.
- Requested Publishing add language to all appropriate service pieces regarding online and recurring contributions.
- Requested Publishing simplify the Self-Support Card.
- Requested GSO consider adding the recurring contributions information to the Area quarterly contributions report.

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON REPORT & CHARTER

Several **Advisory Actions** resulted from the work of this committee which oversees revisions to *The A.A. Service Manual* and the *Final Conference Report*, as well as any changes to the Twelve Concepts for World Service by Bill W.

- One revision in Chapter Four adding a new section on "Area Websites";
- The bylaws of A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. be included in *The A.A. Service Manual* as appendices.
- The G.S.O. Department reports which are shared at Conference be included in the *Final Conference Report*.
- Brief bios for nontrustee directors, similar to those for trustees, be included in the *Final Conference Report*.

### **Committee Consideration:**

There were eight Committee Considerations which are included in the compilation of Advisory Actions & Additional Considerations.



Membership levels remain flat.  
Contributions show small growth.  
Literature sales show small growth.  
Expenses continue to grow slowly  
2-3%/yr.

### A DOLLAR IS NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE

1935: \$1.00



Remember inflation when deciding upon your  
7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Self-Support Contributions for:

- Group Meetings
- Online Recurring Contributions
- Birthday Gifts
- November Gratitude Month

APR. 2017: \$17.78

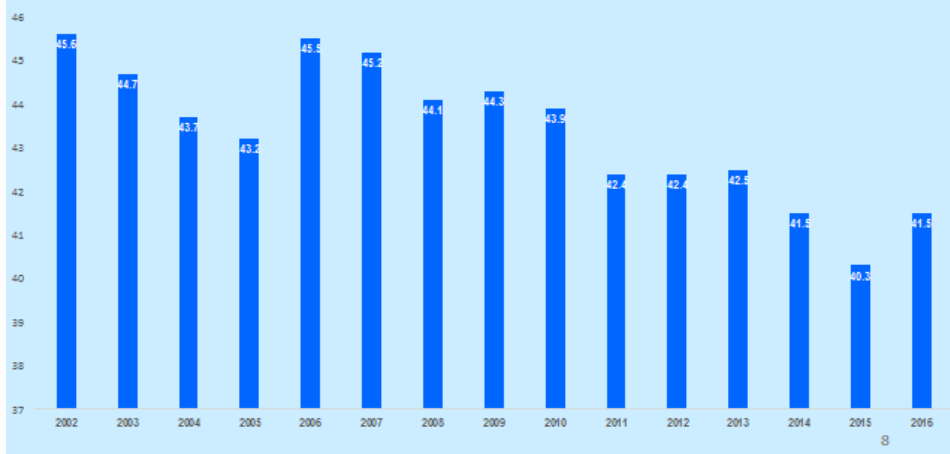


11

This chart represents the percentages of listed groups that contributed to G.S.O. over the last decade. It shows contributions up slightly. 41.5% of groups in the US & Canada contributed in 2016, specifically 27,542 contributing groups out of 66,336 total groups.

This compares to 40.3% of the groups that contributed in 2015, (26,500 contributing groups out of 65,741 total groups).

### PERCENTAGE OF GROUPS CONTRIBUTING – 2002 – 2016



8

## 2018 General Service Conference Theme

The Conference Committee on Agenda recommended the theme:

***“A.A. ~ A Solution for All Generations”***

and 3 Presentation/Discussion Topics for the 68<sup>th</sup> General Service Conf:

- a) *Today’s Alcoholic: Inclusion, Not Exclusion*
- b) *Participation in All of A.A. ~ Is My Triangle Balanced?*
- c) *A.A. Technology: Where Innovation Meets the Traditions*
- d) *Attraction Not Promotion: A.A.’s Relations to the World*
- e) *Group Conscience: The Guiding Force*

The Workshop Topic for the 2018 GSC: “Getting the A.A. Message Out...”

## Area Delegate Stats:

Average Age .....	59 years
Oldest .....	75 years
Youngest .....	37years
Avg. Length of Sobriety .....	23 years
Longest .....	51 years
Shortest .....	10 years
Avg. Length of Service .....	19 years
Longest .....	50 years
Shortest .....	8 years

## Conference Committee

### on Agenda

**Agenda Item F:** Discuss the process of posting the grid of proposed Conference agenda items on the Dashboard.

### Committee Consideration:

The committee expressed appreciation for updates for the 67<sup>th</sup> GSC and requested that the grid, updated to show the disposition of items by the trustees’ committees, and the list of items that had not been forwarded to a Conference committee, be posted to the dashboard as soon as possible following the January Board weekend.

## Conference Committee on Grapevine

### No Recommendations. One Floor Action:

- A.A. Grapevine create a Google for Nonprofits account, with use of the account limited to the YouTube Nonprofit Program and with a guarantee that comments not be shown on the A.A. Grapevine YouTube pages. The A.A. Grapevine Board will track its effectiveness through website metrics.

### Committee Considerations (summary for 3 of 10 items):

- The committee considered the 2010 Advisory Action regarding LaVina and took no action.
- The committee considered the 2004 Advisory Action on outside sales and suggested that the GV Board create a plan for outside sales of subscriptions, books and other items and report back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine.
- Requested AAGV continue exploration of an Instagram account, develop a plan, and bring back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine for review.
- Requested AAGV continue exploration of a Facebook page, develop a plan, and bring back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Grapevine

### WORKSHOP TOPIC ~ Anonymity: The Spiritual Foundation

These four questions were used to facilitate participation in breakout sessions on the Workshop Topic and could be used locally as well for Workshops or discussion groups: (1) What are some ways groups/districts in your Area foster awareness of our principle of anonymity? (2) How has misinformation about personal anonymity among A.A. members been an obstacle in P.I. and C.P.C. service? (3) What is the experience of members in your Area regarding social media with regard to A.A.’s Anonymity Traditions? and (4) How well do

we practice a “genuine humility”? As members? As a Fellowship?

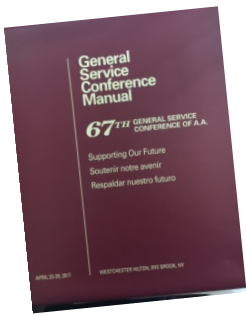


## WHO MAKES UP THE CONFERENCE?

93 Area Delegates .....	69.9%
7 Class A Trustees (Non-Alcoholic)	
12 Class B Trustees (Alcoholic*)	
6 Non-Trustee Directors.....	18.8%
15 GSO and Grapevine Staff.....	11.3%
<b><u>133 Total Voting Members in 2017</u></b>	

\*One Class B trustee vacancy due to death of Joe D., AAWS Chair

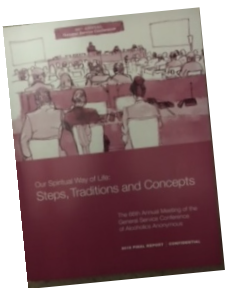
## The Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions recommended that:



- The 2018 General Service Conference move ahead with electronic voting to be used for all Conference voting, with exception of elections, which are conducted by ballot at this time.
- The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference develop a plan for the equitable distribution of the workload of Conference committees by combining and/or creating committees for review by the 2018 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions.
- Starting with the 67<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, an anonymity-protected, digital *Final Conference Report* be published in addition to the current print version.
- The 70<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference be held April 19-25, 2020 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.
- Starting at the 2018 General Service Conference, the proposed dates of future General Service Conferences be considered as an Additional Committee Consideration rather than requiring an Advisory Action.

### Additional Committee Considerations (summary for 2 of 4 items):

- The committee considered a request to allow regional service committees to bid to host the General Service Conference and Took No Action.
- The committee discussed a request to add a "YPAA Subcommittee" to the service structure and Took No Action. The committee recognized that YPAAs are A.A. entities comprised of members of Alcoholics Anonymous and encourage young people to continue their participation at all levels of service.



## Public Information (P.I.)

### The Conference Committee on Public Information recommended:

- AAWS create a Google for Nonprofits account, with use of the account limited to the YouTube Nonprofit Program and with a guarantee that comments not be shown on AAWS YouTube pages. The committee requested that a report including information from website analytics and the usefulness and effectiveness of the AAWS YouTube account be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information.
- The pamphlet "*Understanding Anonymity*" be rewritten to include material from GSO literature covering Tradition Eleven and to expand the discussion of humility in Tradition Twelve as it relates to anonymity and that a progress report or draft language be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Public Information.

### Additional Committee Considerations (summary for 2 of 8 items):

- Requested the trustees' committee continue to develop ideas on the use of quick response (QR) codes; a video on anonymity and the Internet; a daily text message; and options for carrying the A.A. message to the public on social media.
- Suggested the development of service material to address frequently asked questions regarding anonymity and a wallet card addressing anonymity online and in social media.
- Reviewed report on implementation of a Twitter account and Took No Action owing to the 10<sup>th</sup> Traditions direction to avoid public controversy and concerns regarding the viability and modernity of Twitter.

## Conference Committee on Corrections

No Recommendations.

### Additional Committee Considerations:

- Suggested the Corrections coordinator at GSO send quarterly updates to Area Delegates and Area Correction chairs about the status of the CCS and the current need for volunteers.
- Suggested adding the CCS form for "Inside" members to the corrections committee page at aa.org in order to be more accessible.
- Suggested Corrections coordinator explore ways to offer "inside" and "outside" members the option of participating in the CCS via email.
- Committee agreed that local committees were best able to handle the important work of carrying the A.A. message to incarcerated Native American/First Nations/Inuit People. To aid in this work, it was suggested to add the pamphlet "*Many Paths to Spirituality*" to the Corrections Kit and the Corrections Group Handbook.
- Requested AAWS produce versions of "A New Freedom" that are dubbed in French and Spanish to make the A.A. message more accessible.
- Suggested a service piece be developed to accompany the video "A New Freedom".

# Conference Committee on Literature

# Literature

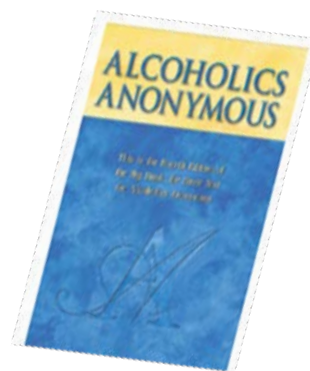
## Approved Recommendations (brief summaries):

- The following two bullet points in “Q&A on Sponsorship” be removed:
  - a *File* of names, addresses, and phone numbers of newcomers, and *Review of newcomers* list by steering committee.
- Revised plan for the annual review of recovery literature be implemented.
- The pamphlet “*Too Young*” be revised to reflect ore current collective experiences of young alcoholics and their welcome to A.A. (Floor Action)
- Question 10 in the pamphlet “*The A.A. Group*” in the section “*A.A. Group Inventory*” that currently reads, “Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive & accessible meeting place/” be revised to read:

“Are we doing all we can to provide a safe, attractive and accessible meeting place?”
- The pamphlet “*The A.A. Group*” be revised to add text of “*Suggestions to Consider*” to the section “*Principles Before Personalities*” from the “*Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare*” service piece.

## Committee Considerations (summary for 5 of 10 items):

- The committee reviewed a draft pamphlet and offered additional suggestions for the following pamphlets:
  - “*A.A. for the Woman*”, “*Finding Acceptance: A.A. for the LGBTQ Alcoholic*”, “*Young People and A.A.*”
- The committee reviewed draft sample illustrations and corresponding revised text for the pamphlet “*The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*”. The committee looks forward to reviewing a draft revised pamphlet or progress report at the 2018 GSC.
- The committee reviewed a progress report from the trustees’ Literature Committee on the development of literature for alcoholics with mental health issues and those who sponsor them. The committee looks forward to reviewing a draft copy or progress report at the 2018 GSC.
- The committee requested that the trustees’ PI Committee consider adding information related to safety to the pamphlets “*A Brief Guide to A.A.*” and “*Understanding Anonymity.*”
- The committee considered requests for the development of new literature regarding safety in A.A. and Took No Action. The committee agreed that shared experience regarding safety and A.A. would be best conveyed by revising existing literature, where appropriate. The committee also agreed that the new service piece, “*Safety and A.A.: Our Common Welfare,*” has been found helpful in providing experience from groups and members on challenges, resources and possible solutions in situations that may involve the safety of groups or individual members.



## Conference Treatment and Accessibilities Committee

It was **recommended** that: “The pamphlet “A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs” be approved with suggested editorial changes and be retitled “Accessibility for All Alcoholics.”

### **Committee Considerations (summary for 5 of 7 items):**

- The committee suggested that the Conference-approved pamphlet “A Message to Teenagers” be removed from the Treatment Service Kit.
- The committee suggested that staff review and revise service material in the Treatment Service Kit.
- The committee suggested that the Remote Communities committees encourage A.A. members carrying A.A.’s message within the context of military life to share their experience, strength and hope, including at the pre-Conference Remote Communities meeting.
- The committee suggested the trustees Committee on CPC/Treatment and Accessibilities forward the pamphlet “A.A. and the Armed Services,” to the Publishing Department for translation into French and Spanish, and to add the pamphlet to the Accessibilities Kit.
- The committee suggested that the GSO continue to explore strategies to provide more effective services to alcoholics who are veterans and active members of the Armed Services and provide a progress report to the 2018 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.



## Conference Archives Committee

It was **recommended** that: “A draft or a progress report of *Unity in Action: Bill W.’s General Service Conference Talks, 1951-1970* (working title) be brought back to the 2018 Conference Committee on Archives for review.

### **Committee Considerations (summary):**

- ◆ The committee reviewed the contents of the Archives Workbook and suggested that the “Shared Experiences” section be refreshed with new stories from local Archivists.
- ◆ The committee suggested that a section be added to the “Archives and History” portal of the GSO website at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) to include any updates from GSO Archives at the discretion of the Archivist.

### THE HAND OF A.A. IS ALWAYS THERE

❖ A few examples of what the 90 people of both GSO and Grapevine do each working day to make sure that the hand of A.A. is always there for the Fellowship and the still suffering alcoholic:

- ❖ 13,600 booklets, pamphlets, and miscellaneous items shipped daily
- ❖ 4,900 Big Books and other books shipped daily
- ❖ 390 people (216 first timers) on average attended each of 14 Regional Forums held during last three years
- ❖ 230 emails responded to daily
- ❖ 65 phone calls answered daily
- ❖ 300 Seventh Tradition contributions processed daily & thank you letters sent
- ❖ 200 Grapevine and La Vina mailed daily
- ❖ 6 requests for information from the Archives answered daily
- ❖ Archives conserves A.A.’s history
  - Manages over 2,700 cubic feet of our history – materials are equivalent to nearly **three quarters of a mile** of 8½ x 11” pages of paper stacked end to end.