

January 9, 2006

Greetings Pacific Region Delegates

As we draw closer to our Pre-Conference activities and assemblies I know each of you are anxious to review the results of the January Board Weekend. I regretfully will give up my letter on board reflections this quarter so there is no further delay in getting this to you.

There are, however, two important items from the General Service Board that I want to share with you as you prepare for Conference. As a reminder, these are unfinished projects so you are reading a "work in progress".

The General Service Board has held two Special Board Meetings this year with the last one scheduled in March. These meetings were arranged for the purpose of reviewing the business plans, corporate board structures, Certificates of Incorporation papers and By-laws. An extraordinary amount of subject material has been covered; our certification papers updated and proposed changes to By-laws submitted. In March, the trustees will be focusing on the General Service Board. The two corporate boards, A.A.W.S. and Grapevine, the topics of the two previous meetings, will no doubt be brought into discussion at that time. . Most of the work is in preliminary stages and I am certain you will get an update at the Conference.

The 2005 Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions requested that the General Service Board furnish a report on the feasibility of more balanced composition/structure of regions. In response, Chair, Leonard Blumenthal, appointed a subcommittee to review all aspects of this subject. I am fortunate to be on the committee and we have worked throughout the year, reviewing volumes of documents and meeting by phone conferencing a number of times. A subcommittee was also formed that reviewed current definitions describing regions and regional trustee. Due to the extent of the project and further work to be done, the Board agreed to continue this committee; however a report will be submitted to Policy and Admissions.

And in writing my last Board report to you, I am filled with an abundance of gratitude for your service to A.A. I want to express the great joy I have experienced in traveling to your Areas and sharing with so many of you who serve throughout our Region in your groups, districts and areas. The hand of A.A. is everywhere I go. I thank you for your generous A.A. hearts and your loving fellowship. Until we meet at PRAASA...

Warmest A.A. Love,

*Phyllis*

Phyllis H>Pacific Region Trustee

**General Service Board Weekend, January 2006**

**A.A.W.S. Board**

## **Services**

**G.S.O.'s A.A. Web Site** – The A.A.W.S. Board received approval that the following items be added to the web-site: “Understanding Anonymity” (P-47), a Calendar of GSB and A.A.W.S. events and the Archives CD – History of Services (M-72).

The committee continued the discussion on Communication with DCM's and suggested that a special sharing session be scheduled at the next meeting of the A.A.W.S. Board.

## **Publications**

**Books – Unit Distribution** During calendar year 2005, G.S.O. distribution was down 5% from 2004's total of 2,219,591. In 2005, total AA purchases amounted to 1,670,763 units, while non-AAAs accounted for 433,726 units or 21% of the total.

**Big Book Sales (All Editions)** – Through December 2005, 974,880 units were distributed, compared to 1,201,569 for the same period in 2004.

**Gross Sales** – For the year 2005, gross sales were \$11,923.00 which was 4% over budgeted.

**On line ordering:** Implementation was delayed for on-line ordering due to a problem with the system which allows the office to create accounts. GSO expects to begin taking orders for all users by 2/20/06.

## **Financial**

Gross sales for the year \$11,923,800 were approximately 4.6% greater than budgeted and 2.6% greater than the year 2004. Gross profit from literature for 2005 is \$6,696,000. For the year, gross profit percentage was 57.7% compared with a budgeted 51.5%.

Contributions showed a slight increase in 2005 at \$5,413,500, compared to \$5,194,315 for 2004. Contributions from foreign countries to assist with the World Service Meeting Literature translations efforts amounted to \$135,000 for 2005 compared with \$128,000 for 2004.

Total revenue for 2005 was \$12,118,900, or 10% greater than budgeted and about 11% ahead of last year. For the year, we had budgeted to realize approximately \$10,000 more revenue than last year, anticipating the effect of the price change. Sales exceeded budget by approximately \$500,000 and manufacturing costs were approximately \$500,000 less than budgeted.

Total expenses for the year were \$11,110,800, or about 1% more than budgeted and approximately \$107,000 less than last year.

Unaudited net loss for the year was \$1,008,125 compared with a budgeted loss of \$83,500.

To recap, compared with budget, net sales are \$476,100 over budget, after deducting cost of literature and shipping/warehousing, gross profit is about \$962,342 over budget. Contributions were approximately \$138,500 greater than budget. These items result in revenue of \$1,107,762 over budget, which after dedicating the expenses that were \$16,000 more than budgeted leaves us with \$1,091,000 more profit than budgeted.

**2006 A.A.W.S. Budget highlights** The A.A.W.S. Board approved the recommendation for additional funding to the Pension of \$141,000 for fiscal year 2005. A scheduled funding over the upcoming years is meant to cover the Board's legal obligations to fund the growing pension payments.

## **Translations and Licensing**

Projects in progress:

Armenian *Living Sober*

Xhosa (South Africa) Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

Oji Cree (Native American) "Is AA for Me?"

Croatian "Twelve Traditions Illustrated," "Twelve Traditions Checklist" and "Twelve Concepts Checklist"

Portuguese "Jack Alexander Article About AA, "Q&A on Sponsorship"

Hungarian "Is there an Alcoholic in Your Life?" Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions wallet card.

## ***The A.A. Grapevine Board***

### **Overview**

The Grapevine had a productive year. The corporation finished the year in the black with a net income of \$64,620 and covered more than 70% of its expenses with income from the magazine.

Average monthly Grapevine circulation dipped this quarter, but with an average monthly circulation of 104,356 this year and an annual income of \$1,794,126, our meeting in print is clearly a very viable publication. Similarly, while book sales were under budget due to the shortfall of three books, income from the Grapevine items was even with last year's income. At the same time, as the development and popularity of digital media accelerates, circulation of the print magazines is no longer the sole measure of the corporation's effectiveness. Subscriptions to the Digital Archives, for instance, have risen to 4,091 and the uses of MP3 recordings of stories online climbed to 1,661 in December. The Grapevine will continue to look for ways to make Grapevine and LaVina stories more accessible to internet users and to alcoholics with special needs.

### **Grapevine Office**

The Grapevine forwarded its request for a reduction in office space to A.A.W.S., the leaseholder for the office. The proposal calls for giving back approximately 1,675 rentable square feet, a 23% reduction in space, resulting in a savings of about \$29,703 a year.

### **A.A. Grapevine Committees**

The Grapevine Circulation committee reported that they would be evaluating the effectiveness of the Grapevine's use of the GvR network, direct mail, and the internet to further develop circulation.

The Grapevine Nominating Committee completed its task of recommending a new regional trustee director, Bob M, Central Region Trustee, to replace outgoing regional trustee director, Michael P.

### **Editorial**

The Grapevine Magazine - A redesign of the magazine is slated to begin in April. One bid has been received; two more are being solicited. The project will take approximately six months.

Forthcoming Publications - Reprint of the Grapevine Memorial issues honoring Bill W. and Dr. Bob; *Emotional Sobriety*, a collection of stories from AAs with several years of sobriety about

their continuing growth in A.A. (May 2006); Audio Grapevine (July 2006), recordings of all the articles in the latest issue (approx. 100 minutes) available online for \$4.95 per issue, or by annual subscription: \$44.95 along, \$49.95 for both print and audio magazine.

Printer – With the help of A.A.W.S.’ production manager, the Grapevine selected Publisher’s Press in Louisville, Kentucky, to print the Grapevine and LaVina.

Circulation – A survey of former subscribers is being conducted this month and a survey of current subscribers is slated for March. Results will be helpful in future planning.

GvR/RLV Network – There are 2,563 registered GvRs and 269 RLVs. Staff has begun revising the GvR/RLV website; quarterly calls to GV/RLV chairs continue.

### **LaVina**

The May/June issue will be a special issue marking La Vina’s 10th anniversary. *La Vina’s third CD, Historias de la Vina III: Pasos 7 a 12*, will be produced in July and released in the last quarter of 2006 provided there is no objection from the 2006 General Service Conference. The goal for La Vina for 2006 is to reach an average circulation of 9,700. Mailings will continue to RLVs, Hispanic central offices, readers of Box 4-5-9 with a mailing sent to all 1,8900 Spanish-speaking groups in the U.S. and Canada. Results for La Vina in the twelve month ending December 31, 2005 show a net loss of \$107,740, compared to a budgeted loss of \$93,840. Average circulation of 9,380 is behind the budget of 9,500.

### **New Business**

The Board considered a request from Area 08 that the Grapevine publish large-print editions of the Grapevine and LaVina and agreed to adhere to the policy of not sending requests to produce existing publications in other formats to the General Service Conference. It also reviewed the cost of printing large-print editions of the magazine and concluded that it is not financially feasible at this time.

The Board gave careful consideration to a request from the Meadowbrook Group, in Fort Worth, Texas, that “all articles in the Grapevine adhere to A.A.’s singleness of purpose” and that we “eliminate all outside issue references such as drugs, therapy or anything else that separates us from our common problem” and “cease all specialty themes seen in recent issues (e.g. Depression in A.A., young people and their drug histories) that divert us from our primary purpose” and agreed to take no action.

### **Grapevine Board Actions:**

- Agreed to raise the price of LaVina to \$9.00 for a 1-year domestic subscription; \$12 for a 1-year foreign subscription; \$17 for a 2-year domestic subscription, and \$20 for a 2-year foreign subscription. This is La Vina’s only price increase in ten years and brings it pricing into alignment with the Grapevine’s.
- Agreed to forward to the General Service Conference Committee on the Grapevine, the suggestion that the Grapevine produce an anthology of LaVina stories in the year 2007 or later.

## **Archives Committee**

Audio Preservation: Included in the report presented to the committee was an inventory of remaining audio materials and priority recommendations for preservation of the remaining audio material. It was recommended that the subcommittee continue to work with G.S.O. Archives in setting up preservation schedules that reflect the committee's commitment to safeguard critical audio records of the fellowship.

The following agenda item is forwarded to the 2006 Conference Archives Committee for consideration:

- “That the Conference Archives Committee annually review a list to be compiled by G.S.O.’s Archivist of proposed archival recordings (format to be determined by A.A.W.S.) to be produced for sale by A.A.W.S. so that the conference might provide guidance prior to production.”

Security Procedures at the G.S.O. Archives: The committee accepted Michelle Mirza’s report on the existing security procedures as well as primary concerns regarding the safety and security of the holdings. Security concerns will be part of the development of an Archives disaster plan.

## **Conference Committee**

It was reported that the deadline for submitting agenda items has passed and the committee agenda will be finalized at a planning meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Conference background will be mailed to all Conference members by February 15.

A report was heard from the subcommittee on ways of improving communication on the Conference committee process. The subcommittee felt that additional information about this topic ought to be available and offered the following suggestions:

- Develop a service piece that talks about the intended design of the Conference and committee processes, including sharing about Concept III and the “right of decision”, trust and a listing of other resources available on these topics.
- Expand the service piece “How the Conference Operates”, especially the section that discusses how the committees work.
- That the Conference be given an opportunity for sharing on how the committee system is operating.
- Include articles in Box 4-5-9 and the Grapevine that emphasizes the committee process.

The full committee agreed to implementation of the subcommittee suggestions. They noted that the existing service piece, “How the Conference Operates” has been updated to read “Resist the temptation to edit recommendations on the floor.”

The Committee reviewed and took no action on the following:

1. An area’s request to form a General Service Conference Access Committee. The committee reviewed the history of similar requests and the impact of the creation of a new committee on the full Conference. They also notes that fewer than half the areas currently have special needs committees and also reviewed the increased activities of GSO staff in sharing information about special needs activities and materials, including the Special Needs Catalog.
2. An area’s request that items submitted with substantial unanimity by a delegate area for placement on a Conference committee agenda automatically be placed on that

agenda. During discussion the committee noted that this proposal would fundamentally change the current Conference process as described in the Conference Charter and took no action.

## **Correctional Facilities Committee**

Staff Report: A mailing went to approximately 2,800 outside male AA members currently listed in the Corrections Correspondence Service to update the status of their correspondence with inside male AA members. Another mailing went to 135 chairs of Corrections, Correctional Facilities, Bridging the Gap and Hospitals and Institutions Committees requesting sharing on the draft service piece/guidelines for Corrections committee presentations to introduce AA to correctional personnel training programs

- *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate:* The committee reviewed and accepted the revised draft booklet, *A.A. in Prison: Inmate to Inmate*, The committee recommended that the revised updated draft manuscript of *AA in Prison: Inmate to Inmate*, which adds/replaces stories to better reflect current experience and includes stories/sharing from young people and women, be **forwarded only** to the members of the 2006 Conference Committee on Corrections prior to the 2006 General Service Conference for consideration.
- Informational media presentation: An interim progress report was heard on the development of an informational media presentation introducing AA to training academies and in-service training programs for corrections personnel. The committee **agreed to forward** the progress report to the 2006 Conference Committee on Corrections.

The committee discussed the suggestion for a specific correction's professional to participate in the media presentation and agreed that discussion on this subject would be ongoing as the project progresses.

## **CPC/Treatment Committee**

### **Cooperation with the Professional Community**

The committee agreed to forward to the 2006 Conference CPC Committee the agenda item:

- “Discuss the need for three short video segments that could be streamed on G.S.O’s A.A Web site and directed to professionals in the employment/human relations, legal/criminal justice, and medical fields, with a total cost not to exceed \$60,000.”

### **Treatment Facilities**

The committee discussed the draft revised Scope of its Composition, Scope and Procedures, taking into consideration input from individual members of the General Service Board that it contained language not in keeping with how A.A. usually describes itself in the Fellowship and to the public, and agreed that further discussion be deferred until the July meeting.

There were no agenda items forwarded from this committee.

## ***Finance and Budgetary***

### Reserve Fund:

As of December 31, 2005, the Reserve Fund balance stands at \$9,253,935 for the purpose of computing the number of months of operating expenses. The Fund represents approximately 8 and one half months of combined operating expenses.

Finance Committee Agenda Items: The committee reviewed, made slight changes, and forwarded to the Conference Finance Committee a “Draft of a Finance card” for discussion.

The committee agreed to forward without comment, these three additional items to the Conference Finance Committee:

- Request from an area that the Conference consider revising the language describing the split of group contributions on page 12 in the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.”
- Request from an area that the Conference consider revising the pie charts be deleted from page 12 of the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix”.
- Request from an area to consider elimination of the freight charge of 10% for literature orders under \$250.00 and consider the elimination of volume discounts on literature orders.

The committee reviewed and approved a report from the subcommittee charged with preparing an explanation of the FAS 106 issues dealing with Post Retirement Medical Benefit Fund. The committee requested that the report be included with material sent to Conference members with the “Presentations” prior to the Conference.

The committee reviewed resumes of potential candidates for the position of consultant to the Trustees’ Finance Committee. Following a lengthy discussion surrounding procedures to be used for a search for a Trustees Finance Committee consultant and the involvement of the Trustees Nominating Committee, the committee agreed there was a need to establish a subcommittee at the July meeting to document of the procedures. The committee agreed that the time period for acceptance of additional resumes will be extended to **June 1, 2006**.

The General Service Board approved the Trustees’ Finance committee’s request for A.A.W.S. to enter into negotiations with the Interchurch Center for a new ten-year lease, following the 56<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference. A presentation, which will include the report, will be given at the Conference.

## ***International Committee***

### Trip Reports:

- Bahrain: Doug R. traveled to Manama, Bahrain to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Gulf Coast Countries Convention. A highlight of this trip was participating in the formation of a regional service committee “The Middle East Regional Committee” as a first step toward the evolution of a general service structure in the Persian Gulf Region.
- Tahiti: Bob P., Eastern Canada Region trustee and Doug R. traveled to Papeete, Tahiti to attend the First A.A. Convention in French Polynesia. In addition to extensive CPC/PI activities during this visit, the members established a general service entity, “Alcoholics Anonymous of French Polynesia.”

## ***International Conventions/ Regional Forums***

### **Regional Forums:**

- The committee **agreed to forward** the “Report on Restructuring and/or increasing Regional/Special Forum” to the 2006 Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums.”

### **International Conventions:**

The committee reviewed the unaudited financial results of the 2005 International Convention, noting that the convention had a loss of \$39,039, less than 1% of the total Convention expenses.

Twelve organizations had either inquired or been contacted regarding bidding to be the 2010 International Convention Consultant/Management Firm. Only one company, Talley Management, submitted a bid. After a lengthy discussion of the bid process, the committee agreed that G.S.O. should proceed with contractual arrangements with Talley Management Group Inc. to be the convention consultant for the 2010 International Convention in San Antonio.

## ***Literature Committee***

In response to a request from the committee to the A.A.W.S. Board for clarification on attribution to creative contributors on literature products, it was reported:

Typically, A.A.W.S. does not give attribution to writers and designers who produce our literature. Most of our text and spoken word in our products are created by trustee committees and approved by the A.A. General Service Conference.

We do give attribution, though, to professionals hired to create art, film, video, voice-over or music for our products, under the following conditions:

- The credit given reflects normal publishing and media industry standards.
- The contributor is a professional and performs the work for pay.
- The contributor does not do the work because of their membership in A.A.
- Either an individual or company can be given credit for a single work but not both.

Liz H. Portland, Oregon will be invited to serve as Appointed Committee Member to this committee beginning July 2006.

The committee **agreed to forward** the following items to the 2006 Conference Committee on Literature:

- “The draft manuscript containing the revised eleven current and eight new stories and the revised front matter of the “Young People and A.A.” pamphlet, for consideration.” Note: It is not yet decided on whether this draft will be for the committee’s eyes only.
- Consider request to develop an Intergroup/central office pamphlet.



- Review the Progress Report from the subcommittee on the Spanish-Language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcoholicos Anonimos*.
- Consider the publication of an A.A. history book covering the years 1955-2000 or beginning with where *A.A. Comes of Age* concludes.
- Review the “Letter to a Woman Alcoholic” pamphlet with the intent to discontinue printing and retire it to archives.
- Consider the desirability and feasibility of developing a pamphlet concerning Alcoholics Anonymous, religion and spirituality.

The committee discussed distribution of Conference background material and agreed that the draft manuscripts of the pamphlets “It Happened to Alice”, Young People and A.A.” and “Too Young?” be forwarded *only* to members of the Conference Committee on Literature prior to the 2006 General Service Conference.

If the Conference Committee on Literature recommends any of the draft manuscripts to the 2006 General Service Conference for approval, the General Service Office will make them available to all Conference members prior to the report of the Conference Committee on Literature to the 56<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference. They would then be returned to the Conference workroom at the end of the Conference.

The committee discussed the following suggestions and took no action:

The committee discussed a request to consider publishing a Conference-approved Big Book dictionary and a “12 x 12” dictionary or a combination of both and took no action.

The committee discussed a suggestion to develop a booklet directed at young people and took no action as similar projects are currently in progress.

### ***Nominating Committee***

After review, all Trustee candidates submitted for Pacific Regional and Eastern Canada Regional Trustees were determined to be eligible for election in April 2006.

The following agenda items were forwarded to the 2006 Conference Committee on Trustees:

- The slate of trustees, Officers of the General Service Board and Slate of Directors of A.A. World Services and A.A. Grapevine Boards were reviewed and forwarded to the General Service Board, approved and placed on the Conference Committee on Trustees agenda for disapproval if any.
- That the language in Nominating Procedure #2, item 9, be changed to reflect the language found on page S66 in the A.A. Service Manual to read:

“If the candidate is a past Conference delegate, he or she is not eligible until one year after rotation.”

- Discuss (the effectiveness) of the “Diversity Statement” currently being used in vacancy letters.
- Discuss whether the selection process for Chairperson of the General Service Board be expanded to include immediate rotating and past Class B Trustees as candidate for this position.

### ***Public Information Committee***

The committee reviewed the tracking and evaluation report from Banyan Communication on the PSA “Living in Chaos” with appreciation. The four-year distribution plan recommended by the 2002 General Service Conference for PSAs was discussed and agreed to the importance of continuing yearly PSAs.

The committee discussed one area’s request to develop a poster from the pamphlet “A Message to Teenagers” and agreed to table this discussion until their July 2006 meeting, requesting additional background information.

A report was heard by the committee on the Annual Anonymity Memo to the Media and agreed with the revisions that were made and with the subcommittee’s recommendation to personalize the memo and reformat it as a letter for mailing in February 2006.

The committee reviewed a request pertaining to physical disabilities in the 2007 AA Membership Survey and took no action. After discussion, the committee agreed with the recommendation of the 2000 General Service Conference that “ the responses to this question have been inconclusive in two previous surveys and the committee recognized that there are other more effective ways of determine how the A.A. message can be better carried to those who have these challenges.

The committee reviewed a request to delete question 14.a on the membership survey which reads, “After coming to A.A. did you receive any treatment or counseling such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc? and took no action. The committee felt there was no widely expressed need and that this information may be useful to professionals interested in Alcoholics Anonymous.

The committee agreed to forward the following items to the 2006 Conference Committee on Public Information:

- Review the new P.S.A. “Testimonials”
- Review the full report on Videos for Young People. (The committee expressed their gratitude for the support and cooperation received from area delegates on the gather of sharing from young people – particularly given the short timeframe.)
- Review the 2005 Annual Report on Oversight of G.S.O.’s A.A. Web site.
- Consider requests to add additional categories to the length of sobriety section of the “2007 A.A. Membership Survey”. 1) Sober between 11-20 years and 2) Sober more than 20 years.
- Review the addition of a “sexual orientation” category to the 2007 A.A. Membership Survey.

- Consider the request to add the option of “Domestic Partner” to the “Marital Status of Members” section of the “2007 A.A. Membership Questionnaire”.
  
- Review the request that the pamphlet P-40, “Speaking at Non A.A. Meetings,” page 17, item #19, be amended to list “some early symptoms” derived from A.A. literature rather than the symptoms taken from pamphlets published by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.