

## **July 2009 Board Report**

### **Madeleine P., Pacific Region Trustee**

Well let me begin by saying rotation is a beautiful thing! I miss some of my compadres terribly but the new freshness that rotation has brought to the board is exactly what we need at this time. It was the most enjoyable, productive board weekend I have experienced in the last 3 years. So I joyfully report our decisions and discussions to you at this time.

First of all, following the GSC, the board had a conference call to address the issue of John Skilton's vacancy on the GSB and Jeanne W. resignation from the board. As discussed at the GSC, the vacancy on the AAWS board should be the purview of the AAWS board and approved by the GSB. AAWS has made plans to replace that vacancy by the next GSC and have Jo-Anne L. Trustee-at-Large Canada serving as a director for the next year. As for the vacancy created by the resignation of Jeanne W., Ward E., new chair of the board, had suggested that Herb Goodman, recently rotated Class A trustee, serve out the remainder of the term. The GSB was split on the decision so the position will remain vacant for the coming year.

We started the weekend with a full board orientation since we had 7 new trustees. The consensus was we need to have the orientation more often as the information was really valuable, regardless of how long one may have served on the board. So we were off to a really fresh start.

### **AAWS**

The General Service Office welcomed 729 visitors the first six months of 2009.

### **Publications**

Total distribution of all books through June 2009 was 1,495,764, up 37% from the same period in 2008. This dramatic jump in distribution is the result of customers purchasing large quantities prior to the July 1 price increase. Through June, total AA purchases amounted to 1,072,471 units; while non-AAs accounted for 423,293 units or 28% (this percentage is higher than normal due to a very large order from Hazelden).

### **Big Book Sales**

Through the month of June 2009, we distributed 866,548 units, compared to 571,691 in the same period of 2008.

### **Kindle Project**

General Manager, Phyllis H., presented a report on July 30, 2009 on the current status of the negotiations with Amazon Digital Services, Inc. (A.D.S.I.) regarding the Kindle project and explained that based on the 30 day termination clause in the contract, a request to withdraw the Big Book on Kindle from the Amazon website had been forwarded to the A.D.S.I. on July 10, 2009. It seems that none of the assurances made to us by Amazon were maintained, i.e. No suggestions for other books to show up with the Big Book, prices, rescinding the contract at any time. Needless to say, a letter will be sent to all conference members explaining the history and resolution of the Kindle project.

### **AAWS Publishing Other Items**

The AAWS Publishing Committee recommended the following items:

- \*That the 2010 International Convention souvenir version of *A.A. Comes of Age* in soft-cover

Format be priced at \$7.00

- \*That future Membership Survey displays be produced in Spanish and French

- \*That the abridged format of the Big Book be produced in audio CD format with an estimated

Price of \$18.00

- \*That the ASL Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* videos be converted to DVD

Format.

### **Financial**

Net sales of \$8,410,300 during the first six months of 2009 were approximately \$474,725 (6%) over budget and approximately \$1,923,300 (30%) more than the same period last year.

Gross profit from literature was \$5,099,410, approximately \$433,513 (9%) over budget and \$1,416,427 (38%) more than the same period in 2008.

Contributions received for the first six months of \$2,883,440 were \$221,050 (7%) less than budgeted and \$203,264 (7%) less than the first six months of 2008.

Resulting gross revenue (gross profit from literature sales, contributions, and interest earned on cash flow) was \$7,983,534. Total revenue was \$210,131 more than budgeted and \$1,209,507 more than the same time period last year.

Unaudited net profit for the first six months of \$1,313,607 compares with a budgeted profit of \$1,153,716 and was \$1,280,151 greater than the \$43,456 reported for the same period in 2008.

#### **Other subjects:**

The AAWS board accepted the recommendation from the 59<sup>th</sup> GSC that the AAWS Board should annually review *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter.

#### **International**

Phyllis H., Jo-Anne L. and Julio E. attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, May 29-31, 2009.

Ward Ewing and Julio E. attended the IX National Convention of AA in Columbia, in Bucaramanga, Colombia, June 12-22, 2009.

Phyllis H. and Valerie O'.I attended the 8<sup>th</sup> Asia-Oceania Service Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, July 24-26, 2009.

#### **AA Grapevine**

AA Grapevine saw a slight increase in average monthly circulation of the Grapevine magazine this quarter, although circulation has not caught up to where it was last year before the downturn in the economy. Average monthly circulation of the magazine was 104,571 at the end of June 2009 (103,211 print; 1360 audio).

Distribution of books, CDs and other items was up about 13.5% over last year, because of interest in two new titles, *Beginners Book and Voices of Long-term Sobriety*. The website drew an average of 43,000 visits a month. Year to date, AA Grapevine has distributed 62,039 books and other items and 646,616 copies of our meeting in print, including back issues.

At 9,620, average bimonthly circulation of La Vina has held steady so far this year, but it is still 1,022 behind June 2008. Year to date we have distributed 2,833 La Vina books and CDs and 35,860 copies of the magazine, which includes back issues and current issues (March/April and May/June).

Response to the redesign of the Grapevine has been largely positive. The chief concern, the placement of the Preamble, Steps and Traditions to the inside covers, beginning with the August issue. The size of the Alcoholism at Large disclaimer will be increased as of the September issue.

I want to remind everyone that the move to staple free was in response to the fellowship request. I had numerous requests from Corrections/ H & I committees for this with the promise of increased subscriptions. I hope you will urge these committees to follow through and purchase subscriptions for their service work.

### **AA Grapevine Financial Report**

For the six months ended June 30, 2009, AA Grapevine, Inc. realized a loss of \$27,139 in comparison to a budgeted net loss of \$163,055. This was ahead of budget by \$135,917. Total AA Grapevine income, including interest from the Reserve Fund was \$920,835 or \$100,539 ahead of budget. Total AA Grapevine expenses were \$947,973 or \$35,378 below the budget of \$983,351.

### **La Vina Financial Report**

Magazine income was \$46,877, which was under budget by \$880. Circulation averaged 9,620 at June 30, 2009. Net loss for the year was \$22,124. This was ahead of the budgeted loss of \$52,380 by \$30,256.

The AAGV Board approved the proposal to publish a special convention issue of the Grapevine commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AA. The price will be \$4.00 with a limited print run.

### **Archives**

The committee discussed the Conference Committee on Archives' request to prepare a report on the feasibility of developing a self-guided tour of GSO's AA Archives and requested that the Acting Archivist prepare the report based on the committee's discussion for review at their next meeting on November 1, 2009.

The committee discussed the Conference Committee's request to add a daily historical reference to the GSO's AA Web Site and forwarded the request to GSO's Intra-Office Web site committee for consideration.

### **General Service Conference**

As chair of this committee this year, we have a very full and challenging plate. The first item up for discussion was the development of a policy regarding the use of "full-face videos" and was tabled until

the Fall Quarterly Board meeting as this was the topic for the Sharing Session to be held later that day and it is an agenda item for the trustees' Committee on CPC/Treatment Facilities.

This committee did recommend to the GSB and was subsequently approved that the use of an online dashboard for all conference members be continued for an additional 2 years beginning with the 2010 GSC.

The topic of floor actions and commit to committee and recommit to committee was discussed at length and tabled until their 2009 Fall Quarterly Meeting for further discussion.

This committee also approved the request for two observers from the General Service structure of Venezuela to attend the 2010 GSC.

### **Treatment Facilities/CPC**

This committee recommended to the GSB and was subsequently approved, to rename this committee to "Trustees Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities." What a mouthful!

The revised video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* will be produced on a single DVD containing all three languages with a planned release date of late September 2009. The DVD will contain dubbing and subtitles as options. Permission was secured from the copyright holder to use the song "Happy Birthday" at the end of the video.

The committee accepted responsibility for the proposed development of a recovery pamphlet for newcomers or prospective members with special needs to include stories solicited from AA members with a wide variety of challenges, such as autism, brain damage, learning disabilities, blindness, deafness or hearing impairment, confinement to wheel chairs, etc. An outline of the proposed pamphlet will be prepared by the Publications Director and brought to the November 1, 2009 meeting of the committee.

### **CPC**

Staff provided an update from the Publications Director that in response to an additional committee consideration from the 2009 GSC Committee on CPC, that he is completing production of consistent voice over text regarding anonymity and singleness of purpose in the three CPC video segments. A DVD containing the three segments will be priced by AAWS and the DVD will be included in the contents of the CPC kit.

This committee also had discussion regarding the use of full face videos and will discuss further at the November 2009 meeting.

With regards to the service piece directed to drug court/alcohol court professionals, a revised draft service piece will be reviewed by this committee and if approved, will be forwarded to the Publications Department for final editing. When approved, staff will send the completed service piece in the next Activity Update to all CPC chairs for use in their CPC Service with drug court/alcohol court professionals.

### **Corrections**

A subcommittee was appointed to bring a plan for proceeding with the project of revising the pamphlet "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" and will report back to the October 31, 2009 meeting of this committee.

The committee discussed the request from the 2009 Conference Committee on Corrections for gathering of shared Fellowship experience regarding the signing of "legally binding documents" and tabled further discussion until its October 31, 2009 meeting. The chair appointed a subcommittee to begin to compile suggestions regarding signing legally binding documents that may be helpful to AA members involved in Corrections service and report back to the October 31, 2009.

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

Registration forms for the International Convention will be mailed in August and registration forms, online and paper, will open on September 1, 2009.

The committee agreed there would be no Fun Run because of declining interest and heat concerns.

A local forum was approved for the Spanish speaking districts in Area 08 San Diego/Imperial California on August 22, 2010.

It was recommended and approved that online hotel registration for Regional Forums will be available on GSO's AA Web site with "page break disclaimers."

### **Literature**

The committee asked the Publications Department to revise the draft pamphlet "The AA Member – Medications and Other Drugs" with attention to the suggestions provided during the GSC discussions and with additional review by AA members who are also physicians and bring the draft back to the fall meeting for review.

The committee also discussed the 2009 Conference Advisory Action that the Literature Committee undertakes a thorough review of the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship." A subcommittee will bring a progress report back to the next quarterly meeting.

### **Public Information**

Hopefully, the Young People's Video PSA will be available this fall. Please continue to urge the fellowship to submit videos as there is a continued need for new submissions.

### **Nominating**

There were multiple changes clarify language in the nominating committee procedures. The majority of the work for this committee this year will be choosing two new Class A trustee candidates to replace Bill C. and Jeanne W. We will also be choosing two new regional trustees, one for Eastern Canada that has been vacant for almost all of its term and one for the Pacific Region, replacing me.

This is probably as good a place as any to talk about the responsibilities for those who are wishing to place their name in the hat for Pacific Region Trustee. I want to make sure everyone realizes the time commitment for this position. We talk a lot about how it doesn't cost any money to serve AA but that really isn't true. How can you spend 90 days away from home in one year and not have it cost something? I work and I suspect many of you do as well. I also know my own limitations in trying to accommodate all requests from areas to visit. I have regrettably had to cancel some requests this year due to my employment responsibilities. I just ask that as you enter into elections, ask candidates to consider the commitments and also as areas, be mindful of the limitations of your regional trustees to accommodate all requests. We need to all work together to make service accessible to all who wish to serve.

Please let me know if you have me scheduled to attend your area this fall. As I mentioned, I had to cancel 4 trips as they conflicted with my work schedule. As many of you know, I moved in May to southwestern Idaho and was fortunate to get a great new job but it does mean less flexibility in my schedule. I will do my best to accommodate your requests but my responsibilities to GSB commitments takes precedence. Thanks for your patience and support during this time.

This is only a partial list of everything that happened this weekend but my intent was just to give you some highlights. Thank you for your patience and support. Call me if you have any questions or if I haven't answered any questions for you.