

A.A.W.S. HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER 28, 2005

General Manager, Greg M reported that many A.A. groups will celebrate Gratitude Month during the month of November – a tradition begun by Bill W. who understood that giving thanks for A.A. was essential to individual sobriety and to the unity in each group. Bill encouraged all groups to join in expressions of gratitude each November by sending special contributions to their General Service Board.

In line with the approved request of the trustees' Archives Committee for a mid-year budget adjustment of \$55,000, all remaining critical audio recordings have been sent to an audio restoration vendor for migration to CDs. Recordings include audios of early General Service Conferences, 440 reels and one wire recording. Assessment is continuing of the remaining recordings based on physical condition and historical value. The evaluation will be completed by year-end.

We were fortunate to save many boxes of historic reels and filmstrips, which have been transferred to storage in New Jersey. Among the stored items are film recordings from the 1940s and 1950s that include original broadcasts and unique recordings. Among these is a short color film of Dr. Bob, Anne and Bill W. recorded in 1945, which the Archives of the Museum of Natural History deemed an artifact of U.S. history. We have initiated research on methods to preserve these treasures while recognizing that the tasks are tremendous. It will take several months to analyze and catalog the collection, and to develop a proposal for the 2006 budget.

Each department at G.S.O. is carefully developing requests for their 2006 budgets by closely reviewing each service expense and offering solutions to reduce costs without altering service. In some instances we may have to develop new means to deliver a product or service. G.S.O. Staff will present 2006 preliminary budget proposals to each trustees' committee that outline expenditures within our projected resources. Over the last 10 years expenses have grown at an average of 4.66%, literature sales have been holding steady, and contributions have increased by 3.5% per year on average. These trends have necessitated an even more precise review of each cost category. Last year, with everyone's help, we were able to hold cost increases to a bare minimum and in some cases we saw large savings as a result of changes implemented.

Services

Conference – Preparations for the 56th General Service Conference are moving forward and we have received some election results for incoming panel 56 delegates.

The theme for the 56th General Service Conference is "Sponsorship, Service and Self-Support in a Changing World." Suggestions for the theme, workshop and presentation topics for the 57th General Service Conference have been received and consideration of these has sparked wonderful discussion in many areas.

Cooperation With the Professional Community – Irene K attended the annual Day of Sharing hosted by Al-Anon's World Service Office in Virginia Beach, Virginia. In September, Irene served as liaison to events in the Washington, D.C. area – the S.A.M.H.S.A./C.S.A.T. Recovery Summit and meetings of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. By attending these events, the staff member offers information about Alcoholics Anonymous and gains some insight on how we can best approach professionals. To date, the C.P.C. assignment has scheduled 55 exhibits at national professional meetings.

Corrections – In October, 11,500 issues of *Sharing From Behind the Wall* were printed. G.S.O. mails this inmate sharing to all Corrections chairs and encloses this publication with each response to an inmate.

International – Doug R attended the 13th European Service Meeting (ESM) in Frankfurt, Germany as a guest observer where 40 zonal delegates from 21 European countries participated. The ESM is organized and coordinated by the General Service Office of Great Britain.

Trustee-at-large U.S., Dorothy W, and Murray M, Trustee-at-large Canada, participated in the XIV REDELA (Meeting of the Americas) in the Dominican Republic as zonal delegates along with Doug as a guest observer. Thirteen delegates from 11 countries participated. Discussions centered on ways of communicating effectively with members and professionals, and country-to-country communication.

Nominating/Special Needs/Remote Communities – The focus of this assignment has been organizing and inventorying the literature and materials available for Special Needs/Accessibilities committees in the Fellowship, as well as materials which address/assist in carrying the message to Remote Communities.

Regional Forums – Preparations were completed for the West Central Regional Forum in Great Falls, Montana, where 311 A.A. members, families and friends joined us for the Forum.

Treatment Facilities – In August, a mail sweep was included with the Treatment Facilities activity update that was sent to all chairpersons of Treatment Facilities, Bridging the Gap, Temporary Contact and Hospitals and Institutions committees. Chairs were encouraged to provide the contact information for incoming new chairs.

The **A.A.W.S. Nominating Committee's** recommendations that Roberta S. L. serve as a nontrustee Director on the A.A.W.S. Board replacing Don M following the April 2006 Conference, and that Jane S serve as a General Service Trustee Director, replacing Ron G following the April 2006 Conference, were approved by the A.A.W.S. board and forwarded to the trustees' Committee on Nominating.

The **A.A.W.S. Services Committee's** recommendation for the inclusion of an explicatory page-break when moving from G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site to the AA Grapevine Web site was approved by the A.A.W.S. Board. The committee reviewed the third quarter 2005 Web site activity report—covering the period July through September 2005. The committee's recommendation to forward the report to the trustees' Committee on Public Information was approved by the A.A.W.S. Board.

Publications – Total distribution of all books through September 2005 was 1,664,289, down 7% from the same period in 2004, which totaled 1,797,365 units. Year-to-date 2005, through September 2005, we distributed 729,042 Big Book units, compared to 1,005,458 during the same period of 2004. September 2005 gross sales were budgeted at \$775,000. Actual sales, unaudited, were \$846,478, or 9% over budget. September 2004 gross sales amounted to \$790,893.

Translation – The updated translation of the Romanian Big Book was completed. This included the revised Preface, Foreword to the Fourth Edition and the Twelve Concepts for World Service.

The 20th Intergroup Seminar was held in Charlotte, North Carolina. It was shared that managers from various offices around the U.S. and Canada expressed gratitude in preparing for major accounts' online sales; 95% of attendees indicated that they would use the Internet to order in the first year of the system going live.

Canadian and Overseas Fulfillment – DataMark has been hired as our new fulfillment service for Canada and overseas. Our pick/pack costs for these orders are expected to be reduced about 37%, from the current \$13.50 US per order to \$10.00 CAN (\$8.50 US) per order.