

A.A.W.S. HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER 9, 2005

General Manager, Greg M expressed appreciation to all of the Directors who braved the severe winter weather in order to participate in this important Board meeting.

Greg reported that the entire archival collection of photographs and negatives has been organized and encapsulated in protective enclosures, which took several years to accomplish. The Archives Department completed work on approximately 25 boxes of Bill W.'s correspondence, representing 20 percent of the project. Assistant Archivist, Michelle M and Archives Clerk, Kristin L, met with a professional film consultant to begin the process of accessing and cataloging the film recordings that are in storage. We have undertaken the search to hire a G.S.O. Archivist to replace Judit O, Ph.D., who resigned in August.

The annual update of group records began in mid-November when our Records Department sent a letter to all Area Registrars/Records' Secretaries requesting their preference for receiving data, on Del/Area program disk, printed group information sheets, or both. This cooperative process between G.S.O. Records' personnel and Area Registrars/Records' Secretaries will culminate with publication of the A.A. Directories in the summer of 2006. Plans to introduce a secure Web-based access for Area Registrars/Records' Secretaries will coincide with release of the new version of Del/Area, which is scheduled for late 2006.

For the first ten months of 2005 contributions are 4% ahead of budget and 9% greater than last year. Those contributions are spiritual sacrifices by groups and members that make a significant difference by strengthening the services offered by the General Service Office to members and groups in Canada, the U.S. and around the world.

Services

Conference – The first planning meeting for the 56th General Service Conference (G.S.C.) was held to review preliminary agenda items, deadline dates, committee letters and the preliminary G.S.C. week agenda. All Panel 56 election results have been received and the random selection process for assigning new panel delegates to Conference committees has taken place. The Communications Kit is being prepared for a mailing to all Conference members on December 27.

Cooperation With the Professional Community – An activity update was mailed to 626 area, district and other C.P.C. chairs in the U.S. and Canada. This activity update requested sharing on how C.P.C. committees cooperate with medical schools and provided information on where A.A. members staffed booths at national-level professional exhibits in 2005.

Corrections – A mailing was sent to the 2,800 outside “male” members listed in the Corrections Correspondence Service to update the status of their correspondence with inside “male” A.A. members and to request whether they could correspond with additional A.A. insiders. A mailing went to 135 area chairpersons of Corrections, Correctional Facilities, Bridging the Gap and Hospitals and Institutions committees that included a request for presentations used by local committees to introduce A.A. to corrections personnel training programs. The deadline for sharing is December 31.

International – Doug attended the 5th Annual Gulf Coast Countries A.A. Convention in Manama, Bahrain. Members from seven Persian Gulf countries participated. As a first step in creating a service structure, “The Middle East Regional Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous” service entity was formed. The “Arabic Translations Committee of A.A.” was formed to coordinate efforts to translate more A.A. literature into Arabic.

Literature – A memo was sent to all Conference members regarding the extension of the deadline for Spanish-language story submissions for the Third Edition Spanish Big Book. The deadline for receipt of manuscripts is June 1, 2006.

Special Needs/Remote Communities – An introductory letter was mailed to 133 chairs of area and district Special Needs/Accessibility committees that invited sharing from committees. One response to this mailing was from a blind Special Needs chair, who opened up a dialog on how effectively we communicate with members serving on Special Needs committees who are blind, mentally challenged or have reading/learning disabilities. We are reviewing the Special Needs package and all materials mailed to committee chairs.

Public Information – The assignment continues to receive many inquiries from media professionals that often concern research on alcoholism, or A.A.'s position on a multitude of subjects. These provide opportunities to present accurate and consistent information about Alcoholics Anonymous and how to find us. We are in the initial pre-production phase of a Public Service Announcement (P.S.A.) that follows the Conference schedule of a four-year plan for P.S.A.s.

Regional Forums – The East Central Regional Forum was held in Houghton, Michigan with great enthusiasm and the commitment of 327 attendees. Having a Regional Forum in this northern-most geographic location of the region eliminated the need for a Special Forum to bring information to this community.

Treatment Facilities/Loners – The Loners assignment is receiving the final responses to the sweep initiated a few months ago to update the list of participants in the Loners/Internationalists Meeting (LIM) service. The Holiday Edition of the LIM bulletin was mailed out.

The A.A.W.S. Services Committee received with appreciation an update from Publications Director, Chris C, on the redesign of G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site and Archives "Timeline" project. The committee approved the revised, "How to Order A.A. Literature" statement to replace the one currently appearing on the Web site.

The A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee discussed a request from the trustees' Literature Committee that A.A.W.S. decide, if and how, to give attribution to creative contributors on products and requested that Chris develop an "attribution policy" to be presented at the committee's January 2006 meeting. The committee agreed that the Publications report itemizing sold and complimentary literature will be reviewed at the end of each fiscal year.

Publications – Total distribution of all books through October 2005 was 1,843,356 units, down 6% from the same period in 2004, which totaled 1,964,941 units. Year-to-date, through October 2005, we distributed 826,400 Big Book units, compared to 1,080,850 during the same period of 2004. October 2005 gross sales were budgeted at \$942,780. Actual sales, un-audited, were \$1,047,816, or 11% over budget. October 2004 gross sales amounted to \$961,104.

Other Subjects

A.A.W.S. Policy on Literature Pricing – The board considered requests from two areas for the 2006 General Service Conference to: (1) Consider the elimination of the freight charge of 10% for literature orders under \$250.00; and (2) Consider the elimination of volume discounts on literature orders. In addition, the board reviewed an area request that shipping charges be dropped to those purchasers of less than \$250.00 or that the 10% postage and handling charge be inclusive of all purchasers. Following lengthy discussion, the Board reaffirmed the policy on literature pricing, as approved on January 27, 2005, which states:

"The A.A.W.S. Finance Committee recommended the 2005 budget to the Board, which approved it and forwarded it to the trustees' Finance & Budgetary Committee for review. (This budget includes an increase of \$1.00 per title on books published by A.A.W.S., except for all formats of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The price increase will take effect July 1, 2005. This budget includes a handling charge applicable to literature orders under \$250.00, effective July 1; and also includes a thorough review of General Service Board and G.S.O. expenses, with adjustments which have reduced expenses from the prior year.)"

It was reiterated that the A.A.W.S. Board operates within its delegated authority to set pricing policy and that the current policy reflects the spiritual basis of self-support at all levels, i.e., the cost of producing literature and providing services. A response will be sent to the three area delegates reaffirming the policy and correspondence will be forwarded to the trustees' Conference Committee.