

from the DELEGATE'S DESK #6

Date: April 8, 2010
To: Mid-Southern California Area Groups
From: Linda C., Panel 60 Conference Delegate
RE: AA Grapevine, Inc., Report from the Chairperson



Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Grapevine, Inc. is one of two operating corporations of the General Service Board (GSB), and publishes the international journal of AA in print and in audio. It also publishes collections of Grapevine magazine articles in books, CDs, and on the Web Site. With the financial support of the GSB, it also publishes La Vina, the Spanish-language journal of AA, and collections of La Vina stories in CDs and other formats. The magazines carry the AA message to about a quarter million people a month in current and back issues, when using the conservative estimate of each issue being passed on to at least one other person.

Following are highlights from the report to the General Service Conference by the Chair of the AA Grapevine, Inc. Board, Dorothy L. H.

- ⇒ Average monthly print circulation was slightly over 102,000 in fiscal year 2009.
- ⇒ Bimonthly circulation of La Vina averaged close to 10,000.
- ⇒ Approximately 77,000 books were distributed by AA Grapevine, Inc., plus almost 11,000 CDs, and about 31,000 other items in Spanish and English.
- ⇒ New collections of stories included *Voices of Long Term Sobriety*, *A Rabbit Walks into a Bar*, a new La Vina CD with stories about the Traditions, and English and Spanish-language CDs of selected stories from *The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA*
- ⇒ The AA Grapevine, Inc. is overseen by the AA Grapevine Corporate Board, which normally consists of nine directors: two general service trustees; one Class A (non alcoholic) trustee; two regional trustees; three nontrustee directors, and the executive editor. This year the board operated with eight directors, because the Class A trustee position remained vacant.
- ⇒ The AA Grapevine Board has met in person eight times since the last Conference—three times as a Corporate Board for quarterly meetings; four times as a Planning Committee, and once at a joint dinner meeting with the Grapevine Editorial Advisory Board. Several additional meetings were held via conference call. In order to conserve limited resources, the board met outside of New York three times, resulting in considerable savings to the corporation.
- ⇒ The Grapevine's Board has only one standing committee (the nominating committee) which facilitates the selection of candidates for the board and oversees the corporate By-Laws. Committee chair this year was Conley B.
- ⇒ **Five other committees were appointed on an ad hoc basis by the chair in 2009-2010 to focus on**

specific areas Finance and budget, chaired by Ken B.; History of Advisory Actions, also chaired by Ken.; AA Service Manual, chaired by Ginger R.B.; 2010 International Convention, chaired by Nancy H.; AA Grapevine's Directors' Handbook, chaired by Albin Z.

- ⇒ **The GV Board also focused on the following areas:** Activities to enhance the communication with the Conference Committee on Grapevine; Board development, including thorough orientations; Short and long-term financial health of the corporation; In December, the external directors made the decision to obtain the services of a professional organization development consultant to assess the overall effectiveness of the corporation and its strategic plan; The board also conducted an inventory of itself, facilitated by SW Regional trustee, Ann B.
- ⇒ The Grapevine Editorial Advisory Board met six times to assess the Grapevine's redesign and to discuss new publications plus the Web Site.
- ⇒ La Vina's Editorial Advisory Board met four times to discuss how to encourage more Aas to write for the magazine, offer feedback, and deliberate on the search for a new editor.
- ⇒ The 2009 GV loss of \$132,594 was smaller than the expected (budgeted) loss of prox \$170,000. Total Grapevine income from cash flow interest and interest from the Reserve Fund was \$58,585 ahead of budget and \$23,894 more than last year.
- ⇒ La Vina is published by the AA Grapevine and funded by the General Service Board at the request of the General Service Conference. Gross profit on the magazine was \$29,491. [Note: La Vina finances are complex; please see full report for full picture.]
- ⇒ The Grapevine Board continues to do detailed and extensive analysis to try to find ways to increase circulation and distribution and has taken pro-active measures to address declining circulation and income. These include: redesign, new circulation director, new La Vina editor and bilingual production assistant, requested funds to update the Grapevine's software and to make the Web Site more useful and cost effective; and drafted a strategic business plan to make more stories digitally available.

THE ENTIRE EARLY CORPORATE BOARD REPORT IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST:
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