

DELEGATE'S REPORT

Pre-Conference Assembly 2015

Delegate's Report – Renae H.: Greetings Fellow Trudgers, What a tremendous feeling it is to be here today with all of you together in service to Alcoholics Anonymous and to the Utah AA Fellowship. I cannot fully describe the blessings and the joy I receive through the many service opportunities this recovery program affords us all! I'm especially excited to hear your sharing on the 2015 65th General Service Conference (GSC) Agenda Items that we have been talking about for the past month and a half among your groups and your districts. Through today's discussion and sharing, Area 69's collective group conscience will emerge by consensus voting, thus informing your delegate how the Utah Area 69's voice is heard at the 65th GSC. I plan on being a very busy note-taker this afternoon! I want to thank the districts that made time for me and Wade J., (Alternate Delegate) to share about the 2015 Conference Agenda Items at their District meetings. I also had the pleasure of attending district 10 and 1's District Workshops and both were extremely informative and engaging to all in attendance---great job! I attended the March Central Office Representative's meeting as an interested AA member. This was my first time to visit the Salt Lake C.O. meeting and it was very interesting. Several motions were addressed in which much loving discussion was heard. I look forward to attending future meetings to learn more about all our Utah Central Offices. Area 69 is currently entertaining a motion regarding the formation of a C.O./ Intergroup Liaison position that is intended to facilitate additional communication and "linkage" between the Area General Service structure and our local Central Offices/Intergroups and the vital A.A. services they provide as a "front line" to the still suffering alcoholic. Moving on to what's happening at your General Service Office (GSO) headquarters, we'll touch on some highlights reported in April 2015. G.S.O. Doug Richardson retired in December 2014 after 18 years at G.S.O. Doug came to the General Service Office in 1995 as an A.A. Staff member. For the last four years of his tenure, Doug served as the Director of Staff Services. Angel Calvillo, Spanish Editor in Publishing, also retired in December 2014 after more than 23 years of expertly translating literally thousands of words during his tenure at the General Service Office. Most recently, we bid adieu to Joe Dennon who retired as of April 1, 2015 after a 28 year tenure at the General Service Office where he worked as staff assistant and secretary to the A.A.W.S. Board. Last but not least, we will bid a fond farewell to Phyllis Halliday, G.S.O.'s general manager, who announced her intent to retire as of October 2015. Phyllis's retirement will mark the conclusion of a seven year period of outstanding service and commitment at the General Service Office, not to mention the distinction of G.S.O.'s first female general manager. We are all grateful to Phyllis for her dedication and service, and wish her well in her new endeavors. The General Service Board will continue on-going discussions on their Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Policy, the Orientation for new trustees, and the search for the new general manager. A Search Committee has been formed and the position opening announced with resumes to be received by April 15. If all goes well, interviewing will begin in June with a decision targeted for August 1st. Since the 64th Conference, the General Service Board hosted Regional Forums in Idaho, Quebec and Puerto Rico. On the International scene, trustees and G.S.O. staff were invited to El Salvador, Columbia, Poland, Latvia, Japan and

Mexico. A highlight of trustee and staff travel included General Service Board representation at the 23rd World Service Meeting in Warsaw, Poland. There were 61 delegates from 41 countries in attendance at this international sharing session and GSO was delighted with first-time participation by the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Iran and Romania. This year our trustees-at-large will be attending the 19th REDELA (Meeting of the Americas) in Mexico City, Mexico, which is the A.A. Zonal Meeting corresponding to the A.A. service structures in North, Central and South America. Zonal service meetings are invaluable to emerging countries and are held, in addition to the Americas, in Asia Oceania, Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa. Zonal meetings will take place this year in Dubai, U.A.E.; York, England; and Johannesburg, South Africa. They provide opportunities to discuss the challenges of creating service structures, literature distribution and practicing A.A. principles in all their affairs. Manager's Report General Manager Phyllis H., reported that the General Service Office has been a hub of activity with the multitude of reports and final preparations for the General Service Conference; and applauded Mary C. for an outstanding job in guiding the work of agendas and background to completion by deadline! Planning continues for the 2015 International Convention. We currently have over 36,000 registrants with over 90% of whom registered on-line. We are working on the Advance Program with information about the Convention and a tentative list of A.A. and Al-Anon meetings that will be sent to all registered attendees. Those who have requested email correspondence will receive it electronically. Once available, the Advance Program will be posted on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site. Adrienne B. (recently-retired Staff member) has returned to G.S.O. on a part-time basis, assisting with the overflow of work on the Service Assignments. Recruitment for an additional G.S.O. staff member has been posted in the latest box 459 issue with a deadline for applications by May 1, 2015. Planning for the late summer/early fall 2015 construction of the co-location of the G.S.O. and Grapevine offices on the 11th floor of 475 Riverside Drive, continues to progress. Four construction companies are preparing to submit bid proposals which are due the week of March 23, 2015. The construction will be divided into five phases, with completion anticipated by January 2016. Group Services – A net total of 1,387 new A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada were listed at G.S.O. last year. Each new group's general service representative (G.S.R.) or contact receives A.A. literature and basic information to encourage the group to link with their local structure and support Twelfth Step activities. The service piece, "Services Provided by G.S.O./A.A.W.S.," describes in detail the services provided by the A.A. staff assignments and other employees at G.S.O.

G.S.O.'s A.A. Website



Website Redesign: The www.aa.org website redesign was deployed on June 3, 2014. Currently averaging over 30,000 visitors a day, reaching 40,000 on a few occasions, the contemporary designed site provides users with an overall greater ease in navigating the site with a more intuitive search functionality, and a more user-friendly organization of information for A.A. trusted servants. Popular new features include an enhanced "A.A. Near You" page, and an updated Archives portal.

Most recently posted are web banners online – both with still and dynamic A.A. images – for local A.A. websites with links to A.A. materials on www.aa.org.

Online Store: Traffic on the two A.A.W.S. Online Store sites (bulk order customers and general consumers) continues to increase at a steady pace. Currently we are achieving about 54% of our total literature sales online.

Financial Unaudited G.S.O. financial update for the one month ended January 31, 2015:

Net sales

Gross Profit (Literature)

Contributions

Total operating expenses

The A.A.W.S. Board approved the following recommendations brought forward by the Finance Committee:

\$1,095,998 \$ 887,636

\$ 625,886 \$1,117,504

1. That a transfer to the General Service Board General Fund of \$2,827,106.68 to cover the 2014 General Fund deficit from operations and \$132,026 to cover the funding of La Viña be approved.
2. That a transfer to the General Service Board Reserve Fund of \$1,200,000 representing excess Working Capital needs, be approved; with the understanding that as funds may be needed for Construction, they will be withdrawn from the Reserve Fund.

Publishing

Sales: The 2014 year ended with \$17,128,000 in total gross sales (including digital book sales) which was \$2,152,100 (14.37) over budget for the year. Digital Publishing: Endorsed as a 2013 Conference Advisory Action, negotiations with distributors resulted in A.A. literature being published with Apple, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon. The first publication, Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (English) went live in mid-December 2013, followed by Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (English) in early January 2014, followed by Daily Reflections and Living Sober. The conversion process for the remaining books continued in 2015 with "Pass It On," "Dr. Bob and the Good Old timers", and "Experience, Strength and Hope" – the most recent addition. For the year 2014, 61,927 eBook units were sold for a total income of \$235,200. International Translations: As of December 2014, there are 68 translations of Alcoholics Anonymous in distribution, with 13 new translations pending. A.A.W.S. prints the Big Book in 52 languages, with 35 printed by local service

structures. Fifty-three countries are licensed to print and/or distribute 1,710 publications in 53 languages. A.A.W.S. has published literature in an additional 34 languages – for a total of 87 languages. Additionally, the professional translation service supervising the process of the Navajo translation of Alcoholics Anonymous advised us that it is possible that the translation (in audio format) will be completed by the third or fourth quarter of 2015.

75th Anniversary Commemorative Alcoholics Anonymous: Approximately 178,000 copies of the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Alcoholics Anonymous were distributed in 2014. The response to the special edition Big Book was overwhelmingly positive and it was one of the main contributors to the overall level of sales for the year. G.S.O. is pleased to note that the book will be on sale at the 2015 international Convention in Atlanta – and for the balance of the year. An early reorder of the book created an overstock situation – resulting in a significant write-off in the 2014 profit and loss against the more than \$1,600,000 in gross income.

Other --- The A.A.W.S. Board considered two items forwarded from the Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference: 1) Request to ask the General Service Office to investigate the possibility of holding the General Service Conference on the West Coast every other year; and 2) Request the General Service Office management whenever possible, select a site outside of NYC in which to hold the General Service Conference. After a full discussion, the A.A.W.S. Board voted unanimously to take no action on the requests since both fall outside A.A.W.S.'s jurisdiction and require Conference Action. The A.A.W.S. Board will forward both requests to the Trustees' Committee.

A.A. Grapevine and the Reserve Fund – A.A. Grapevine maintains a balance in the Reserve Fund to fund its unfulfilled subscription liability. The balance at December 31, 2014 was \$1,943,500, and the actual subscription liability as of that date was \$1,920,000, meaning that the liability is over funded. In March 2015, A.A. Grapevine, Inc. had excess working capital and made a transfer of \$240,000 into the Reserve Fund. This is the second year in a row in which A.A. Grapevine, Inc. was able to make a substantial transfer of excess working capital to the Reserve Fund. The A.A. Grapevine Board continues to be deeply grateful to the staff for these tremendous achievements.

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And finally, during the Pacific Region (PR) luncheon scheduled at the 2015 General Service Conference, bids to host the 2018 Regional Forum will be considered and a location will be selected by the PR Delegates' group conscience. The Utah Area 69 last hosted a Regional Forum back in 1996---19 years ago. (Note: It will be 22 years ago in 2018.) Regional Forums originated in 1975 at the suggestion of Dr. Jack Norris, then Chair of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. They were to be weekend sharing and informational sessions designed to help the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, Inc., the Grapevine Corporate Board, the Grapevine Staff, and the General Service Office Staff stay in touch with A.A. members, trusted servants and newcomers to service throughout the A.A. service structure. The location and agenda for Regional Forums are decided jointly by the Regional Trustee, Area Delegates and G.S.O. The responsibility for initiating contact with the hotel is assumed by a local A.A. Host Contact working with the Forums Coordinator and Regional Trustee. The Forums Coordinator at G.S.O. distributes registration forms to groups and service workers throughout the region and, working with the Host Contact and Regional Trustee, coordinates the details of the Forum. There is no registration fee for

Regional Forums. The General Service Board covers the expenses of meeting rooms. In many places, area committees, districts and groups cover or defray the transportation and lodging expenses of the trusted servants representing them at a Forum. Later this afternoon, I would like to hear feedback from the body on whether or not you would support Area 69 “throwing our hat into the ring” at the 65th Conference to host the 2016 Regional Forum.

In Much Love and Gratitude for You and for Service, Renae Harkness, Area 69, Panel 65 Delegate