

## AREA 05 DELEGATE'S REPORT

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

April 22-29, 2018 at Crowne Plaza Times Square, New York



### What is the annual General Service Conference?

The group conscience of the annual meeting is considered the voice of the AA Fellowship which guides and directs the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. Every year, the elected Delegates from the 93 areas in the U.S. and Canada meet in April for 6 days with the trustees of the General Service Board, non-trustee directors of A.A.W.S., Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and certain staff members of the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine to review the operations and finances of AA World Services and the Grapevine and to address the questions, concerns, and suggestions of the Fellowship at large.

**We come together for one purpose:** to focus on how AA can improve our ability to reach and help the suffering alcoholic. We gather to improve AA's ability to carry our message of recovery and to insure our Fellowship's growth into the future. We meet to address the questions, concerns, and suggestions of the Fellowship on improvements to AA literature, policies and finances -- guided by the informed consciences of the A.A. groups.

### Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community Approved Recommendations (summary)

- **Approved: Three (3) revised 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.", **now including information for professionals who come in contact with veterans and active members of the Armed Services, and information on how to contact A.A. worldwide.**
- **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 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 deepen the pool of Class A Trustee candidates; and--by our presence on **LinkedIn**, to reinforce the continuing relevance and efficacy of A.A. to professionals

### Considerations (summary)

- That the updated "peer to peer" sample guide letters, now rewritten to be more relevant to the professionals to whom they are addressed, replace the guide letters currently in the C.P.C. workbook, and that utilizing the guide letters be mentioned in the "Suggested C.P.C. Committee Goals and Projects" section of the workbook.
- 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 trustees' Committee on CPC/TA 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".

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

3 Class B (Alcoholic) – Pacific Regional.....	Kathy F.
- Eastern Canada Regional.....	Jan L.
- General Service Trustee .....	Beau B.

Thomas B.  
Panel 67 Delegate  
Area 05  
Southern California  
delegate@aascaa.org

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE on FINANCE

### Approved Recommendations (summary):

- 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.

### Committee Considerations (summary for 7 of 9 items):

- 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 informing our Fellowship of the vital services provided by A.A.W.S.
- 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 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:** (A) That there be a greater online presence. (B) A fact sheet on the topic of Grapevine be included in the *Self-Support Packet*, and (C) that the General Service Board make available issues of Grapevine for distribution purposes through G.S.O. staff assignments.

Contributions set historic record  
of \$8.4 Million, up 6%  
Literature sales up 6%  
Cost of services per member \$7.40  
Grass roots challenge:  
\$7.40 on 7/04/18 !

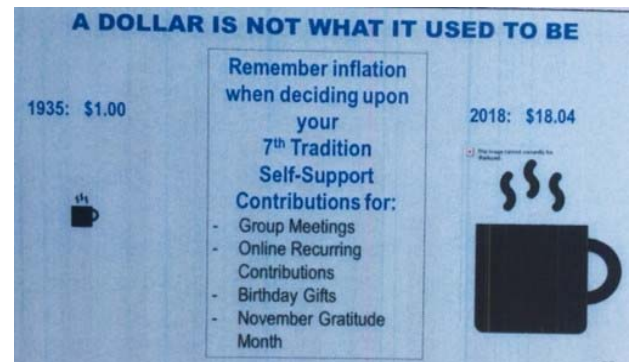
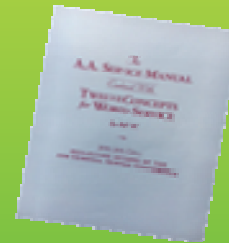
## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON REPORT & CHARTER

Seven **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.

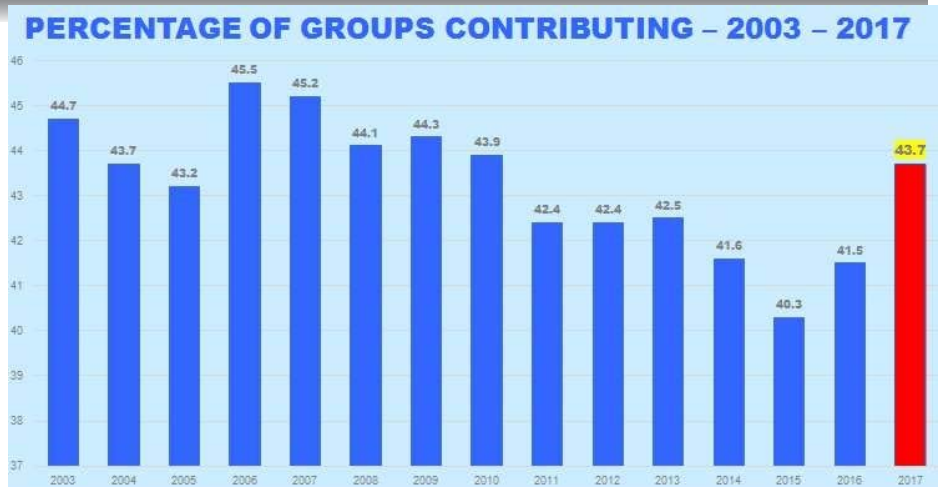
- Text boxes visually displaying the member positions on each of the three corporate boards be added to Chapter Ten of the A.A. Service Manual in the section on A.A. World Services, Inc.
- The defined term "panel" be added to the Glossary of Service Terms in the A.A. Service Manual
- Any Committee Considerations be published *in their entirety* in both the printed *Conference Final Report* and the anonymity-protected digital version.
- Floor Action:** Area Service Highlights be published in their entirety in both the printed Conference Final Report and the anonymity-protected digital version

### Committee Consideration:

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



This chart represents the percentages of listed groups that contributed to G.S.O. over the last decade. It shows group participation in contributions to support A.A.'s life-giving services *up significantly*. 43.7% of groups in the U.S. and Canada contributed in 2017; specifically 29,219 contributing groups out of 66,860 total groups. This compares to 41.5% of the groups that contributed in 2016, (27,542 contributing groups out of 66,336 total groups).



## 2019 General Service Conference Theme

The Conference Committee on Agenda recommended the theme:  
**"Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages."**

AND: 3 Presentation/Discussion Topics for the 2019 Conference:

- Yesterday's World – Our Legacies Begin*
- Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service*
- Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant*

The Workshop Topic for the 2019 GSC: **"Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings"**

## Conference Committee on Agenda

### Committee Considerations:

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 Conference agenda items.

The committee reviewed the General Service Conference 2016 Report on the Agenda Item Selection Process, and noted that great progress has been made on implementing the plan in the 2016 report.

The committee requested the trustees' committee create a process for area delegate review of certain proposed agenda items and bring a report to the 2019 Conference Committee on Agenda.

## Area Delegate Stats:

Average Age .....	59 years
Oldest .....	76 years
Youngest .....	35 years
Avg. Length of Sobriety .....	23 years
Longest .....	38 years
Shortest .....	8 years
Avg. Length of Service .....	18 years
Longest .....	38 years
Shortest .....	6 years

## Conference Committee on Grapevine

### Approved Recommendations:

- **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, thus making these life-saving publications available *wherever they may be useful in helping the still suffering alcoholic*.
- **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.
- **AA Grapevine, Inc.** continue to seek opportunities to expand bulk sales.
- **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."**

### Committee Considerations

- There were **Nine Committee Considerations**, including **5 new Grapevine/ La Viña books** and refinement of GV/LV social media strategy- see compilation of Advisory Actions & Additional Considerations.

### **WORKSHOP TOPIC ~ Getting the A.A. Message Out**

These four questions were used to facilitate participation in breakout sessions on the Workshop Topic and could be used locally as well: (1) What role do individual members have in getting the A.A. message out and how does the service structure support efforts to carry the A.A. message? (2) How can the Fellowship overcome confusion about A.A.'s Anonymity Traditions to create better understanding and increase participation in getting the A.A. message out? (3) What misperceptions about A.A. held by professionals and the public prevent getting the A.A. message out? How have we overcome these in order to carry the message? And, (4) What more can A.A. do to reach suffering alcoholics? What is the role of technology / unexplored avenues?

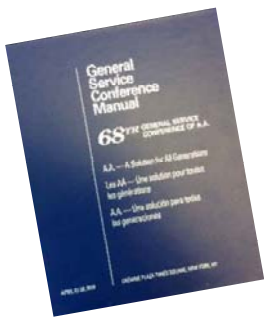
## WHO MAKES UP THE CONFERENCE?

93 Area Delegates .....	68.4%
7 Class A Trustees (Non-Alcoholic)	
13 Class B Trustees (Alcoholic*)	
6 Non-Trustee Directors.....	19.1%
17 GSO and Grapevine Staff.....	12.5%
<b>136 Total Voting Members in 2018</b>	

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







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

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

## Additional Committee Considerations (summary for 2 of 5 items):

- The committee accepted the dates April 25-May 1, 2021 for the 71st General Service Conference since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.
- 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.

## *Public Information (P.I.)*

### The Conference Committee on Public Information recommended:

- 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.
- 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

### Additional Committee Considerations (summary for 2 of 5 items):

- 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 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.

## Conference Committee on Corrections

No Recommendations.

### Additional Committee Considerations:

- 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.
- 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 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 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.
- Suggested that the links displayed in the video “*Carrying the Message Behind These Walls*” be updated.
- Suggested the trustees’ Committee on Corrections discuss ways to utilize A.A. materials for incarcerated alcoholics at juvenile facilities.
- 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.

## Conference Committee on Literature

### Approved Recommendations:

- The revised pamphlet “A.A. for the Woman,” re-titled “*Experience, Strength and Hope: Women in A.A.*,” be approved.
- The revised pamphlet “A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic,” re-titled “*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.
- 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.”
- Text regarding A.A. Members’ permitted use of prescribed medications, *originally included in the 1998 edition of Living Sober* following the section titled “*Note to Medical Professionals*” be re-added to **Living Sober**
- That the video “*Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure*” be comprehensively updated to reflect a *contemporary presentation* of the General Service and AA Grapevine offices as well as a *current portrayal* of the General Service Structure.

## Literature

### Approved Recommendations (continued):

- The pamphlet “**The God Word**” (currently published by the General Service Board of A.A., Great Britain), providing shared experience strength and hope from atheist and agnostic A.A. members, be adopted by A.A. World Services, Inc. with minor editorial changes.
- **Development of 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.
- **Development of 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.

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

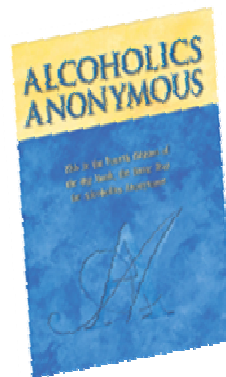
- The committee recommended the trustees’ Literature Committee develop a new book, combining *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* with *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, and bring back a progress report or draft manuscript to the 2019 Conference Committee on Literature.

However, this recommendation did not receive the required two-thirds approval from the Conference.

### COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS (2 of 9)

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 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.



## Conference Treatment and Accessibilities Committee

### Approved Recommendations:

- 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 to include underserved or "Remote Communities" — communities difficult to reach because of geography, language or culture.

### Committee Considerations (8 of 16 items):

- Suggested that the trustees' CPC / Treatment and Accessibilities focus on carrying the message to veterans in VA facilities, active service members stationed in local military facilities in the U.S. and Canada, and active military personnel who are deployed outside the U.S. and Canada.
- 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.
- Continue exploring ways to meet the needs of A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing and 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.

### 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:

- ❖ 14,000 booklets, pamphlets, and miscellaneous items shipped daily
- ❖ 4,900 Big Books and other books shipped daily
- ❖ 230 emails responded to daily
- ❖ 40 phone calls answered daily
- ❖ 350 Seventh Tradition contributions processed daily & thank you letters sent
- ❖ 200 Grapevine and La Vina mailed daily
- ❖ 400 people (215 first timers) on average attended each of 12 Regional Forums held during last three years
- ❖ 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.



**ACTION IS THE  
KEY TO  
SUPPORTING  
THE FUTURE OF  
ALCOHOLICS  
ANONYMOUS**

## Conference Archives Committee

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.

## Conference Trustees Committee

### Committee Considerations (2 of 5) Summary:

- ♦ 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 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.
- ♦ 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.