



Delegate's Report – February 14, 2009

General Service Board News & Highlights

Our Trustees of the General Service Board held their quarterly meeting on January 29 – February 1, 2009. I am awaiting minutes from the Board meeting, and will provide a report at the March 21, 2009 Area Assembly.

A.A. World Services, Inc. News

Sharing on Self-Support

The 58th General Service Conference recommended that: "The trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee gather input from the Fellowship on the benefits and liabilities, both spiritual and practical, of fully funding G.S.O. Services to the Fellowship (G.S.O. Functional expenses) by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members and groups and that this information be forwarded to the 2009 Conference Committee on Finance."

Correspondence was received from G.S.O. in October including background information to help us in organizing informed discussions on the topic of supporting G.S.O. I have copies available today.

Please take this information to your next District meeting, Committee meeting, or home group business meeting as a topic for discussion. G.S.O. is looking for our sharing, which will be included in the background material for the 2010 General Service Conference. This should be great food for thought and discussion!

We will have time allotted at our March 21, 2009 Area Assembly for an open discussion on self support at G.S.O. I will then compile a report and submit it to Don M. at G.S.O. immediately after our Assembly.

Corrections Activity Update

We received correspondence from Gayle S.R. Corrections Coordinator at our General Service Office with an update on Corrections activity. Some noteworthy points:

- Literature for Correctional Facilities!
 - ✓ *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate* (first edition) is available – while quantities last – at **\$5.00 per case** to cover shipping and handling.
 - ✓ Second edition of the *Spanish Big Book*. Since a third edition of the Big Book is now available in Spanish, **the second edition Spanish Big Book (all available formats) is selling for \$25 per case (including shipping.)**
 - ✓ Sharing From Behind the Walls newsletter comes out four times a year, and back copies are available in English and in Spanish.
- Corrections Correspondence Service

There is a *continuing* need for male A.A. members to volunteer for the Corrections Correspondence Service. Please contact Gayle at corrections@aa.org.
- Staple-free A.A. Grapevine Magazines

Beginning with the March 2009 issue, the Grapevine magazine is going staple free. This will make it much easier to get them into correctional facilities.
- Additions to the Corrections Kits

Beginning this year, the Corrections Kits will include a copy of the DVD "A.A. in Correctional Facilities," and a copy of the A.A. Grapevine magazine or La Vina magazine, along with suggestions for using these two items to carry the message of A.A.

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. News

The themes of upcoming issues in the A.A. Grapevine include:

- ✓ March, 2009: *Double Digit Sobriety: Still a Daily Reprieve*
- ✓ April, 2009: *Along Spiritual Lines: AAs Talk About their Higher Powers*

Some of the special themes to be featured in 2009 are:

- ✓ *Finding Balance: Leading a Full Life in Recovery*
- ✓ *All About Me: Letting Go of Ego*

The Grapevine welcomes our articles on every aspect of recovery. To submit your story on any of the above topics or your experience, strength and hope on one or more of the Steps, visit www.aagrapevine.org for writer's guidelines.

59th General Service Conference

The Conference Coordinator at the General Service Office, Doug R. mailed out a "Communications Kit" for delegates in December, containing a Preliminary Draft Agenda for the Conference week, a list of the members of the 59th General Service Conference, the 2009 Conference Committees, the Preliminary Agenda Items, and a list of the Conference "buddies." Also included were the various forms to be completed, making arrangements for lodging, travel expenses, and ordering Early Bird Box 459s and Final Conference Reports.

Our Area's financial contribution to the General Service Conference was mailed to Doug R., as voted on and approved by the Area in our 2009 budget. We received an acknowledgement and thanks from Doug for our show of self support beyond the \$1,200 contribution suggested.

I am serving on the Conference Committee on Trustees. As elected at last year's Conference, I will be serving as the Co-Chair of the Conference Committee. Our Committee Chair is Michalene R., delegate from Southern Indiana. I continue to pray for the health of my Committee Chair. Michalene attended the last General Service Board weekend, during which she emailed our committee members, welcoming us and giving us food for thought on how the Committee meetings will be conducted. Our Committee secretary is G.S.O. staffer Valerie O'N.

Follow up to our December 2008 Area Assembly...

Letters were sent to Doug R., Conference Coordinator at G.S.O. We received letters from Doug in acknowledgement and thanking Area 29 for our request for Agenda Items for the Grapevine and Treatment Facilities Committees for the 59th General Service Conference. Doug reported our requests were forwarded to the corresponding trustees committees. We also received a letter from Robin B., from the Grapevine Corporate Board thanking Area 29 for our request.

We received the list of Final Agenda Items. Along with the list, is a list of requested Agenda Items for which No Action was taken by the trustees committees. There was No Action taken on our requests for the Grapevine and Treatment Facilities items, with explanations provided:

Grapevine

"The Grapevine Board discussed Area 29's request that the 2009 Conference Committee on the Grapevine consider adding the bullet points on page 66 of the Final Report of the 58th General Service Conference, Additional Considerations to the Grapevine Workbook and took no action at this time. The bulleted list of suggestions "to increase use of the Grapevine and La Vina and awareness of their roles in AA today" was referred to a subcommittee of the AA Grapevine for further discussion."

Treatment Facilities

"The committee discussed an area proposal, "that the 59th General Service Conference revisit the Bridging the Gap pamphlet, specifically that the pamphlet be revised to be more generic to include Corrections, Treatment Facilities, and Institutions" and took no action. The committee noted that this item had been considered by the 2008 Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities and agreed that in keeping with the practice of not having an item considered and subsequently reconsidered by consecutive conferences that forwarding this item to the 2009 Conference Committee on TF would not be appropriate at this time."

The Conference incorporates a "Buddy" system in which first year delegates are teamed up with second year delegates who serve as mentors. My assigned Conference Buddy from Northeast Ontario had to step down as delegate due to family issues. As this delegate's successor is a lady, and our delegates are buddied up with

members of the same gender, Doug R. sadly informed me I would be buddyless and in recompense offered to be my Buddy. I have a friend.

We have received the Final Agenda Items and Background Material for the 59th General Service Conference. Copies of the Final Agenda Items, Items for which No Action was taken, and items Tabled are available. It is exciting to note that the Final Agenda Items include the Report and Charter item submitted by Area 29.

Out and About Area 29

Since our Area Assembly meeting in December, I have attended District meetings in Districts 6, 31, 36, and 42. If I have not attended your district's meeting, please let me know where and when you meet. I will be happy to come out and visit if you wish. Since our last Area Assembly, I attended the Lower Shore Intergroup meeting.

Laurel Grove Group New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance

On Wednesday, December 31 I attended the Laurel Grove Group New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance in Mechanicsville, in District 36. We heard Mike M. share his experience, strength and hope after feasting on a pot luck buffet featuring a virtual cornucopia of chicken, ham, meatballs and salads. Thanks to all who made it happen and the gracious hospitality extended to me. It was heartwarming to see a large attendance from the local treatment facility experience that "we are not a glum lot." The only bittersweet disappointment was that in the long drive home late at night on New Year's Eve, I did not encounter *any* sobriety checkpoints. (And I was driving with license and registration at the ready!)

4th Step Workshop

On Saturday, January 24, I attended a 4th Step Workshop co-hosted by the Intergroup Liaison Committee and the Ocean City Intergroup in Ocean City. The attendance was phenomenal, and we heard a panel of speakers share on their experience with the 4th Step. The audience had an opportunity to participate in a written exercise on the 4th Step. Thanks go out to Dan M. and Jen O. for organizing the event. Lunch was provided, and I can not go on without saying that Jen's organic chili was the best thing I've eaten since Jen's organic pizza at last year's Regional Panel meeting in Salisbury.

District 31 Dinner and Play

On Friday, February 6, District 31 hosted a Dinner and Play featuring their rendition of "Snow White and the Seven Character Defects" in Severna Park. A bountiful buffet of salad and satiable spaghetti was followed by a tasteful rendition of the SWATSCD Play. Thanks to the G.S.R.s and hats off to the District 31 master thespians. The presentation was performed to a packed house. We were especially bewitched by the Wicked Queen.

District 10 Spiritual Foundation Workshop

On Saturday, February 7 District 10 hosted a workshop titled "Our Spiritual Foundation," in Parkville. We heard three speakers share their experience, strength and hope on the topics of "Higher Power and What it Means," "The Spiritual Life is Not a Theory – We Have to Live It," and "Prayer and Meditation." The three speakers were punctuated with questions and answers, and a pot luck lunch provided at noon. Thank you to D.C.M. Charles L. and the folks in District 10, for an enlightening and what I am told their first workshop in many, many years.

And Things to Come...

2009 Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA)

On February 19 – 22, 2009 I will be attending the NERAASA in Portland, Maine. I am looking forward to another great NERAASA and will provide a full report in March.

2009 Northeast Regional Delegate's Weekend (NERD)

I have registered to attend the Northeast Regional Delegate's weekend, or NERD, on March 13 – 15, 2009 in Pittsburgh, PA (Area 60.) The NERD serves not only as a reunion of past delegates throughout the Northeast Region, but as an opportunity for current delegates to meet each year prior to the General Service Conference and help prepare for the Conference week.

Area 29 Regional Panels

On many dates between today and our Area 29 Mini Conference in April, our six Regional Panels will be meeting to review and discuss the Conference Agenda Items for the 59th General Service Conference. I am *keeping my calendar open* so I may *attend as many Regional Panel*

meetings as I can. Our Regional Panel meetings and our Mini Conference are where the fellowship of A.A. become informed and have an informed group conscience on matters which affect A.A. as a whole.

Area 29 Mini Conference

Area 29 will be hosting the Mini Conference on April 3 - 5, 2009 at the Holiday Inn in Columbia. The Mini Conference is designed to prepare our delegate for the General Service Conference, and is open to *all A.A. members*. I have registered to attend.

2009 Maryland State Convention

Area 29 will be hosting the 39th Maryland State Convention on June 18 - 21 in Hagerstown. I have registered to attend the convention, and looking forward to another great State Convention.

2009 Northeast Regional Forum (NERF)

I have registered to attend the 2009 Northeast Regional Forum, or NERF on June 26 - 28, 2009 in Somerset, New Jersey. I like to say that Forums are where our General Service Office takes its show on the road. Forums are an opportunity for the fellowship to meet members of the General Service Board, General Service Officer staff and Grapevine staff, hear presentations on the roles of our staff and trustees, and ask questions during general sharing and ask-it basket sessions. *All A.A. members are welcome!* There is no cost for registration. Registration flyers are available today. Registration can be done online on the G.S.O. web site at www.aa.org .

Don't drink, go to meetings...

Please help fill up my calendar! I am available and willing to attend and support regional and area events, your district meetings and events, committee activities and group functions. You can email me at delegate@marylandaa.org.

And a parting thought(s)

Tradition Twelve

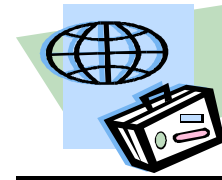
"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because A.A.'s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit - well symbolized by anonymity - is the foundation of them all. It is A.A.'s proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future."

p. 184, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Yours in Service,

**Tom R.
Panel 58 Area 29 Delegate**



Delegate's Wanderings

- Sunday, February 15 - Annapolis Buffet Breakfast, Annapolis
- Thursday, February 19 - Sunday, February 22 - Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA), Portland, Maine (Area 28)
- Monday, February 23 - Arnold Area As Bill See's It group anniversary, Arnold
- Friday, March 13 - Sunday, March 15 - Northeast Regional Delegate's meeting (NERD), Western Pennsylvania (Area 60)
- Saturday, March 21 - Area Assembly meeting, District 17
- Friday, April 3 - Sunday, April 5 - Area 29 Mini Conference, Columbia/Jessup