

# DELEGATE'S REPORT

*Our Commitment to Carry AA's Message – Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action*

59<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, April 26-May 2, 2009

Crowne Plaza Times Square, New York, NY

Dear friends in SENY: This report consists of the notes I took during Conference week, augmented by information provided by GSO as well as by other delegates after the Conference was over. The business of the Conference is done through a series of committee meetings, with their recommendations presented to the full Conference for ratification. Those recommendations, which if approved become advisory actions, as well as additional considerations from the committees and all the floor actions, are presented in the third and last section of this report (Conference Committee Reports). There, most of the text is the actual wording of the recommendations and considerations, with italic text indicating my summary of the discussion and/or my record of the actual votes taken. The first part of this report presents some non-committee matters, and the second part consists of some personal observations on this, my first Conference experience. Thanks for your support and interest!

## I. SOME NON-COMMITTEE MATTERS

Although the General Service Conference (GSC) formally began on Sunday, April 26, most delegates arrived on Saturday and attended a Delegate's Meeting that evening, plus a Remote Communities Meeting Sunday morning, at which I gave a report on how we try here in Southeast New York to reach remote communities. (For the purposes of this meeting, a remote community is considered to be any place where it is difficult to carry the AA message because of language, culture, geography, or life condition.) After that meeting, volunteers were requested to step forward to help organize the Remote Communities Meeting for the 60<sup>th</sup> GSC; I made myself available and will help put together the newsletter that is distributed then.

The Northeast Region had two lunches during the week. At the first one, on Sunday, we selected Area 48 HMB to host the 2012 NERAASA in Albany. That means the next three NERAASAs will be held within New York State (WNY next year, SENY in 2011 and HMB in 2012). At the second lunch, we selected Joanne M., of Area 50 WNY, as our candidate for Trustee-at-Large, U.S. (See Election of New Trustees, below, for results of all the voting for new trustees.)

At a Sharing Session on Wednesday, the matter of making the Big Book available on Amazon's Kindle Reader, which had been reported earlier in the week, was raised. The contract stipulates that 40% of the sales price goes to AA and 60% to Amazon. At AA's insistence, the price is set to match the price of the current print edition of the Big Book (currently \$6, which will rise to \$8 in July). Questions were raised regarding the propriety of the sales arrangement and of the contract being made without first bringing the matter to the Conference. The manager of the Publications Department informed the Conference that Amazon approached AA on the issue and that it was reviewed by the AAWS Board before the contract was signed. He also stated that the contract can be canceled at any time and that there will be no linkage between the Big Book and other Amazon titles, or vice versa. This matter came up again later, as a floor action.

The manner in which the General Service Board (GSB) allocates seats on the various committees of the Board also came up. A group of six trustees, it was claimed, sat on five of the committees, whereas the remaining trustees sat on only one or two of them, and in a few cases none. A chart was distributed to document the situation. This matter may have been part of the background for the intense discussion we had later in considering the slate of trustees and officers for the GSB.

On Friday there was a presentation on the 2008 World Service Meeting. The next meeting, the 21<sup>st</sup> one, will be held in 2010 in Mexico City, with the theme “Sponsorship: Our Responsibility.”

### **III. FIRST-YEAR IMPRESSIONS**

I arrived at the Conference hotel Saturday afternoon and even though I live only about 70 blocks away, I felt disoriented and uncertain how I’d fit in. The lapel pins I’d brought with me as SENY mementos turned out to be good ice-breakers. So did remembering that we drunks are all in the same boat – I wasn’t the only one who had these feelings.

It was hot that day and by the time of the evening Delegate’s Meeting I was tired. I was also surprised to hear some “we/they” talk during the meeting. Plus a few people seemed to go to the mike a lot, and I vowed I wouldn’t do that (though I don’t think I succeeded as the week went on). I had a good night’s sleep though, and then on Sunday morning I was shocked to find myself volunteering for a commitment next year (for the Remote Communities Meeting) when the Conference hadn’t even begun yet.

After the roll call of attendees, which formally opens the Conference, I made a visit to the Hospitality Committee room, where a lot of SENY people were on hand. It was great to see them. (What a wonderful cast of characters – no wonder I keep doing service!) When I arrived at the joint meeting of the Conference Finance Committee (my assigned committee) and its Trustees counterpart, I merrily went about handing out lapel pins, only to discover that the meeting had already begun. Either it kicked off early or most of us were late, but it was a little awkward. However, things soon got moving along and we reviewed the financial reports and discussed the overall financial picture. There was quite a bit of concern about the funding of the pension plan, given the current economic downturn and the drop in the valuation of the investments we’re holding to meet that obligation. It is hoped that the economy will recover and that federal requirements regarding pension plan funding are loosened so that this underfunding doesn’t impact the operating budget and the reserve fund. Depending on what happens, we may be talking about the pension plan a lot more next year or in the years to come.

On Monday and Tuesday the Conference Finance Committee (there were nine of us) met several more times, two of them formally scheduled and one added by the committee to try to pin down what we wanted to bring before the Conference. It was at times frustrating, as our main agenda item on self-support at the GSO level was difficult to get a handle on, although I think we did the best we could with that agenda item to bring something concrete before the Conference.

All week long there were reports from the corporate boards, presentations on various topics, area highlights from all the new Panel 59 delegates, and a morning of workshop sessions. At first it seemed odd to me to have such a variety of things going on, but as it played out I grew to

appreciate how the agenda provided a constant change of pace, which helped make the very long days remain stimulating. Tiring, yes; but tedious, no.

When committee reports began on Wednesday, we got bogged down in “housekeeping” talk about discussion time, how or when to count votes, having paper ballots on hand, and so on, and from that point on we ran behind schedule to the end. On Thursday we extended the evening session by one hour to 11 p.m. and moved Friday’s session one hour earlier, to 8 a.m. We even discussed omitting one of the non-committee presentations, but the suggestion was quickly dropped. Thus it was that we were still conducting business at 2:15 a.m. on Saturday, a new (and unwanted) record for the Conference.

It was late Friday afternoon when we finally heard from the Trustees Committee. Naïve me thought we would get through that report quickly (there were three committees to be heard from afterward, plus floor actions), but things got quite intense as resistance to the slate of trustees and officers for the General Service Board surfaced. The dinner break didn’t calm things down much, and in fact in some ways when we resumed it was as if I were sitting in on a contentious home group business meeting, only instead of cookies and coffee in dispute it was trustees and officers. To me it felt as if our AA unity was failing, and I actually wondered if AA could fall apart. It was a terrifying thought (though far from likely in this particular instance), and I found myself at the microphone trying to express my feelings and my sadness at what was transpiring. I may be wrong, but I think we Panel 59 delegates were especially shaken (there were tears in some eyes), and at breaks later on many of us clung to one another and vowed to make things better next year. In the end, the Conference voted overwhelmingly for the slate of trustees and officers that was presented to us, and as I’ve reflected on the experience since I realize that, as unpleasant as it was for me and others, the questions that were raised probably helped clear the air and perhaps did even more. After all, what we’re good at in AA is talking, and through talking and listening to one another, difficult as it may be, we reach the group conscience so essential to our unity.

That trustee business behind us, we were able to move through the remaining committee reports Friday night and then deal with the floor actions in the wee hours of Saturday morning. (What a difference from what I used to do with my wee hours of the morning!) After a short night’s rest, we reassembled for a closing brunch and talks from the rotating trustees. (For the second year in a row, there wasn’t time for the outgoing second-year delegates to say their farewells.) It was good hearing the farewell talks, until two of the rotating trustees used their time (way more than their time, in one case) to rehash some of the disappointments they had experienced in a way that seemed ungracious, given the circumstances. But our outgoing Class A Trustee and Chair of the GSB Leonard Blumenthal put things back on track and left us looking forward – there are an estimated 2 million members in AA in the U.S. and Canada, he told us, but there are probably at least 35 million alcoholics out there. We’ve got a lot of work to do!

Hopefully, some of what we accomplished at this year’s 59<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference will help AA to continue to carry the message to those who still suffer. I believe the spirit of listening with an open heart, as I saw it in play this year, will serve us well in facing whatever difficulties may come our way.

Love and Service,

Richard S.  
Panel 59 Area 49 (SENY) Delegate

### III. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS

*A recommendation brought to the full Conference by a committee must be approved by two-thirds of those voting at the time; if not, the motion fails. In that case, those who voted against the motion are the prevailing side, so the minority opinion comes from those who voted in favor of the motion. Of course, when two-thirds or more vote for a motion, they are the prevailing side so the minority opinion comes from those who voted against the motion. After minority opinions are heard, a motion to reconsider can be made only from the prevailing side; it may be seconded by anyone. I was impressed by how much the Conference body listened to the minority opinion and how often the result of the vote changed. In such cases I've included vote totals to show how that process worked, and also in cases in which the vote was very close or very lopsided.*

#### AGENDA COMMITTEE

##### Recommendations

- A. That the theme of 2010 Conference be "Practicing AA's Principles – the Pathway to Unity." *Passed unanimously.*
- B. That the following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2010 Conference:
  - a. Practicing These Principles in all Our "Service" Affairs
    - i. What is the Difference Between General Service and Service in General?
    - ii. Love and Tolerance is Our Code
    - iii. Setting an Example – Attraction to Service
  - b. Unity Through Inventory
    - i. Our Common Welfare Should Come First
    - ii. This We Owe to AA's Future
    - iii. What Happens After Inventory?
  - c. GSC Agenda Selection Process:
    - i. How it Works
    - ii. Collective Participation
    - iii. Communication – The Key to an Informed Decision*Passed with 1 vote against.*
- C. That the following be the workshop topic for the 2010 GSC: "Discuss the General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process," and that all the background provided in the 2009 Conference Agenda Committee regarding the "GSC Agenda Selection Process" be sent to the members of the 60th GSC in February 2010 as background for the 2010 Conference workshop session along with any additional related background material that may be compiled by the GSB, the trustees' Committee on the Conference, the General Service Office (GSO), or other sources. *Passed; no minority opinion.*

##### Additional Committee Consideration

- The committee reviewed the GSC Evaluation Form and made no changes.

#### ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

No recommendations.

##### Additional Committee Considerations

- The Conference Committee on Archives wishes to emphasize the importance of GSO's AA Archives as precious to all members of our Fellowship and wishes to express concern over staffing levels at GSO's AA Archives.

- The committee reviewed the Archives Workbook and expressed satisfaction with the contents.
- The committee discussed the following ideas to make AA's archives and history more readily available to the Fellowship:
  - › The committee requested that the trustees' Archives Committee create a report to be forwarded to the 2010 Conference Archives Committee on the feasibility of developing a format (e.g., PowerPoint® presentation) for a self-guided tour of GSO's AA Archives to convey the experience of visiting GSO and the Archives, for those who have not yet visited the General Service Office in New York.
  - › The committee requested that the trustees' Archives Committee consider a suggestion to add a daily historical reference to GSO's AA Web site to create interest and enthusiasm for AA's history and archival collection.
  - › The committee received with gratitude a report from the Senior Archivist on archival activities since the last Conference in response to suggestions from the 2008 Conference Committee on various ideas for creatively making AA's archives and history readily available to the Fellowship.

#### CPC COMMITTEE

##### Recommendation

- A. That the video segment directed to professionals in the employment/human relations field be streamed on GSO's AA Web site. *In the discussion some concern was expressed regarding the use of full-face shots of actors portraying AA members. Passed 105/14. Motion to reconsider failed.*

##### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee suggested that the voiceover of the text regarding anonymity and singleness of purpose in the CPC video segments directed to professionals in the legal/criminal justice and medical fields currently streamed on GSO's AA Web site be consistent with the CPC video segment directed to professionals in the employment/human relations field.
- The committee suggested that the CPC video segments directed to professionals in the legal/criminal justice, medical, and employment/human relations fields be added in DVD format to the CPC kit and made available for purchase.
- The committee reviewed with appreciation the current CPC Kit and Workbook and suggested that appropriate references to the "AA Grapevine" in the CPC Workbook be updated to include La Viña and La Vigne.
- The committee discussed specific possible uses of the AA Grapevine, La Viña and La Vigne in CPC endeavors and suggested that the following helpful ideas for CPC committee members be added to the CPC Workbook:
  - › AA groups, individuals or committees participate in "Adopt a Professional" efforts and take a single issue to or purchase a subscription for the professional.
  - › "Lose a Grapevine" by leaving an issue behind in a professional's office.
  - › Consider inviting AA Grapevine reps to participate in local CPC presentations and exhibits.
- The committee requested that the staff and trustees consider creating a survey-style follow-up letter to be completed by the professional after a CPC contact to assess effectiveness of AA literature (including the AA Grapevine, La Viña and La Vigne), CPC presentations and contact by AA members. This letter would be included in the Guide Letter Section of the CPC Workbook.

## CORRECTIONS COMMITTEE

### Recommendations

*The original committee report was tabled so that its considerations on "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" could be reviewed. The revised report had two recommendations, as follows.*

- A. That the trustees' Committee on Corrections undertake a revision of the pamphlet "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" which will take into consideration 1) more stories of recovery from alcoholism through the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous drawn from *Sharing From Behind the Walls, Box 4-5-9*, or other available sources, 2) less use of 'directive' language (such as that used in the section on HALT), and 3) including photographs that reflect current times, and that a draft pamphlet or a report of progress be brought back to the 2010 Conference Committee on Corrections. *Passed unanimously.*
- B. That the photo on page 18 of the pamphlet "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell," which shows an inmate smoking a hand-rolled cigarette, be replaced with a photo of the current edition of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous in future reprints, as well as in any revision. *Passed with 2 votes against.*

### Additional Committee Considerations

The committee reviewed the contents of the Corrections Kit and Workbook and made the following suggestions:

- That the list of contents be corrected to indicate that both the Corrections Correspondence Service flyer for the outside AA member (F-26) and the Corrections Correspondence request form for inmates (CCS-2) are included in the Kit.
- That the Spanish-language and the French-language Corrections Kit contents be updated to match as closely as possible the English-language Kit. The committee heard a report from the Publications Director that *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate* will be completed in Spanish by fall of 2009, and the DVD *A.A. in Correctional Facilities* will be available in a compilation of all three languages by the end of 2009.
- That a copy of the booklet *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate* (in the appropriate language) be included in the kits.
- The list of Corrections Kit contents be placed on GSO's AA Web site in the Corrections 'cubbyhole' with the appropriate links to each service piece, pamphlet or book where available.
- The committee considered alternatives to a biennial mailing to Corrections professionals, and made the following suggestions: 1) that the automatic biennial mailing begun by an additional committee consideration of the Conference Committee on Corrections in 1999 be suspended indefinitely, and 2) that the American Correctional Association Directory of Adult and Juvenile Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies, and Probation and Parole continue to be purchased on a biennial basis and the contact information therein be sent to the relevant area Corrections committee chair.
- The committee discussed issues that may be involved in AA members' complying with the rules of correctional facilities, such as signing 'sponsorship agreements' or legally binding documents, and requested sharing from the AA Fellowship regarding this topic to be gathered by the staff member and the trustees' Committee on Corrections and that sharing be sent to the 2010 Conference Committee on Corrections.

## ELECTION OF NEW TRUSTEES

- For SE Regional Trustee: Eleanor N. (SC) and Cesar D. (PR) went to the hat after the 4th ballot and Eleanor N. was selected.

- For East Central Trustee: Pamela R. (SE Michigan) was elected on the 4th ballot.
- For Trustee At-Large, US: Don M. (Southeast Region) and Rod B. (Pacific Region) went to the hat after the 5th ballot and Don M. was selected.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### Recommendations

- A. #1: That the Trustees' Finance Committee gather input from the Fellowship on the following for review by the 2010 Conference Committee on Finance: 1) If we continue to use literature profits to partially fund services, should there be a limit? 2) If there is a limit, how do we continue to pay for service if there is a shortfall in contributions? The committee requested that the statement of policy "Self-Support of the World Services of Alcoholics Anonymous" be distributed as background:

#### Self-Support of the World Services of Alcoholics Anonymous

The AA spiritual principle of self-support enables us to pursue our primary purpose of carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic with a shared sense of responsibility for our lifesaving work and without interference or financial dependence on outsiders. From our Fellowship's earliest days, the expenses of the General Service Office, and the world services provided by it, have exceeded the amount derived from contributions of AA groups and members. As a result, providing these needed services has necessarily been supported in part by income from the sale of AA literature. It is the policy of the General Service Board that income from literature sales should only be in amounts required to allow continued provision of vitally needed services and maintenance of a prudent reserve fund. We hope that the day will come when AA groups and members, through their contributions, will be able to fund fully the services provided by the General Service Office. If that is achieved, revenue from literature sales will only be needed in amounts necessary to cover the actual costs associated with literature production and to maintain a prudent reserve fund.

*Failed 57/66. After minority opinion, we voted to reconsider. Passed on revote 88/37.*

#2: That a discussion of additional ways to communicate with the Fellowship about self-support be included on the agenda for the Conference Finance Committee for the 60th GSC. *Passed 116/3.*

### Additional Committee Consideration

- Took no action on request to produce a 7th Tradition poster. Although visual aids are helpful, the committee felt there was no need for a Conference-approved 7th Tradition poster and expressed the hope that local areas might create visual aids that could be shared with others.

## GRAPEVINE COMMITTEE

No recommendations.

### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee discussed the contents of the AA Grapevine workbook with appreciation and noted that the new portable GvR Handbook requested by the 2008 Conference Committee on the AA Grapevine is scheduled for publication. The committee requested that the current AA Grapevine workbook, *A Guide to the AA Grapevine*, continue to be posted on the AA Grapevine website as a free download. The committee suggested that the location and description of the Workbook/Guide be reviewed to improve visibility and accessibility on the website.
- The committee considered a request that "the 2007 Conference Advisory Action recommending that 'the AA Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical,

- legal, and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer' be rescinded" and after lengthy and thoughtful discussion took no action.
- The committee requested that the disclaimer in the section on medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism in the AA Grapevine (Alcoholism At Large) be placed more prominently and distinctively and that the language of the disclaimer in the AA Grapevine and La Viña be reviewed for both clarity and consistency.
  - The committee considered a request "that the 2004 Conference advisory action (*To allow the widest distribution of the AA Grapevine and La Viña to all purchasers, while guarding against affiliations with any outside enterprise, a) subscriptions to the AA Grapevine and La Viña magazines be issued only by AA Grapevine, Inc., or by AA trusted servants directly; and b) the AA Grapevine, Inc., adopt standardized sales practices and pricing structures for all purchasers.*) be rescinded" and took no action. The committee noted that rescinding the 2004 advisory action would not have an impact on the 2009 subscription price.
  - The committee supported the spirit of communication between the Grapevine Board and Conference members, as recommended in 1987 and reaffirmed in 1988, that: "The Grapevine staff are responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters."
  - The committee expressed concerns regarding several changes and decisions made by the AA Grapevine office and Board in the last year concerning items produced by AA Grapevine, Inc. The committee requested that the AA Grapevine Board review the history of advisory actions pertaining to the relationship between the AA Grapevine Board, AA Grapevine office and the Conference Committee, on the decision-making process of matters that affect the fellowship (i.e., pricing, redesign, name change and promotional items) and forward a report to the 60th GSC Committee on the AA Grapevine for their review.

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & FORUMS

### Recommendations

- A. That an anonymity-protected photograph of the flag ceremony be taken at the 2010 International Convention. *Passed, with 1 vote against.*
- B. That an encrypted, anonymity-protected Internet broadcast of the 2010 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony be approved. *Passed unanimously.*

### Additional Considerations

- The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums consider ways that the broadcast of the 2010 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony could be made more widely available than was the 2005 broadcast.
- The committee discussed the site selection process for the 2020 International Convention, and requested that the trustees' Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums conduct a review and inventory of the site selection process for International Conventions and prepare a report for the 2010 Conference Committee on Conventions/Regional Forums.
- The committee discussed ways to encourage interest in Regional and Local Forums, including:
  - › Be enthusiastic in announcing the Forum in advance, and reporting on it afterwards.
  - › Write an article about the Forum for a local newsletter or website.

- › Participation is key – get people involved in the planning of the Forum, as greeters, hospitality, registration, etc.
- › Encourage all segments of the Fellowship to attend, including those who speak other languages.
- › Seek ways to prevent conflicts with other local events, such as sharing weekend AA event schedules through a central office or intergroup.
- › Let members know that Local Forums can be requested by any AA entity; the request does not need to come through the general service structure.
- › Overcome challenges of the cost of attending Forums by encouraging members to ride together and share rooms; some areas have rented buses for members to travel together.

## LITERATURE COMMITTEE

### Recommendations

- A. That the revised draft pamphlet “The AA Member – Medications and Other Drugs” be approved. *Failed 37/83. Later, a floor action was filed.*
- B. That the revised draft pamphlet “AA for the Native American” be approved. *Failed 75/46. After extensive minority opinions, we voted to reconsider. Passed on revote 112/8.*
- C. That the trustee’s Literature Committee undertake a thorough review of the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” and eliminate or revise outmoded ethnic, cultural, and vocational references. *Passed with 1 vote against.*
- D. That a Special Needs recovery pamphlet for newcomers or prospective members be developed and that stories be solicited from members with various special needs, for example, members who are deaf, blind, wheelchair bound, etc. The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or a draft pamphlet at the 2010 Conference (approximate cost \$6,850). *Passed 104/23. Extensive minority opinion; motion to reconsider failed.*
- E. That a sentence encouraging newcomers to obtain and study the Big Book be added to the pamphlet “A Newcomer Asks.” *Passed 109/13.*
- F. That the title of the pamphlet “44 Questions” be changed to “Frequently Asked Questions About AA” *Passed with 5 votes against; no minority opinion.*
- G. Updating the existing video/DVD, “Your A.A. General Service Office, the Grapevine, and the General Service Structure” and adding one episode on GSR and one episode on DCM to the video/DVD (approximate cost \$64,000). *Failed 22/95.*
- H. That the trustees’ Committee on Literature develop a questionnaire to gather input from the Fellowship on whether there is a need to develop Conference-approved literature that focuses on the topics of spirituality, and agnostics or atheists/nonbelievers in AA and that a report with a summary of the results from the responses to the questionnaire be presented to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature. *In the discussion some who supported such literature felt that a questionnaire would delay it; others spoke of such literature conflicting with AA’s spiritual principles. Motion failed 57/64. During the minority opinion some trustees spoke in favor of the questionnaire; another spoke in favor of new literature as a way to clarify AA in light of court rulings holding AA to be a religion. Vote to reconsider failed 76/59. Later, a floor action was filed.*

### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee considered a request to publish a book of stories from members living in remote communities and took no action. The committee noted that there was no widely expressed need.

- The committee considered a request to develop a second volume of *Daily Reflections* and took no action.

#### POLICY/ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

##### Recommendations

- A. That the alternate delegate for Area 12, Delaware, be seated as a Conference member of the 59th GSC because the sitting Panel 58 delegate passed away. *Passed.*
- B. That three observers from Brazil and Columbia be admitted. *Passed.*
- C. That the 62<sup>nd</sup> GSC be held April 22-28, 2012 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holidays, hotel availability and Bylaws' deadlines of the General Service Board, Inc. *In a brief discussion, the question was raised as to which hotel venue was used to set the date; the answer was the Hilton in Rye, NY. Passed.*
- D. #1: That the GSC develop a procedure for the submission of minority appeals to the GSC and bring a draft to the 2010 Conference Policy/Admissions Committee for their review. The committee asked that the following questions from the "Trustees' Committee on the GSC Subcommittee on Forwarding Minority Reports and Presentations to the GSC" be addressed in the proposed procedure:
  - a. To whom does the minority announce that it intends to present a minority report to the Conference?
  - b. What is the deadline for making such a decision?
  - c. What Conference members, if any, are given advance notice of the decision?
  - d. Who is responsible for seeing that the minority report and its documentation are in fact physically made available to the Conference?
  - e. What is the deadline for distributing the minority report and its documentation?
  - f. To whom are the minority report and its documentation given?

*Discussion revealed that apparently the "minority appeal" would apply only to Trustees, Directors, and GSO staff. A friendly amendment was inserted to read "Concept V minority appeal" which is somewhat broader. Recommendation passed 112/8.*

#2: That as part of a procedure for the submission of minority appeals to the GSC, minority appeals be presented directly to the GSC without being reviewed, vetted or approved by any committee of either the Trustees or the Conference. *Failed 47/71.*

- E. That the GSB develop a plan for the GSC to conduct an inventory of itself that includes a planning committee consisting of representatives of Delegates, Trustees, Directors, non-trustee Directors, and Staff, and that a progress report be presented to the 2010 Policy/Admissions Committee. *Passed 112/4.*

##### Additional Committee Consideration

- The committee reviewed the "GSB Summary of Responses to Inventory Questions Pertaining to Regional Composition and Structure" with appreciation and expressed their gratitude to the GSB for their thorough discussion of the inventory questions.

#### PI COMMITTEE

##### Recommendations

- A. That the updated pamphlet "A Message to Teenagers . . ." containing selected text and graphics from the current "Too Young?" pamphlet, be approved with minor changes. *Passed 103/12.*

- B. That the wall poster for young people with information about Alcoholics Anonymous be approved with minor changes. *The minor changes involved making some of the clothes less revealing and more generic. In the discussion there seemed to be a bit of opposition at first, when only a tabletop version of the poster was available. But then a projection of the poster became viewable on a large screen for all to see. Passed 101/21.*
- C. #1: That a new AA television public service announcement be developed for review by the 2010 Conference Committee on PI, at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, and that full faces of actors portraying AA members not be shown in the PSA. (The committee suggested that older alcoholics and those with special needs be portrayed in this PSA.) *Failed after a long discussion 73/47. After minority opinions we voted to reconsider. Passed on revote 102/20. Later, a floor action was filed to set a full-face policy for AA videos.*  
 #2: That the revised script for “Combination Radio PSAs on CD,” omitting PSA #15, be approved with minor changes, and recorded at a cost not to exceed \$20,000. *Passed 114/4.*
- D. #1: That the four selected AA Videos for Young People be approved with minor changes. *The videos were all shown, ranging in length from 5 minutes to just over 7 (the French language one). The “25 and Under” video was most interesting visually; the “beach video” had good text and sound; the “Just Like Me” video had uneven sound, good visuals; the French one we couldn’t see in its entirety due to a malfunction, but we saw most of it (an anonymous young woman speaking to the camera). Passed unanimously.*  
 #2: That the videos “AA: Rap With Us” and “Young People and AA” be discontinued. *Passed unanimously.*
- E. That the draft 2010 Membership Survey Questionnaire be approved. *Passed with 3 no votes. No minority opinion.*

#### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee reviewed the 2008 annual report from the trustees’ Committee on PI regarding GSO’s AA Web site with appreciation.
- The committee considered the request to add the text “Provide initial motivation” to the section “What AA Does Not Do” in the flyer “AA at a Glance” and took no action. The committee requested the trustees’ PI Committee consider placing the full text of the section “What AA Does Not Do,” from the service piece “Information on Alcoholics Anonymous,” into the “What AA Does Not Do” section of the “AA at a Glance” flyer.
- The committee considered a request to develop a generic AA poster or posters for places such as hospitals, places of employment, doctors’ offices, etc., and took no action. The committee noted that there is no widely expressed need for this item at this time and that experience with posters will be gained should the wall poster for young people become available.
- The committee reviewed current AA television public service announcements for relevance and usefulness and suggested that no current television public service announcements be retired.
- The committee reviewed with appreciation information on centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the 2008 television public service announcement, “I Thought.”
- The committee requested that the script be included in the packaging of the “Combination Radio PSAs on CD.”
- The committee requested that the trustees’ PI Committee consider distribution options in addition to DVD for the AA Videos for Young People, e.g., placement on GSO’s AA website.

- The committee requested that the AA Videos for Young People project continue, and that video submissions be encouraged from young people in the Fellowship, especially from Spanish-speaking members.
- The committee requested that the trustees' PI Committee consider the purpose, usefulness, frequency and methodology of the AA Membership Survey.
- The committee requested that the trustees' PI Committee develop text on the importance of not breaking the anonymity of living AA members in memorial announcements when one of our Fellowship dies. This text, intended for inclusion in the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity," is requested to be brought back to the 2010 Conference Committee on PI.
- The committee briefly discussed the use of the AA Grapevine and La Viña in PI endeavors.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the PI Kit and Workbook and requested that the pamphlets "Too Young?" and "AA for the Older Alcoholic – Never Too Late" be included.

## REPORT AND CHARTER COMMITTEE

### Recommendations

- A. The following changes to the AA Service Manual be made:
1. That the sentence "A non-trustee director can serve up to four one-year terms" be added to the end of the section "Choosing Non-trustee Directors For A.A. World Services and The AA Grapevine" on page S75 of *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* so that it reads as follows: "The remaining candidates are interviewed by the corporate board's nominating committee which recommends a nominee to the full board. The name and resume of the nominee are then forwarded to the trustees' Nominating Committee for approval by the GSB and the GSC. Per the AAWS and AA Grapevine by-laws, a non-trustee director can serve up to four one-year terms." *Passed unanimously.*
  2. #1: That all changes to *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* be listed in the edition in which the changes appear for the first time, and organized by source of change (GSB, Conference Advisory Action, Conference Committee on Report & Charter, Publications Department). Conference advisory actions will be noted by vertical margin change bars in the edition in which the change appears for the first time. *Passed.*  
 #2: That the GSB, the AAWS Board and the AA Grapevine Board annually review *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter. *Passed, 1 vote against.*
  3. That the title "Conference Language" on page S19 be changed to "Glossary of General Service Terms" and that the subheading be removed. *Passed, 3 no votes.*
  4. That the last sentence on page S70 of the 2008-2009 edition of *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* in the section "Appointed Committee Members" be changed from "The term of service is four years, renewed on a yearly basis" to "Appointed Committee Members are appointed for one year, but the term may be extended depending on committee projects (maximum four years)." Note: This language makes the description of the terms of service of Appointed Committee Members consistent with the language in the trustees' Committee on Nominating Procedure No 2, "Procedures for Selecting

Appointed Committee Members for General Service Board Committees.” *Passed, 2 no votes.*

5. After further deliberation, this item was returned as an additional consideration.
6. That area numbers be inserted next to area names in Appendix D, pages S105 through S107 of *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service*. *Passed unanimously.*
7. The committee reviewed a letter requesting an “inventory” of various items related to the GSC Charter. The Committee reaffirmed the action of the 1957 Conference which enlarged the duties of the committee to include a continuing study and review of the Charter and approval of recommended changes to it. It was recommended that a review of the Charter be made a standing agenda item for the Conference Committee on Report and Charter. *Passed 80/32. After minority opinion we voted to reconsider. Opinions included the danger and diminishment in making the Conference Charter a standard item; others felt it would push the Fellowship to become more familiar with the Charter. Failed on revote 52/64.*

#### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee received with loving appreciation a locally developed GSR Preamble and decided not to include it in *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service*.
- The committee reviewed a request from the AAWS Board to add text regarding the desirability of business or professional background for regional and at-large trustees to the section of *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* on “Qualifications of an Effective Trustee” found on page S63. The committee strongly believed that placing such limitations on those who are willing to serve might prevent the selection of the most qualified candidate.
- The committee considered a suggestion to insert the page reference “(see page S63)” in the section on Regional Trustees found on page S65 and decided it was not needed.
- The committee reviewed suggested revisions to Chapters 10 and 12 of *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* submitted by the AA Grapevine Board. The Committee suggested that the AA Grapevine Board forward revisions of Chapters 10 and 12 to the 2010 Conference Committee on Report and Charter and use the current version (2009-2010) of Chapters 10 and 12 as the basic text, include any new charts necessary to the text and provide reasons for proposed revisions. The committee also suggested that the AA Grapevine Board may wish to retain accurate historical information currently in *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service*.
- The committee reviewed a list of proposed editorial changes to *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* and forwarded them to the Publications Department:
- The committee reviewed a list of proposed editorial changes to *The A.A. Directories* and forwarded them to the Publications Department.
- The committee agreed to review the rough draft of the Conference Report and the tear sheets of *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* with careful attention to accuracy and completeness of reporting and to return corrections or suggestions to the GSO within 21 days of receipt.
- Editorial responsibilities of the Publications Department of the General Service Office regarding *The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* will be limited to the following:

- › Update financial and publication data that changes on an annual basis.
- › Revise dates that require periodic updating.
- › Correct typographical and spelling errors.
- › Maintain an accurate index and cross reference.
- The committee is forwarding a request to clarify language regarding nominating a regional trustee candidate in the same year when nominating a trustee-at-large candidate to the 2010 Conference Committee on Trustees, as the request includes reference to the 1985 Conference Committee on Trustees Advisory Action, “no area shall submit an individual as candidate for both regional trustee and trustee-at-large U.S./Canada in the same year.”

## TREATMENT FACILITIES COMMITTEE

### Recommendations

- A. That the revised video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* be approved. *The video, which uses actors to portray AA members, was presented. It shows them full face discussing their experiences and AA principles (such as “what you see here, leave here” and anonymity). Much of the video is structured like a meeting. There was some amount of opposition from trustees, and some members compared it unfavorably to the rawness of the young people’s videos. Failed 81/45. Minority opinions followed, with much support from GSO staff and with considerable attention to the cost that had already gone into the video (about \$60,000). Voted to reconsider. Passed 85/36.*
- B. That the committee’s scope be expanded to include service to Special Needs/Accessibilities committees and that the name of the committee be changed to the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities. *Passed, after a brief discussion, 117/9.*

### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee considered a proposal to include additional information on carrying AA’s message to treatment facilities with out-patient programs. The committee requested that the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities consider developing a section on carrying the AA message into out-patient treatment settings, using shared experience, for inclusion in the *Treatment Facilities Workbook* and the *AA Guidelines on Treatment Facilities*. In addition, the committee suggested that staff continue to gather shared area experience regarding carrying the AA message into out-patient treatment settings and that the trustees’ Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities continue to explore ways to carry the AA message to treatment professionals and patients in out-patient settings.
- The committee discussed possible uses of the AA Grapevine and La Viña in Treatment Facilities endeavors and suggested that the AA Grapevine consider developing an annual treatment facilities issue similar to its annual Corrections issue. In addition, it was suggested that if a new treatment facilities issue is published that it be placed in the Treatment Facilities Kit. It was also suggested that groups be encouraged to adopt a treatment facility or center for the purpose of providing subscriptions and/or back issues of the AA Grapevine.
- Upon review of the Treatment Facilities Kit and Workbook, the committee suggested that an AA Grapevine as well as the DVD *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* be included in the Kit. It was also suggested that a one-page insert containing suggested uses/examples of the “Local Experience” tab be added to the Treatment Facilities Kit.

## TRUSTEES COMMITTEE

### Recommendations

- A. #1: That the following slates of trustees and officers be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the GSB in May 2009:

#### Class A Trustees

Terrance M. Bedient, FACHE  
Frances L. Brisbane, Ph.D.  
Corliss Burke  
William D. Clark, M.D.  
Ward B. Ewing, D.D.  
Rogelio R. Flores  
Jeanne S. Woodford

#### Class B Trustees

Kenneth B. (West Central Region)  
Conley B. (Southwest Region)  
Dorothy H. (General Service)  
John K. (Northeast Region)  
Jo-Anne L. (Trustee-at-Large, Canada)  
George M. (General Service Trustee)  
Don M. (Trustee-at-Large, U.S.)  
Don M. (General Service Trustee)  
Eleanor N. (Southeast Region)  
Madeleine P. (Pacific Region)  
Victor P. (West Canada Region)  
Pamela R. (East Central Region)  
vacant (East Canada Region)  
vacant (General Service Trustee)

Note: The General Service Board will operate short one Class B regional trustee and one Class B general service trustee.

On April 27, 2009 the GSB approved a motion that the trustees' Nominating Committee, in consultation with the AAWS Board, consider actions to fill the vacant general service trustee position and report their conclusions to the GSB at its summer 2009 meeting. At that time the GSB may choose to appoint a Class B general service trustee.

#### Officers of the General Service Board

Chairperson	Ward B. Ewing, D.D.
First Vice-Chairperson	Madeleine P.
Second Vice-Chairperson	William D. Clark, M.D.
Treasurer	Terrance M. Bedient, FACHE
Secretary	Conley B.

*A very long discussion ensued, with questions raised regarding the vacant trustee positions. Another problem involved a Class A trustee who has had difficulty attending meetings. Ward Ewing reported that she would "conduct a personal inventory" within the next two weeks to decide if she can continue. Further comments were made about the General Service trustee vacancy and why it hasn't been filled. Another member expressed discomfort with having a reverend as Chair of the GSB. (At this point we adjourned for a dinner break and resumed Friday at 7 p.m.) Questions were raised about disapproving the slate and what would happen to the Board if we did. (Apparently, only if the number of members on the GSB fell below 15 would there be legal problems.) What is the pool from which to draw a new General Service Trustee?, it was asked. The response was that about 6 to 10 present and past non-trustee directors might be eligible and available. The question was called but failed to pass 82/43 so the discussion resumed for quite some time. The question was called again and passed, so discussion ended. Passed 105/18.*

#2: That the February 2009 appointment of the following officers by the Chair of the GSB be approved at the annual meeting of the members of the GSB in May 2009:

Assistant Treasurer Donald W. Meurer

Assistant Secretary Adrienne B.\*

\*Will be replaced at GSO Staff Rotation, Summer 2009.

The appointment process is in accordance with the 2007 GSB Bylaws. *Passed with 1 vote against.*

B. That the following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the AA World Services Corporate Board in May 2009:

Andrea G. B. Jo-Anne L.

Adrienne B.\* George M.

Phyllis H. William N.

John K. Victor P.

Roberta L.

\*Will be replaced at GSO Staff Rotation, Summer 2009

Note: The Alcoholics Anonymous World Service, Inc. Board will operate with the Class B trustee-at-large/Canada serving as a director, replacing a Class B general service trustee director. *Passed 113/5.*

C. That the following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of members of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board in May 2009:

Ginger B. Nancy H.

Robin B. Dorothy H.

Kenneth B. Don M.

Conley B. Albin Z.

Note: The Grapevine Corporate Board will operate short one Class A trustee director. *Passed 117/7.*

D. That, in light of the extensive confidential information in the trustees' election resumes, resumes of all election candidates would no longer be made available to all Conference members immediately prior to the Conference trustees' election session. Distribution of trustee resumes at the Conference would be limited to only voting delegates and members of the Conference Committee on Trustees and the trustees' Committee on Nominating. The resumes of the elected trustees would be distributed to all Conference members immediately after the election session. Note: The purpose of suggested limited distribution of Conference trustee election resumes is to emphasize the GSB's and the Conference's commitment to protecting the confidentiality of trustee candidates' resume information. *Passed 89/31.*

#### Additional Committee Considerations

- The committee reviewed the resumes and approved, as eligible for election, all candidates for East Central and Southeast regional trustee and for trustee-at-large/U.S.
- The committee thoroughly reviewed and unanimously accepted with gratitude, with one correction noted, the report from the trustees' Committee on Nominating pertaining to the 2008 Additional Committee Consideration regarding Class B regional trustee and trustee-at-large successor terms in the event of an unexpected vacancy.

#### FLOOR ACTIONS

*Floor actions were submitted during the course of the week, usually in response to actions taken by the Conference regarding committee recommendations. We began to consider the floor actions a little before 12:30 a.m. Saturday morning, completing them around 2:15 a.m.*

- #1 Recommend a thorough inventory of the Conference Charter be made a standing agenda item for the Conference Committee on Report and Charter. *Declined to consider 93/19.*
- #2 Recommend that the revised pamphlet “The AA Member – Medications and Other Drugs” be returned to the trustees’ Literature Committee for additional discussion and report back to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature. *Passed 113/9.*
- #3 Recommend a needs assessment for Special Needs literature that includes scope, content and cost of such literature by the trustees’ Committee on Literature. *Declined to consider 96/14.*
- #4 Recommend development of Conference Approved Literature that focuses on spirituality and includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous. *Voted to recommit to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature 86/22. This means the item will be on the agenda for the Committee next year, with background material to go through the Literature desk at GSO directly to the Conference Committee.*
- #5 Recommend that the price increases proposed by AAWS in a letter dated March 20, 2009, be withdrawn and the current pricing structure be maintained. *Failed 8/114. Minority opinion; no reconsideration.*
- #6 Recommend we develop a uniform Conference-approved policy regarding full-face photography of actors or subjects appearing in our GSC approved videos, public service announcements or graphics arts projects, before any new projects are placed into production. *Failed 18/90.*
- #7 Recommend the Kindle project contract with Amazon.com be suspended immediately and a detailed review be conducted by the trustees’ Literature Committee on the scope, substance, format, and pricing arrangements and forward a report to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature. *Failed after long discussion 18/111.*
- #8 Recommend a voiceover in the video “Hope – Alcoholics Anonymous” to change the discussion of the Traditions as “by-laws” to “guidelines” or other more appropriate term. *Failed 67/44. No minority opinion.*