



Delegate Report – June 4, 2011

Area 29 News

The **Contributions Quarterly Report** as of April 30, 2011 has been received. I e-mailed this to all on my distribution but have a hard copy with me today. If you are a DCM and did not receive the report, see me and I will give you the pages which pertain to your district. For the 4 months ended April 30, the percentage of groups contributing in Area 29 were:

<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
20.78%	21.54%



North East Region News

The **NERAASA 2011** committee reported a very successful event with 952 registered and 338 attending the Saturday Night banquet. There were 100 at the Delegate’s Luncheon which was sold out. All seed money was distributed, according to NERAASA guideline, as follows:

- \$2,500 to NERAASA 2012
- \$1,000 to NERAASA 2013
- \$1,000 to NERAASA 2014

Leaving \$10,850.50 sent as a contribution to the GSB in the name of NERAASA 2011. The committee attributes the profit to the decision not to purchase coffee from the hotel and the superb work of the Hospitality Committee (supported by local groups and districts) to keep up with the demand for coffee and snacks.

Save the Dates!

NERAASA 2012 will be held March 2-4, 2012 at the Crowne Plaza Albany hosted by Area 48, HMB, New York.

NERAASA 2013 will be held in Lancaster, PA

NERAASA 2014 will be held in Rhode Island for the first time.

North East Regional Forum

NERF 2011 was held in Sturbridge, MA the weekend of May 20-22. John and I, Morgan and Linda and three folks from District 20 in Washington County attended. J. Gary L, presided for his first time as the new North East Regional Trustee. Folks were lined up at the mics for every sharing and Q&A session. The Ask-It-Basket was chocked full of interesting questions. Watch for the final report from the forum which will include a synopsis of the sharing from each workshop and answers for the questions in the basket which could not be answered on the floor.

NERF 2013 will be held in Cromwell, CT and as mentioned earlier, an additional **NERF 2014** will be hosted by our own Area 29. This will be a wonderful opportunity for members in Area 29 to meet delegates, Class A and Class B Trustees, and GSO Staff members to ask questions and share ideas.

61st Annual General Service Conference

Our 61st Annual General Service Conference took place May 1 through May 7 at the Crowne Plaza Times Square on Broadway in New York City. The theme of the Conference was “We are Responsible for A.A.’s Future – Let It Begin with Us”

Saturday, April 30

On Saturday, April 30, I left my house at 8:00 am like I did last year. I felt more confident this year. I didn’t have to make phone calls to question what I was doing; but I did listen to the CDs from the Mini Conference just past. I drove to Hackensack, NJ to the home of GSO Staff member, Gayle S-R who had graciously offered me a ride into the city. Her husband Ralph drove us to the hotel, dropped us off with our luggage, drove home to Hackensack and caught a bus back into the city to join Gayle for the beginning of the week. Talk about going to any length!

The week started Saturday afternoon with a Remote Communities meeting which takes place outside of the Conference. The meeting is open to all delegates and is a forum for sharing ideas on overcoming barriers of culture, language, and geography. Saturday evening the delegates met in a Delegate's only meeting to share experiences and answer questions from the "new kids on the block" (Panel 61 delegates).

1728 Group

The 1728 Group (12x12x12=1728) met Sunday morning. This group was formed to help Class A trustees and other interested non-alcoholics learn more about the A.A. program. All meetings are open. Members of A.A. are welcome since their participation is essential for non-alcoholics to learn about recovery.

G.S.C. Serenity Group

Monday through Friday of the Conference week begins with the G.S.C. Serenity Group A.A. meeting at 7:30 am. I spent my time each morning having a very light breakfast in my room and doing my personal prayers, meditation, and organization for the day.

Make Up of the Conference

There were 135 voting members at the Conference this year, including delegates (93), trustees, directors, GSO Staff and Grapevine Staff.

The average age of the delegates was 55, the oldest was 75 and the youngest, 34. The average length of sobriety was 19 years and shortest, 7 years. The longest length of service was 28 years and the shortest, 5 years.

Sunday, May 1

The Conference week started Sunday morning with registration where we picked up our conference packets. The opening session began at 10am with roll call as each of the 93 delegates to the Conference stood and said "here" or "present". Our Conference week had begun.

Sunday afternoon we had lunch by delegate region for orientation and discussion of the upcoming week. Late Sunday afternoon the Conference Committees met jointly with their Trustees' Committee for one hour to discuss what had taken place over the past year and to ask questions.

Opening Dinner and A.A. Meeting

After a period of rest and preparation, we attended the Opening Dinner and A.A. meeting. Area 29 Alt

Delegate, Linda J. attended the dinner as my guest and Past Delegate, Morgan J. attended as the guest of Area 13 Delegate, Frank Z. The room was a buzz of activity as old and new friends met. Following dinner, there were five speakers at the A.A. meeting including two delegates, a GSO Staff member, a trustee and an AAWS director.

Monday, May 2

Monday morning all Conference Committees met for three hours to begin their work. I serve on the Conference Finance Committee where we discussed at great length the change to the "pie charts" and the agenda item from Area 29 to create a Finance Kit and Workbook. We also discussed many ways to carry the message of self support.

As we went around the room to introduce ourselves, one of our members tearfully shared that his mother had passed away that morning. His sister had encouraged him to stay and do the work he was elected to do; that's what his mother would have wanted. We were able to watch out for him during the week and give him hugs and encouragement as he helped his sister make arrangements by phone.

Monday afternoon we entered the hall, now set up for the general sessions of the Conference with the familiar long, narrow tables covered with cloth. Translators, visitors from Venezuela and Great Britain, Trustees Emeriti and some GSO staff members sat along the back wall, a white placard announcing their space. There were the six numbered microphones, the three flags representing the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico and the infamous timing light on the podium.

We heard reports from the General Service Board, A.A.W.S. Board, the Grapevine Board and the Trustees Finance and Budgetary Committee. Following are some highlights from those reports which are available in their entirety for anyone who may want a copy.

General Service Board

- A.A. celebrated its 75th year at the 2011 International Convention in San Antonio, TX. There were 53,000 in attendance resulting in a profit of \$844,545 which went into the general fund.
- The 21st World Service Meeting took place October 2010 in Mexico City. 53 delegates from 32 countries shared their Experience, Strength and Hope with each other.

- Translations of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, are approaching 61 including Tibetan, Amharic (Ethiopia) and Saami (spoken by Laplanders). Four translations are pending – Greek, Twi (Ghana), Luganda (Uganda) and Xhosa (S. Africa).
- *Living Sober* has been translated into Croatian and *Came to Believe* into Romanian.

AA World Services, Inc.

Group Services

- A net total of 1,896 new A.A. groups were listed with G.S.O. in 2010. Each new GSR receives info from G.S.O., usually within 21 days. DCM and GSR Kit Contents will soon be posted on the A.A. website with links to material which is available online
- G.S.O. Staff participated in 5 regional forums in 2010. These trips help staff to gather local experience to add to other collected experience available from G.S.O.
- The 25th Annual Intergroup/Central Office/AAWS/AA Grapevine Seminar was held in St. Louis, MO in September with 130 attendees from approx 110 local offices
- A.A. Archives renovation in 2010 doubled the storage and working space. While reviewing and relocating material from basement storage, the staff discovered an early scrapbook compiled by Jim B from Southern MD who was credited with contributing the phrase “God as we understand Him” to A.A.
- 2,114 members and friends visited GSO
- At year end there were 77 full time and 5 part time employees at G.S.O.

Publications

- Total units sold in 2010 was less than 2009 due to large orders received prior to the July 1, 2009 price increase
- 2010 A.A. purchases = 84.6% of total units
- 2010 Non-A.A. purchases = 15.4% of total units
- As reported in March, The Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions will be available in eBook format on Apple technology around October followed by Android soon after.

Finance

- Final 2010 contribution figures – approx. \$6,408,421; a 1.8% increase over 2009.
- 2010 GSO Net Profit was \$1,255,289; \$18,272 less than 2009
- Net sales of \$12,183,922 were approx. 12.7% less than budgeted
- Total 2010 Revenue (gross profit from literature sales, contributions, and interest earned on cash flow) of \$14,273,404 was \$259,267 less than in 2009
- Contributions Online, implemented in June 2010, received >\$82,000 via that mechanism by the end of the year. From 1/11/11 to 6/1/11, 688 transactions netted \$52,191; an average of almost \$76 per transaction.

A.A. Grapevine Board

- GV realized a loss of \$399,037 in 2010 in comparison to a budgeted loss of \$245,743
- Gross profit on the magazine was below budget by \$151,846 due to unrealized anticipated revenue for 2010 from July 2009 price increase, and changing of subscription/product fulfillment vendor to correct problems.
- Gross profit on the special GV Souvenir issue for the International Convention exceeded budget by 40%
- GV Costs, Expenses, Editorial Costs, and Circulation/Business Expenses, were all under budget
- GV General and Administrative expenses were \$173,488 over budget, mainly due to unbudgeted expenditures for professional fees and severance pay
- GV Subscriptions in the U.S. and Canada were 2,478 less than in 2009
- GV Subscriptions in MD were 43 greater than 2009
- La Viña Subscriptions in the U.S. and Canada were 458 less than in 2009
- Grapevine’s majority reader profile is a 50 yr old white male with 20+ yrs of sobriety. There is a need to grow and serve a wider, more diverse membership
- Over 1,000 digital subscriptions of GV have been purchased since the rollout at the beginning of 2011



News from AA Grapevine, Inc.

The new AAGRAPEVINE.org website launched April 29, 2011. You can purchase subscriptions, back issues, books, CDs and more for yourself or others online. eCheck and PayPal payment options will be added to the website beginning June 1

Grapevine Annual Subscription Prices **Effective July 1, 2011**

- Grapevine Print Magazine - \$28.97
 - *Grapevine Story (Digital) Archive - \$26.97
 - *Audio Grapevine Magazine - \$21.97
 - *Grapevine Digital Magazine - \$21.97
 - NEW! Grapevine Online - \$34.97
- All-inclusive and Unlimited Access to *items above

Trustees Finance and Budgetary

Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustee and General Service Board Treasurer, Terry Bedient gave his "Around The Picnic Table" Finance Presentation which includes useful charts and graphs; many of which are available on the www.aa.org website under the Finance tab.

The General Service Office has only two sources of money to pay the bills; contributions and literature sales. At the end of each year, any cash more than that necessary to pay bills on time is transferred to the Reserve Fund. In 2010, contributions made up 43% of the income and literature made up 57% of the income.

The Grapevine also has only two sources of money to pay the bills; subscriptions and literature sales. At the end of each year, any cash more than that necessary to pay bills on time is transferred to the Reserve Fund. In 2010, subscriptions made up 76% of the income and literature made up 24% of the income.

One of the charts is an Inflation Calculator. We have all heard the phrase "put a dollar in the basket" but a dollar today is only worth eight cents (or less) compared to 1945.

Per the report given, an annual contribution of only \$6.29 per member or \$137.45 per group in 2010 would have allowed GSO Services to be fully self-supporting from contributions. This information plus comparisons for previous years is available on www.aa.org under the Finance tab and can be useful when discussing the 7th Tradition in your home groups or districts.

Tuesday, May 3

Conference Committees met again on Tuesday to complete their work. Many, including my committee, Conference Finance, worked through lunch. Some scheduled time to continue meeting while others took the subway to the General Service Office. I fulfilled my first loving invitation from the Conference Coordinator to close the Tuesday afternoon session with a reading. Tuesday evening was the Delegate's Dinner and Delegate's-Only meeting. This was, to say the least, a lively dinner and meeting as the Panel 60's shared experiences and offered tips for giving reports to their areas.

With the exception of the Delegate's Dinner and two Regional lunches, we met for lunch and dinner with all members of the Conference. At each meal we would sit with different people allowing us to meet and have conversations with other delegates, trustees, GSO staff members, directors and visitors from other countries. This was not a time to discuss Conference Agenda Items, but a time to get to know each other and share how we carry the message in our areas.

At breaks we had the opportunity to visit the extensive Literature and Grapevine displays which took up a large area outside the main meeting room. There was one full table displaying the many translated volumes of the Big Book. Most items on display were labeled "Display-Do not Remove". Once those labels were taken off, all items could be taken by anyone who wanted them. There was not much left by the time it was announced at the microphone.

Wednesday, May 4

Wednesday was a busy day for me and for the North East Region. In the morning I moderated one of the ten conference workshops on "How to Increase Participation in A.A. – Striving for Self-Support in All Our Affairs". Each group had a recorder so that the results of the sharing can be made available in the Final Conference Report.

At the second North East Regional Delegate lunch we heard presentations from three areas bidding to host the 2014 NERAASA. The winning bid went to Area 61, Rhode Island, which has never hosted this event. We ran out of time at the luncheon to conduct a formal bid for the 2014 Additional Regional Forum; but since no other area was prepared to make a bid, Area 29 "won". We will host the 2014 NERF at the Double Tree Hotel and Conference Center at BWI in June of that year.

Election of Trustees

On Wednesday afternoon a section of the conference floor is roped off in preparation for Trustees' elections. Third Legacy procedure is used and a 2/3 majority is needed to elect. Other members of the conference may watch the elections.

Trustee-at-Large/Canada

On the third ballot, **Barb K.** from Eastern Canada was elected.

South West Regional Trustee

On the third ballot, **Clayton V.** (Eastern Missouri) was elected. (Note: his wife, Laura, Panel 61 Delegate, presented his name in nomination.)

North East Regional Trustee

It was awesome to participate in a third legacy procedure election at the Conference and an honor to have the opportunity to personalize the resume of Area 29's candidate, Nancy K. On the fourth ballot, J. Gary L. from Eastern Pennsylvania was elected to serve A.A. and the North East Region for the next four years.

Sharing Sessions and Q&A

Throughout the week open sharing sessions were held to allow conference members the opportunity to share what's on their mind or ask questions. Here are some of the items discussed:

Q. Can FNV (Fellowship New Vision database) be improved???

A. *"We're working on it."*

Q. Why was eBook project not brought through the Conference Process?

A. *"It is just another delivery system, nothing more."* (Phyllis)

Q. What about loss of the copyright of the 12 Concepts and when it happened?

A. *The loss occurred in 1990 for failure to renew and was discovered in early 2007. It was thoroughly reported in the 2007 Final Conference Report.*

Q. Questions about the "Copyright Project" (researching the copyright status of all our literature)

A. *International Property Dept. is now looking at all of our literature to make sure we do not lose anything else. They are making progress on this very substantial project and cannot give any information until it is done; it is a very complex issue which has become infinitely more complicated with*

the changing nature of international intellectual property law. Progress reports will be provided.

Q. Why are there large-print versions of some books in English and Spanish, but not in French
A. *Publications has committed to and is working on all literature in all three languages (Valerie O'Neill, Publications Desk)*

Q. Can we get Final Conference Report electronically (sanitized/no last names).

A. *This has been brought up before; many technical challenges and very labor-intensive; will see what might be done.*

Q. Hoping that GSO might oversee the translation of all background material into Spanish (and French?); not a request for it to be done by GSO, but GSO oversight instead of delegates just doing it on their own.

A. *"We'll take it under consideration."*

Comment: It was pointed out that *La Vigne* (the French language magazine published in Canada) has a 40% readership among its French-speaking members and has sent the profit from last year of \$250,000 to G.S.O.

Comment: Could we explore electronic voting at the conference? It would be accurate, fast, easy, and not very expensive these days. (Currently the members of the Agenda committee are counters and count raised hands one by one)

Comment: Can we work on getting New Group and Group Change Forms with space for e-mail? Valid email addresses for GSRs, GvRs, and all other contacts would save lots of money!

Q. How do we "de-list" groups that do not abide by, or are no longer abiding by, the AA Traditions e.g. groups who practice medical or restrictive detox procedures or groups who have changed the Steps.
A. *This is a very difficult problem as generally it has been the policy not to de-list groups. However, each case will be considered individually and hopefully an acceptable answer can be found.*

Q. Can we look for a way to structure AAWS and GV to work together? Perhaps combine all literature and publications into one catalogue?

A. *Ward Ewing, GSB Chair, has formed an ad hoc committee to look at this.*

Q. Is there any plan to publish a hard bound Daily Reflections?

A. *There is currently no written request to do this.*

Conference Committee Reports Begin

Wednesday afternoon began the Conference Committee reports and discussion which ended, after a break for dinner, at 11:00 pm. A group of 18 die-hards traipsed across Broadway to the Stardust for ice cream. Being exhausted, we still mustered up the energy to sing and eat too much sugar...after all it is a Conference tradition!

Conference Committee reports resumed Thursday morning and afternoon; and in the evening after presentations on "Alcoholics Anonymous in a Digital Age", the session ended Thursday night at 10:00 pm.

Friday, May 6

Friday morning we met for our final day of reports and discussion. There didn't appear to be too many Floor Actions presented so we were hopeful that the session would end as scheduled at 3:00 pm. That was not to be the case. Even though we did not beat the still-standing record of the 59th General Service Conference which ended after 2:00 am, we continued working through dinner until 7:10 pm when all discussion had been exhausted and all votes had been taken. Farewells by rotating Panel 60 delegates and closing remarks by the Chair of the General Service Board ended at 9:30 pm with the Serenity Prayer in English, French and Spanish.

Saturday Closing Brunch

Saturday morning was a time for tearful farewells at the closing brunch as we said good-bye to our new and old friends including four rotating trustees. In an effort to lighten up the moment, all of the delegates from the South West Region, including the women, sported bow ties to honor their rotating trustee, Conley B, who was recognized for his. He was quick to point out that they were not clip-ons!

Our own John K, North East Regional Trustee who served us for the past four years, gave a very emotional farewell full of memories and heartfelt gratitude. I share with you the ending from John's talk which also expresses my gratitude for this final opportunity to serve as your delegate at the General Service Conference.

"You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains; you raise me up, to walk on stormy seas; and I am strong when I am on your shoulders; you raise me up...to more than I can be."

Highlights of 2011 Conference Advisory Actions and Additional Considerations

- The theme for the 2012 Conference will be "Anonymity: Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age".
- A.A. Grapevine will be permitted to utilize digital channels like smart phones, tablets, eReaders, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products.
- The trustees' literature committee will continue to develop literature which focuses on spirituality which includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are sober in A.A.
- The 2011 A.A. Membership Survey will be conducted by area on a random basis.
- The recovery pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" - approved.
- The revised pamphlet, "The A.A. Member-Medications and Other Drugs" - approved.
- An additional blank pie chart and text will be added to the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix"
- A draft Self-Support Kit will be developed
- A Finance Workbook will NOT be developed
- The A.A. Preamble will NOT be printed in the Big Book

Full copies of the Conference Advisory Actions, Additional Committee Considerations, Floor Actions that Did Not Result in Advisory Actions and Recommendations that Did Not Result in Advisory Actions are available. Please contact me.

I encourage all Regional Panels to review the actions on each Agenda Item discussed in your panels and at the Mini Conference. Please use the list of Additional Considerations to formulate possible Agenda Items to bring to the Area for discussion and possible approval no later than the December Area Assembly. The deadline to send proposed Agenda Items to New York is January 15, 2012.

Full details of the 61st General Service Conference will be published this summer in the Confidential 2011 Final Conference Report which should be available in August.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve you!

Nancy B.
Panel 60, Area 29 Delegate
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