

DELEGATE REPORT
OF THE 63rd GENERAL SERVICE
CONFERENCE
TO THE AREA 20 SUMMER ASSEMBLY
JUNE 15TH, 2013

Hello Area 20

I want to start out by thanking all of you for the opportunities I have had as Area 20's Delegate since the beginning of 2012. I have been able to learn, understand and appreciate a little bit of what it takes to keep Alcoholics Anonymous functioning today and into the future. I shall be forever grateful for this experience.

I arrived in New York City on Thursday at about noon, with the intentions of hooking up with the Delegate from Chicago and two Wisconsin Delegates. That was the day that Chicago saw 5" of rain, and Mark and I were both lucky to get out of O'Hare. Randy had no problems, and Marty got to New York much later in the afternoon after getting about a foot of snow in Northern Wisconsin. So the three of us, that got in, spent the afternoon walking along Time Square, like a few Midwestern tourists.

Later in the afternoon I met a friend at Penn Station and took the Long Island Railroad to his home on Long Island where I met and had dinner with his beautiful family. After which, we went to a small island community called Long Beach, where his Home Group meets. This is an area that was hit particularly hard by Hurricane Sandy, and their Group was still displaced because of the damage. Members explained to me what the area used to look like, including a boardwalk, which only a support structure remained. To what it looked like after the storm, with water, debris and relocated beach sand everywhere. The members all credit the storm and the Group's efforts to keep together in the aftermath with making their Group stronger than ever. I was helping Jim with his current commitment as Greeter, and I guess he didn't think about the fact that I was on the Grapevine Committee, because out of a car came one of their members that was at the time a Non-Trustee Director on the Grapevine Board. A man that I had become very good friends with since we first met. And who about one week later would become a General Service Trustee on the General Service Board, serving on the Grapevine Board. Congratulations Albin. He lives directly in this little community, and in the first weeks after the storm, their Group met in his home, with sand, water and candles, along with members of the local Young Peoples Group, who just recently were able to return to the building that hosts their Group.

On Friday a lot of us from the East Central Region, and a few others went to the General Service Office. My friend Kenny, Western Michigan, and I left the office early together, walked through a portion of Central Park, took a subway to southern Manhattan, and spent the day walking through many neighborhoods on our way to Ground Zero. Along the way we went through Greenwich Village, and Washington Square Park, where we saw this arch that really grabbed my attention. I was particularly taken by the words inscribed on the arch, which I felt were very fitting, considering that in a couple of days we would be doing AA's business with the help of God. The words are "LET US RAISE A STANDARD TO WHICH THE WISE AND THE HONEST CAN REPAIR. THE EVENT IS IN THE HAND OF GOD. WASHINGTON. At home I googled the park and

the arch to verify the wording and was to find these words. “In 1934, Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, became sober while attending Oxford Group Meetings at 246 East 23rd Street, located approximately one mile from Washington Square Park. In his “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous, Wilson referred repeatedly to a triumphal arch matching the unique features of the Washington Square Arch in every detail.” These can be found on pages 12, 17, 21, 47, 62, 75, 97. Examples-“that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built” – “new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom” – “for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last”. Along with references to cornerstone, footing, foundation, powerful cement. This all made me feel both that day at the park and at my home very close to Bill, his efforts, and our early history.

Business starts at the Conference for most of us on Sunday. I say that because the Committee for International Conventions and Regional Forums met on Saturday, with the possible host cities for the 2025 International Convention, and narrowed the number of cities down to three. Those three are, Montreal, St. Louis and Vancouver. The rest of the Committees meet on Sunday with their respective Trustees’ Committees. Being on the Grapevine Committee, there is no Trustees Committee, we meet with the Grapevine Board. And I want to start out by apologizing to all that were at our Pre-General Service Workshop in Galesburg. I had said that the agenda item related to the below additional consideration was a simple piece of housekeeping to give the Grapevine and LaVina Editors some editorial freedom. This is not what I initially thought, but someone I trusted put it that way to me and I believed him. This was actually an agenda item by the General Service Board, initiated by an ad-hoc report on LaVina that you all may have seen in the Board Minutes I sent out in February. None of which was in the background information.

Conference Committee on Grapevine

- The committee reviewed the results of the 2012 assessment of La Viña as a bimonthly, perfect bound, black and white, 68-page magazine and concluded:
 - The committee recognized that funding La Viña as a service, through the General Fund, is an issue affecting the overall Fellowship.
 - The committee acknowledged the increase in circulation by 8.6% from January 2011 to December 2012 may be tied to the changes in format and additional content.
 - The committee acknowledged that the 2012 increase in La Viña deficit results in large part from allocation of pension funding expense.
 - The committee expressed concern that funding La Viña through the General Fund of the General Service Board, while AA Grapevine Inc. has responsibility for the production of La Viña, may suggest an imbalance between responsibility and authority.
 - The committee requested that the GV board submit a proposal to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine that would significantly reduce the La Viña deficit.

The committee considered discontinuing the requirement for the current format of the La Viña print magazine (i.e., 68 pages, perfect bound) and took no action. The committee needed more background regarding La Viña's financial history and information regarding what a new format would be.

- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2014 or later:

1. Making Amends (working title)

Members share their experience about making Ninth Step amends from stories previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

2. How I Found My Higher Power (working title)

A collection of stories by AA members sharing their experience with their personal journeys with Step Two, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

- The committee reviewed the 2013 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and made the following requests:
 - That Grapevine communications regarding the Grapevine Audio Project specify that GV is not recording meeting speakers at A.A. events.

That an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future, be provided to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.

Conference Committee on Literature

I was able to actually see the final draft pamphlet titled “AA-Spiritual not Religious”. I received it the night before we were to vote on it, and finished reading it soon before voting the next day. I knew there was some fear and discomfort in the past in Area 20 in regards to the possible content of this piece of literature, and I tried to look at it in all ways possible. Quite honestly, the stories I read in there would cause no harm to the integrity of Alcoholics Anonymous. But it did not achieve what I believe to be the original intent of being a very broad based piece of literature covering all angles in spirituality and beliefs and non-beliefs. Unfortunately it was very heavy toward non-belief. Some people thought it was good piece of work. Some were more concerned with the title than with the content. If it would have been more broad based I might have been in favor of it, because the stories in it were good. In the end, after about two hours of discussion,

The draft pamphlet “A.A—Spiritual not Religious” be recommitted to the trustees’ Literature Committee for additional discussion and brought back to the 2014 Conference Committee on Literature.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

- The committee reviewed the draft pamphlet of “Circles of Love and Service” and offered additional suggestions for the trustees’ Literature Committee to consider. The committee looks forward to reviewing an updated draft pamphlet that includes their considerations at the 2014 Conference Committee on Literature meeting.
- The committee discussed a suggestion to add an index to *Alcoholics Anonymous* and took no action, noting that our Big Book is spiritual in nature rather than academic and that an index might discourage a full reading of the material.
- The committee thoroughly discussed a request to add the subtitle ‘None Left Behind’ to the newly revised “A.A. and the Armed Services” pamphlet and took no action. The committee agreed that this request was fully and appropriately addressed by both the Conference Committee on Literature and Conference members at the 62nd General Service Conference.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT DID NOT RESULT IN CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS

Conference Committee on Literature

- The committee recommended that the second paragraph on the inside front flap of the dust jacket which currently states:

At the time of the third edition, in March 1976, the worldwide membership of A.A. was estimated at 1,000,000 or more. Copies of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in circulation exceeded 1,450,000. In 1995, the General Service Conference approved the recommendation: “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Doctor Bob’s Nightmare’ and the Appendices remain as is.”

be replaced with the following language:

At the time of the third edition, in March 1976, the worldwide membership of A.A. was estimated at 1,000,000 or more. Copies of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in circulation exceeded 1,450,000. The basic text (pages 1 through 164) remains largely unchanged. This is the A.A. message, just as it was introduced in the 1939 edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the book that gave the young fellowship its name.

NOTE: This change will also be made to all formats of the dust jacket of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

I VOTED FOR THIS- MOTION FAILED
75 AGAINST- 45 FOR

- The committee recommended that “Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers” be added to the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (Blue) Card (F-17) in all three languages when the inventory of the English version is depleted.

The statement will read as follows:

“THIS IS AN OPEN MEETING
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

This is an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are glad you are all here – especially newcomers. In keeping with our singleness of purpose and our Third Tradition which states that ‘The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking,’ we ask that all who participate confine their discussion to their problems with alcohol. **Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers.**” (Bold text reflects addition)

I VOTED AGAINST THIS- MOTION FAILED

61 FOR- 63 OPPOSED

Conference Committee on Public Information

What the PI Committee recommended was:

The committee discussed the Fellowship sharing on the effectiveness of the language of the Short Form of Tradition Eleven and recommended that the delegates explain at the local level that Internet, social media and all forms of public communications are implicit in the last phrase of the Tradition, which reads: “...at the level of press, radio and films.”

I did not like this recommendation because it was giving direction to the Delegates only. But I did like the intent because there is a need to do something in regards to this issue. And I am happy this Committee had what it takes to get this started.

Someone stood and said, in reference to the way some people are using social networking “People are running hog wild for fame at AA’s expense.” I liked that statement.

There was a lot of discussion, a vote that failed, a motion to reconsider, an amendment that did not pass. To this, which we passed unanimously:

It was recommended that:

The 63rd General Service Conference affirm that the Internet, social media and all forms of public communications are implicit in the last phrase of the Short Form of Tradition Eleven, which reads: “...at the level of press, radio and films.”

A.A. World Services be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of digital A.A. literature. The committee requested that the board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The committee requested that a status and financial report be submitted to the appropriate 2014 Conference Committee.

WHEN THIS WAS PRESENTED, I HAD NOT MADE MY DECISION YET, AND WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO FLOOR DISCUSSION TO HELP WITH MY DECISION. THERE WAS LESS THAN 5 MINUTES OF DISCUSSION AND WE WERE VOTING. MOTION PASSED WITH ONLY 3 OR 4 NOT IN FAVOR. I WAS ONE OF THOSE NOT IN FAVOR, I DIDN'T FEEL WE GAVE THIS ENOUGH CONSIDERATION.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

The committee reviewed the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on establishing a Public Information Social Media Page and agrees with the trustees' conclusion that A.A. World Services, the General Service Office, and the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña cannot establish a presence on Facebook in a manner which would be consistent with A.A. Traditions.

The committee suggested the General Service Board encourage the trustees' committees to review existing literature that discusses how A.A. members apply the Eleventh Tradition, e.g., "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" and "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," and suggest updates to the literature that reflect current experience with anonymity in a digital age, with an eye towards reaffirming the importance of the Eleventh Tradition to the Fellowship.

Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

The deadline for the submission of Conference Agenda Items be changed from January 15 to December 15, beginning in December 2014 for the 65th General Service Conference.

International Conventions/Regional Forums¹

It was recommended that:

The under noted three cities, expressed here in alphabetical order, be considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2025:

Montreal, Quebec
St. Louis, Missouri
Vancouver, British Columbia

Up to 21 non-A.A. speakers be invited to attend the 2015 International Convention at A.A.'s expense.

Archives

It was recommended that:

The Archives video *Markings on the Journey* be revised and updated with the proposed changes (estimated cost \$5,000) and brought back to the 2014 Conference Archives Committee.

A commemorative 75th Anniversary Edition of the first edition, first printing of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be published in April 2014.

THERE WAS A LOT OF DISCUSSION ON THIS, MOSTLY AGAINST. WITH IT BEING CALLED A TRINKET AND A NOVELTY ITEM. TALK OF PROFIT MOTIVATION. WE HAVE NEVER COMPETED WITH ANY OTHER PUBLISHER, NOW WE WOULD BE COMPETING WITH TWO WHO ALREADY PUBLISH THIS BOOK
MOTION FAILS 79-47, I VOTED AGAINST, NEEDED 5 MORE VOTES TO PASS
MOTION TO RECONSIDER PASSES
I VOTED YES THIS TIME- MOTION PASSES- 96-28

Conference Committee on Trustees

- The committee reviewed the General Service Board's proposed plan regarding the slate of directors for the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board and took no action. The committee did not support the proposed interlocking directorate.

The committee noted that the General Service Board has sufficient authority to implement changes in Practices as outlined in the initiatives in the sections under the heading "Communications and Unity" and "Efficient Operations and Financial Stability" and expressed their support for those ongoing changes. It was the sense of the committee that the changes in Practices could address the concerns of the General Service Board.

The committee requested that, before implementation, any changes proposed in the section "Governance," regarding "Non-trustee Director Service," "Eligibility of General Service Trustees" and "Eligibility of Appointed Committee Members" be brought to the Conference Committee on Trustees for review.

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

	2010 ACTUAL	2011 ACTUAL	2012 ACTUAL
Group Services	\$3,035,842	\$3,263,908	\$3,307,215
Public Information	432,153	445,832	420,794
Cooperation Professional Community	403,732	484,271	488,252
Treatment Facilities	204,183	206,459	203,446
Corrections	364,572	357,460	369,890
Overseas Services (including Literature Assistance)	801,816	760,790	633,373
General Service Conference	1,062,423	1,340,073	1,115,021
International Conventions	268,511	0	0
Regional Forums	568,284	581,972	670,396
Archives	678,296	793,285	825,788
Trustee/Director Activities	520,978	513,089	593,398
World Service Meeting	301,322	0	305,774
Supporting Services (Allocated in above numbers)			
Total	<u>\$8,642,112</u>	<u>\$8,747,139</u>	<u>\$8,933,347</u>

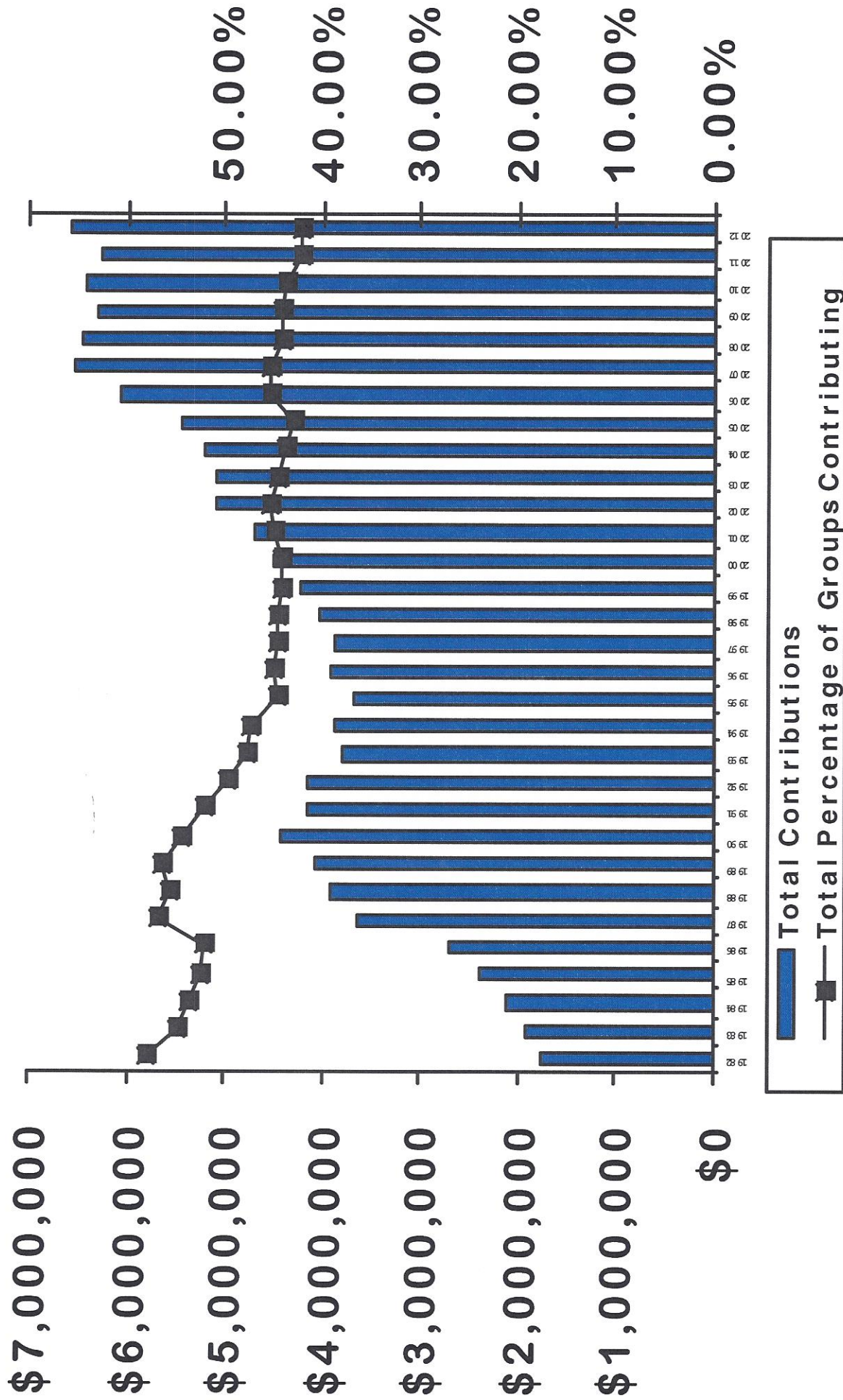
MEMBER STATISTICS

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
Cost of Service per member per year	\$7.04	\$6.46	\$6.29	\$6.32	\$6.43
Cost of Service per group per year	\$157.21	\$142.64	\$137.45	\$137.01	\$138.69
Number of members reported	1,342,380	1,358,879	1,373,681	1,384,699	1,388,727
Number of groups reported	60,093	61,581	62,873	63,845	64,414
Percentage of Groups Contributing	44.1%	44.3%	44.9%	42.4%	42.4
Contributions per member per year	\$4.69	\$4.50	\$4.54	\$4.47	\$4.67
Contributions per group per year	\$107.55	\$102.24	\$99.24	\$96.95	\$100.69
Literature contribution to Service cost per member	\$2.35	\$1.96	\$1.75	\$1.85	\$1.76

GROUP SERVICE ACTIVITIES

	2010	2011	2012
Group Service Staff Activities	\$549,542	\$664,853	\$628,675
Box 459	305,811	303,879	279,687
A.A. Directories	99,167	100,262	55,314
Records & Files Depts.	808,665	853,912	853,592
Contributions, Processing, Verification and Documentation	961,261	940,651	921,458
French Services	27,978	36,452	37,805
Spanish Services	34,692	23,701	26,721
Special Needs	122,806	170,443	222,959
Nominating	125,920	169,755	281,002
Total	\$ 3,035,842	\$ 3,263,908	\$ 3,307,213

CONTRIBUTION HISTORY 1982—2012



INFLATION CALCULATOR

\$1.00

in

1945

had the buying power of

\$12.90

in

2013

\$.08

in

2013

had the buying power of

\$ 1.00

in

1945

Source: U.S. Department of Labor