

## 58<sup>th</sup> GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The 134 members of the Conference consisted of the 93 Area Delegates, Class A (non-alcoholic) and Class B (alcoholic) Trustees, and directors and staff of AAWS and the Grapevine. For the week (April 27-May 3), a number of issues were discussed and voted upon. This was noted to be the longest General Service Conference on record. On the last day, the Delegates engaged in discussion far into the night. Although this year's Advisory Actions (the agenda items discussed and voted upon) did not appear to be as ground-breaking as last year, the Conference—as related by Pat B., our current Area 38 Delegate—accomplished much toward resetting the spiritual compass of the participants: bringing the Conference and thus AA as a whole back to our Traditions and Concepts.

The need for effective communication rang loud and clear. Very apparent was the participatory responsibility of our Groups. Without participation and the voice of the Groups, AA stops functioning. The importance of the Groups' input was demonstrated. Because of the Groups, the Conference was able to come together.

A majority of our new Delegates from the Southwest Region continue to be elected to Conference Committee positions—3 out of 4 will chair for 2009. There are 11 Conference Committees. (Pat was the 2008 Conference Treatment Facilities Chair.)

Greg M., will retire as the General Manager of the General Service Office by Dec. 31, 2008. His excellent service of over 10 years has been praised by all.

### ADVISORY ACTIONS

*In keeping with the Concepts, a 2/3 majority is required to make any action binding on the Trustees. These are called Advisory Actions—some are listed below:*

- ▶ Finance: A noteworthy Advisory Action recommended that input will be gathered on the benefits and liabilities—spiritual and practical—of relying completely on voluntary contributions of members and Groups. Some liabilities of relying on publishing income were pointed out. Group input on this issue will be important. All information will be forwarded to the 2009 Conference Finance Committee.
- ▶ Treatment Facilities (TF): The revised video “Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous” will be completed with minor changes and brought back to the 2009 Conference TF Committee for review.
- ▶ Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC): The video segments directed to professionals in the legal/criminal justice and health care fields to be streamed on GSO's AA website were approved with suggested changes. The Trustees' Committee on CPC/Treatment Facilities will oversee these changes.
- ▶ International Conventions/AA Regional Forums: The following four cities were considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2020: Detroit, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Vancouver. Up to 21 Non-AA speakers will be invited to attend the 2010 International Convention in San Antonio, TX at AA's expense.
- ▶ Policy/Admissions: Representatives from other National AA service entities will be granted admission as observers—upon their request—to the annual General Service Conference of the U.S. and Canada; admission is not to exceed three countries and two representatives per country; the request for admission will be made through GSO (General Service Office) in New York; the decisions regarding responsibility for guest observer expenses will be at the discretion of the General Service Board.
- ▶ Public Information (PI): The 2008 television public service announcement (PSA), “I Thought,” developed by the Trustees' PI Committee was approved, and reference to newspapers will be added to the tag line. The Conference PI Committee will annually review current television PSAs for relevance and usefulness; they will retire a PSA only when it is no longer relevant and/or useful to the Fellowship.
- ▶ Report and Charter: A section titled “District Information” and an illustration of the District Information Change Form (F-43) will be added to Chapter Three of *The A.A. Service Manual*, after the section on redistricting. The Online Intergroup of AA (OIAA) will be listed in a new section titled “Online Intergroups” under the section “International Correspondence Meetings” in the AA directories above where “Online Meetings” appear—the listing will include the online intergroup web site and e-mail addresses
- ▶ Trustees: The slate of Trustees and officers will be elected at the annual meeting of the General Service Board at the May 2008 meeting. The slates of directors of the AA World Service (A.A.W.S.) and Grapevine Corporate Boards will be elected At the annual meeting of the boards, May 2008.
- ▶ The theme for the 2009 General Service Conference will be: “Our Commitment to Carry A.A.'s Message—Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action.”

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

*These were discussed and not voted on. Here are some of the considerations:*

- ▶ Archives: Requested that the GSO Archives' "Statements of Policy" related to accessing the Archives, as well as the "Sound and Video Access Policies," be added to the next printing of the Archives Workbook. Discussed various ideas for creatively making AA's archives and history more readily available to the Fellowship in the future.
- ▶ Corrections: Reviewed the Corrections Kit and Workbook and the Corrections AA Group Handbook and made several suggestions for both.
- ▶ Grapevine: Agreed to forward to the AA Grapevine Board the suggestion that the AA Grapevine produce in the year 2009, or later, two CDs of stories from La Vina on Traditions One through Twelve. Discussed the Grapevine's legacy of self-support and encouraged the AA Grapevine, Inc. to uphold that legacy. Suggested several ways that the AA Grapevine, Inc. and the Fellowship could increase awareness of the Grapevine's and La Vina's roles in AA.
- ▶ Literature: A draft of the revised pamphlet "AA for the Native North American, taking into consideration the committee's suggested changes, be returned for review to the 2009 Conference. A draft of the revised pamphlet "The AA Member—Medications and Other Drugs be brought to the 2009 conference for review.
- ▶ Posthumous anonymity and the need for increased awareness of this issue was discussed—no action was taken.

## FINANCIAL

- ▶ Income: The 2008 budget projects gross sales of \$12,700,000. 2007 actual results were \$12,730,000.
- ▶ Contributions: 2007 contributions were 6,381,600 (5.2%: \$326,000 over budget). 2008 contributions are budgeted to be \$6,675,000. 45.2% of Groups in the US and Canada contributed to GSO in 2007.
- ▶ Operating Expenses: budgeted at \$13,266,700 for 2008.
- ▶ Operating Revenue: budgeted for 13,507,500 in 2008. In recommending the 2008 budget, the AAWS (AA World Services) Board considered that revenue and expense assumptions made for the GSO budget ultimately affect the long-term health of the General Service Board's Reserve Fund.
- ▶ The Grapevine anticipates a profit of \$3,200 for 2008; 2007 showed an actual loss of 25,000 (a budgeted 2007 loss was \$81,300). La Vina estimates a 2008 loss of \$67,371.
- ▶ Total contributions to GSO from the US and Canada continue to grow slowly; however, the number of Groups contributing has fallen steadily since 1987 from 58% to 45.2% now. Last year the functional expenses of running GSO cost about \$6.50 per member—actual contributions totaled \$4.09 per member. A shortfall of \$2M was balanced by literature income. AA was last fully self-supporting in 1989.

### Estimates of Groups and Members (Groups listed with GSO) as of January 1, 2008

	Groups	Members
US	53,595	1,220,993
Canada	<u>4,745</u>	<u>93,559</u>
Sub-Total	58,340	1,314,552
Correctional Facilities (US & Canada)	2,359	60,912
Internationalists		37
Lone Members		<u>97</u>
Total	<u>60,699</u>	1,375,598
Outside US & Canada	<u>52,469</u>	<u>669,057</u>
Grand Total	113,168	2,044,655

(AA activity is known in about 180 countries; there are 60 autonomous General Service Offices world-wide.)

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*From material in Pat B.'s report & Box 459, June-July, 2008. A detailed Conference report is available in Box 459, June-July 2008. The final Report from GSO will be available in August or September.*