

Delegate's Report Back At Area 31 Roundup

Good afternoon, my name is Brian and I am an alcoholic. I have a twofold disease that centers in my mind, coupled with an allergy of the body. And I work out my solution on a spiritual as well as an altruistic plane. My sobriety date is August fifth 1990 and my home group is The Wilbraham Group. My current service position is delegate Panel 62/ Area 31. And my Conference assignment was Alternate Chair of The Policy/Admissions Committee. My gratitude and appreciation go out to the Roundup Committee for their hours of love and labor put forth into this weekend. Thank you to Jeff the Chair, Betty the Co-Chair and the entire committee along with the standing/invited committees and districts of Area 31 that participated. You did a magnificent job! Also, at this time would like to welcome our visitors Mary Clare L. from the GSO staff and Billy N. We are looking forward to hear from both later tonight and tomorrow. Welcome.

The heart of our twelve step program is about the nature of divine grace. And that the power of grace has an almost magical ability to produce a soul change, or a deep psychic change, and heal the self-destructive behaviors which resulted in all my human woes. I wanted to lead a good life but realized the problems that deeply tormented me were the obsessive

thoughts and compulsive behaviors which I knew were wrong and destructive, but which I couldn't stop by my own unaided will power. I could will or attempt to will this drink problem away, but I could not do it. I knew in my inner most self that my out of control drinking was an offense to all that was good. In spite of the sane and moral part of my mind was telling me, my body kept going to the drink. Scolding, nagging, preaching and punishment only made me drink more. To crave a drink as my instant reaction to this was insanity. Once this psychic change, or soul change, occurred in me I was easily able to control my desire for alcohol and the irritability, restlessness and discontentment eased.

With the realization from Step Eleven of what God's will was for me, "to put no gods before Him and to help my fellow man", another realization surfaced that my life was none of my business. A sense of duty to forward this gift the men and woman shared with me, was not only insurance against a possible slip, it was a pleasure! That pleasure turned into one of the Twelfth Step Promises. "Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends – this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our live."

I was rescued by The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous that led me to The Program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Not until The Three Legacies were introduced to me and practiced as a way of life was I able to continue this spiritual experience and thus receive more every moment the thirty six principles were applied in my thoughts and actions. I owe you folks a debt that I will cheerfully attempt to repay every day by passing these on to the next alcoholic in my path. And if I cannot enhance your life, I'll try not to hurt it. For these are the reasons I shall continue to do for Alcoholics Anonymous whatever and whenever I can because "I owe, I owe, I owe."

As my thoughts crept in to prepare for this report, the comments that were made last year manifested. And some bear repeating and the rest will act as a foundation. Although my aim is not to be consistent with any of my previous statements on any given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth.

The questions of what is The Conference and why do we need it? Can be answered by something that still stirs something up inside me. (Point to the easel.)

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting: "We may not need a General Service

Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.”

“We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing overintegration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.”

We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and wants of all A.A. and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is.”

Another concept that warrants repeating is the upside down triangle of our service structure which is Concept One. This

year, more so than last, I felt as equal with all at the Conference. Possibly my mind was telling me last year there was an unwritten hierarchy and surely the trustees, or those that sat on the boards, and the general manager had more clout than the delegates. Even though *I knew* the delegates by decree had to represent this fellowship by a number equal or greater than two thirds. This year I felt equivalence on all levels, especially parity on the spiritual plane.

You may have wondered, or are wondering where you fit in A.A.'s service structure or what is our service structure? (Point to the visual aid.) The groups, the groups that are represented by a General Service Representative (GSR), have a voice in Alcoholics Anonymous. This, the top of our inverted triangle, is where the voice is initially heard. Our "*Upside-Down Organization*" or the inverted triangle chart shows us the groups are on the top and the trustees at the bottom. The First Concept begins with the sentence, "The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services..." This followed up in the next Concept where Bill makes clear that the groups "delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference the actual voice and effective conscience for our whole Society." From the delegated authority, the GSR, the home groups' conscience is passed to the district and then all six districts to our Area Assemblies. This is one of the reasons the Delegate, the Alternate Delegate and the Area Chair visits the districts and committees on a regular basis. This is why our recent Mini-Conference was important to

us and A.A. as a whole. Ninety three Area Delegates were able to take their area conscience, formed through the “upside-down structure”, and share it at The General Service Conference last month. Out of the Conference come Alcoholics Anonymous World Services conscience as expressed by the advisory actions which go to the A.A.W.S., Inc and Grapevine, Inc boards at the bottom of the triangle.

I’ve often heard said that these spiritual principals are laid at our feet so we may trip on them. Well if that be the case what better place than A.A. and better people than you, to trip with? Besides, there surely aren’t any people in this room today to judge another? It’s comical to view myself or another alcoholic judging another. Yet, sometimes spiritual people can have human experiences. “Thank the good Lord He made this magical land of A.A. for us!”

Speaking of magical lands, three weeks ago I went to one in the middle of New York City. And this is what the crux of the delegates report back is. To share with you what you shared with me over the last year in general and at the mini-conference specifically, that I shared at The Conference and am now sharing back what happened there. I would like to thank Mark N. our current Area Chair for escorting me down on the

train and spending the weekend. It my first time on Amtrak sober!

Roll Call is considered the official opening . This occurred on Sunday morning a little after ten. Before the official opening there was a Delegates Only Dinner & Meeting the evening before. This is where the ninety three delegates of North America may fellowship together and possibly the second year delegates can offer the first year delegates some experience to calm any fears they may have, real or fancied. At the meeting three delegates were asked to share on topics and I was chosen to share on **“Trusting The Committee Process”** which we’ll hear more of later on. After opening remarks by the chair of our General Service Board, Ward Ewing, Class A Trustee, so his last name can be spoken, we were treated with the Keynote Address by Class B Trustee George M. We then broke for the first of two regional lunches.

After lunch we met for a presentation/discussion on “Spiritual Principals for World Service” then broke out to our first of three Conference Committee Meetings. This is where a group of eight to nine delegates meet to discuss the agenda items in their committee on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. And on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday the chairs of the committees come back to give their report to the entire Conference. The agenda items can either result in a Recommendation, an Additional Consideration or No Action. If it goes to The

Conference as a Recommendation it can either pass and becomes an Advisory Action or it can fail and become An Additional Committee Consideration or a Recommendation That Did Not Result In Conference Advisory Actions.

It may be helpful here to briefly share what is an Advisory Action and where does it come from? This may best be explained in the process or Evolution of a Conference Advisory Action. Firstly, it emanates as an idea, suggestion, question, concern or subject which comes from A.A. members, Delegate's, Trustee's or GSO/GV Staff., and may be shared or discussed at the group, district and Area Assembly and sent to the Conference Coordinator @ GSO. Secondly, the idea is reviewed by the GSO/GV Staff and forwarded to the Appropriate Trustees' Committee. Thirdly, they may then refer the matter to the Appropriate Conference Committee which fourthly, meets during the General Service Conference week and makes recommendations that are presented in the Committee Reports to The General Service Conference. Finally, if a Conference Committee recommendation is approved, after full floor discussion, it becomes a Conference Advisory Action, which becomes binding when approved by the General Service Board.

Terry Bedient, class A trustee and chair of the Finance & Budgetary Committee and the General Service Board Treasurer presented a clear and crisp evaluation of where we had been the last twelve months. When his talk finished I approached the mike to pose a question. It reads as: "Terry, thank you for your report that gave us a clear rear view mirror look at the past year. My area asked me a question at last year's Report Back about our future financial status. So my question has to do with planning and protection. *"Do we have a contingency plan for the protection of our future financial responsibilities and current reserve fund for the continuing global financial crisis which has its root cause in over the counter derivatives that effect all fiat currency in the financial world?"* I'm not sure if he was taken by surprise, didn't know the answer or thought it was prudent not to comment on because his response was "you're half right." My gut instinct was not to pursue it further as our area's concern was expressed and hopefully the board will investigate. The true purpose and concern for the question arises out of my love for Alcoholics Anonymous and that it is here in as good shape or better when we leave. And although the question lingers whether the board understands the grave financial nature we're in I do not for a minute doubt their intent or motives for the Fellowship we both love. Although we have no debt we do have pension obligations which are binding and a prudent reserve fund which needs protection planning in my

opinion. Not to worry if this is not accomplished as poverty has many positive spiritual attributes. And we do believe today that *all* our problems have a spiritual solution.

Tuesday morning it was the third and last Policy/Admissions Committee meeting and we finished our agenda items and elected a new chair and alternate chair for next year's Conference. We finished up some more business on the Conference floor after lunch and then at 2:15 we took the subway uptown for a visit to our GSO. We were warmly greeted and given the identical tour any visitor would be given. I would know as I've been on about a half a dozen our friend and past delegate Bobbi has organized for the Area. My suggestion is if you've never visited your General Service Office to do so when you are able. The work they do is phenomenal. If my memory is correct, it seems to recall a fact that years ago there was one staff member per 10,000 alcoholics and now there is one GSO Staff worker for every 100,000 alcoholics they serve.

On Wednesday morning we separated into fifteen groups with eight to nine per group to discuss five inventory questions and then to report back to the Conference floor our input. This is the first of three years the Conference will be taking its inventory which is appropriate since the theme of this year's Conference was **The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory – Our Solution In Action**. I was given the loving invitation to moderate the group which touched on the subjects

of The Committee System, General Service Board/Corporate Boards (A.A.W.S. & A.A. Grapevine) and Leadership.

The Conference broke up again to have their regional lunches for delegates and it was here a couple of exciting things happened for Alcoholics Anonymous in general and our Area specifically. Six Areas in the Northeast Region submitted an Intent to Bid at this year's NERAASA and three Areas arrived with actual bids to present to the NERD's (Northeast Regional Delegates), Area 13 (Washington D.C.), Area 30 (Eastern Mass) and Area 31 (Western Massachusetts). Based upon the support of past delegates, the Area 31 Committee and current A.A. members, I was proud to move forward with this bid presentation. On the second ballot, using The Third Legacy Procedure, YOUR AREA WAS AWARDED TO HOST NERAASA 2016! Congratulations! We have never had the opportunity to host NERAASA so this is a spiritual milestone as we can say we are, or will be, fully self-supporting by practicing the Seventh Tradition. Thank you to Bobbi who took the time to accompany me to The Sheraton and help with the bid package. And thank you to The Area Committee and all the other trusted servants who I'm confident will volunteer their resources to plan and host this huge event.

The next item on the agenda was to forward a regional candidate for the Trustee At Large/US from the Northeast from a pool of thirteen. Area 31's candidate was Bob W. P52/A31.

Using our Third Legacy Bob W. was elected on the third ballot. Now it was time to present him in front of the entire Conference with five other regions who had just gone through the same procedure in their lunches. We each had two minutes to share more about our candidate's along with the resumes of all. Bob's wife Cheryl wrote for me a crisp and clear two page essay on why her husband should be our new Trustee At Large/US. *Just kidding!* But the support of his family was vital before this process began as the role of any Trustee in A.A. is time consuming with the Trustee At Large more so as he or she attends all regional forums in the US and visits foreign GSO's when needed.

After the presentations, the Conference voted and after the second ballot only two remained, Richard H. from Alaska and Bob W. The third ballot was 48-41 in Richard's favor as was the fourth ballot 49-38. A motion was made by Chase B. the Oregon delegate to go to a fifth ballot which did not pass. Therefore, we "went to the hat." And both names were placed in the hat and Bob's name was picked! The Conference went into a thunderous roar for Bob and for the Third Legacy.

Alcoholics Anonymous surely won here. It was an amazing experience, one I wish all in this room could have felt. If any doubts had existed that questioned the Mighty Rhythm that lay under the material world, they were put to rest that afternoon.

God was in that room and He flowed through every man and woman. Thank you for allowing me to be there and present my friend as our new Trustee At Large/US! Take a good look at him, as we probably won't see much of him in the next four years.

Getting back to the Advisory Actions of The Conference and in alphabetical order here they are.

The Agenda Committee had two Advisory Actions. Both passed unanimously. The first was choosing the theme of the 2014 General Service Conference "Communicating Our Legacies – Vital in a Changing World." The second was the choice the following be the presentation/discussion topics for the 2014 General Service Conference:

Living in the Heart of A.A.

- a) Recovery, Unity and Service – Our Responsibility
- b) Passing It on Through Sponsorship
- c) Participating in Our Common Welfare Through Contributions
- d) Inventory – A Guiding Tool to Our Future

The Archives Committee had three Advisory Actions. Members of the Archives Committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment. The actions were:

The archives video *Markings on the Journey* be revised and updated with the proposed changes (estimated cost \$5,000) and brought back to the 2014 Conference Archives Committee. Secondly, that a commemorative 75th Anniversary Edition of the first edition, first printing of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be published in April 2014. This will be for sale through the next International Convention in Atlanta 2015. The book will be printed on paper of the similar thickness and texture to create how it received it's name "The Big Book." The cost has not been determined yet.

What was interesting on this motion, I assumed would pass easily and quickly, had a different path to take. Originally, this agenda item produced a swell of enthusiasm and received a unanimous recommendation from our Area's mini-conference. And as someone interested in A.A. history, I was excited about it as it was seen through these eyes to draw A.A.'s to the program. And isn't that the purpose of our Fellowship?

Well, first motion after this agenda surfaced was a "Call to Question" which asks the floor if they even want to hear this. The call to question passed and debate ensued. The

committee process was in full swing and I not only heard both sides of the question but listened to both sides. There was talk about this project promoting “drunk junk” or just a money making event to support our General Service Office. Another objection was the question of having this only in English and whether or not it would be translated into French and Spanish. The other angle was that the publication of this would attract new and old members to our program as outlined in The Big Book and our rich history. Which by the way, a man from Springfield, Massachusetts, Ralph F.* wrote his story on page 357 entitled “Another Prodigal Story.”

*(In an email dated 6/14/2013, the Area 31 Delegate sent a correction. The correct name is believed to be Roland Arthur F. aka "Bob".)

After debate the motion failed with 79 for and 47 against, which isn't substantial unanimity. Minority opinion, Concept Five – my favorite Concept, was heard and a motion to reconsider passed. Another call to question passes and more debate. This debate focused more on the positives outweighing the negatives and the motion passed 96-28. It was a joy to be a part of and trusting the

committee process as opposed to knowing I was right and stubbornly voting that way at every chance.

The third and last advisory action of the Archives Committee was “The posting of freely accessible, anonymity-protected archival audio clips on G.S.O’s A.A. web site to be done at the discretion of the Trustees’ Committee on Archives and the G.S.O’s Archivist.”

The Cooperation With The Professional Community had three Advisory Actions also. The first was: The Statement in the section Referrals From Court and Treatment Facilities in the pamphlet “If you Are A Professional.....” which currently reads:

“Some groups, with the consent of the prospective member, have the A.A. group secretary sign or initial a slip that has been furnished by the court together with a self-addressed court envelope. The referred person supplies identification and mails the slip back to the court as proof of attendance.”

Be revised as follows:

“Each group is autonomous. Some groups, at the request of the prospective member, have the A.A. group secretary sign, initial or stamp a slip to the court as proof of attendance.”

This had a couple of friendly amendments. Friendly amendments arise from the floor and if accepted by the committee is deemed friendly. If not accepted, it may go to a vote and if then passes is just an amendment.

The second was the statement in the section How to Make Referrals to A.A. in the pamphlet “If You Are a Professional...”, which currently reads:

“Or, you can contact the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous for help and information. Write:

P.O. Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163

Or phone: (212) 870-3400

Be revised as follows:

P.O. Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163

(212) 870-3400

www.aa.org

The last action was “The trustees’ Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities revise the pamphlet “If You Are a Professional.....” taking into consideration suggested changes of the Conference Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community and bring back a report or draft pamphlet to the 2014 Conference Committee.

The Corrections Committee had one Advisory Action. It was recommended the revised pamphlet “A Message to Corrections Professionals” be approved. I voted against

this motion as our Area conscience did not support it because it made no mention of “Bridging the Gap”. And there was no discussion which would have encouraged me to practice the right of decision. There was no minority opinion.

There were no Advisory Actions for **The Finance** and **Grapevine Committees**.

The International Conventions/Regional Forums passed two **Advisory Actions**. The first that the undernoted three cities, expressed in alphabetical order, be considered as possible sites for the International Convention in 2025:

Montreal, Quebec

St. Louis, Missouri

Vancouver, British Columbia

This passed unanimously.

The second recommendation was “up to 21 non-AA speakers be invited to attend the 2015 International

Convention at A.A.'s expense." Motion was passed with minority opinion heard with no motion to reconsider.

The Literature Committee had one Advisory Action. It was recommended that the draft pamphlet "A.A.- Spiritual not Religious" be recommitted to the trustees' Literature Committee for additional discussion and brought back to the 2014 Conference Committee on Literature.

All of the Advisory Actions were more than just the result, some more than others. They truly held their value in "trusting the committee process." The dialogue in favor of or against a motion was the heart of the learning process. And this pamphlet review on the development of literature which focuses on spirituality had such wealth.

The title of the pamphlet commenced at "A.A. Spiritual Not Religious" to be motioned to be amended to "Spiritual Experiences of Some A.A. Members" which failed. This manifested another amendment to re-title it to "Spirituality – An Individual Journey" with the same subtitle. This amendment also failed, friendly or otherwise. After an hour or two the motion to recommit to the trustees' committee passed, hence the Advisory Action.

The point wishing to be expressed here is the Joy was in the process.

The Policy/Admissions Committee had four Advisory Actions. The first recommendation was “ the 66th General Service Conference be held 17-23 April 2016, since these dates do not conflict with any significant holidays or hotel availability. The second, The user responsibilities in the “Guidelines for Electronic Device Users at the General Service Conference,” which read:

“Users are responsible for insuring adequate battery strength prior to the start of sessions. No technical assistance will be provided by the organizers of the General Service Conference or Conference technical assistants.”

be revised to read:

“Users are responsible for insuring adequate battery strength prior to the start of sessions. For safety reasons, extensions cords will not be permitted between any

seating rows or walking areas. Power outlets will be available in designated seating areas during General Sessions. No technical assistance will be provided by the organizers of the General Service Conference or Conference technical assistants.”

Thirdly, “The deadline for the submission of Conference Agenda Items be changed from 15 January to 15 December, beginning in December 2014 for the 65th General Service Conference.”

Lastly, “The timetable for the election of the delegate from Area 84, Northeastern Ontario, be revised to allow for two odd and two even panels in that province. The revised timetable for the election of the delegate from Area 84, Northeastern Ontario is to be accomplished by having the Panel 63 delegate elected for a one-year term with the understanding that this delegate would have the opportunity to stand for his/her own two-year term in the following Panel 64 election.”

The Public Information passed two Advisory Actions. The first was to recommend “The 63rd General Service

Conference affirm that the Internet, social media and all forms of public communications are implicit in the last phrase of the Short Form of Tradition Eleven, Which reads: “.....at the level of press, radio and films.”

The second recommendation was “ A.A. World Services be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of digital literature. The Committee requested that the board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The committee requested that a status and financial report be submitted to the appropriate 2014 Conference Committee.”

Report and Charter had five Advisory Actions. The first recommendation was “A typographical error in the article “Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need” contained within the essay on Concept IX on page 37, fifth paragraph, third line: “.....badly disturbed or **uniformed**...” Be corrected to “.....badly disturbed or **uninformed**.....” in the next printing,

noting that this typographical error has existed since the first printing of *Twelve Concepts for World Service*.

The second was, the following text describing the duties of the chairperson of the General Service Board be added to Chapter Nine in *The A.A. Service Manual* in a location determined by the Publishing Department.

“Duties of the A.A. General Service Board Chairperson

The chairperson of the General Service Board of A.A. presides over the trustees’ meetings, co-chairs the General Service Conference, and functions on behalf of the General Service Board between board meetings. The chairperson appoints members of the trustees’ committees, subject to G.S.B. approval, and is an ex-officio member of all trustees’ committees. In addition to board meetings and the Conference, the chairperson participates in all Regional Forums and may participate in a number of other events.”

Third Advisory Action was that the following be added to page S23 of *The A.A. Service Manual*, after the section entitled “Stimulating Interest in General Service”:

“The Principle of Rotation

“Traditionally, rotation ensures that service positions, like everything else in A.A. are passed around for all to share. Many positions have alternates who can step into the service position if needed.

“To step out of an A.A. office we love can be hard. If we have been doing a good job, if we honestly don’t see anyone else around willing, qualified, or with the time to do it, and if our friends agree, it’s especially tough. But it can be a real step forward in growth- a step into humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity.

“Among other things, anonymity in the Fellowship means that we forgo personal prestige for any A.A. work we do to help alcoholics. And, in the spirit of Tradition Twelve, it ever reminds us ‘to place principles before personalities.’

“Many outgoing service position holders find it rewarding to take time to share their experience with the

incoming person. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. 'status' at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise – we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed.”

The fourth was that the following text be added to Article 4 in the Current Conference Charter, on page S102 at the end of the final paragraph:

“The Conference recognizes the principles contained within the Twelve Concepts, particularly the Right of Participation, and the Rights of Petition and Appeal reflected in Concepts IV and V. In keeping with these principles, the Conference may agree to hear Concept V Appeals brought by members of the Conference structure below the Conference level on the inverted triangle.”

Lastly, that the 2010 Advisory Action regarding Area Highlights be rescinded, so the entire *Final Report* may be professionally edited and published, while still reflecting the full substance of the General Service Conference.

There were no Advisory Actions for Treatments/Special Needs-Accessibilities.

The Trustees Committee had four Advisory Actions and all were concerned with the appointment of Class A & Class B Trustees', Officers of the General Service Board, directors to A.A.W.S., Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and the appointment of officers to the General Service Board.

The one that would concern us collectively was the election of Bob W. as Trustee at Large – U.S. which is a Class B Trustee. For a full slate see me and I'd be happy to share.

There were many agenda items that did not evolve into Advisory Actions. They either became Additional Committee Considerations or Recommendations That Did Not Result In Conference Advisory Actions. We'll briefly highlight those and then address Floor Actions That Did Not Result In Conference Advisory Actions before we close and open it up for questions.

The Conference Committee on Grapevine reviewed the 2013 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and made the following requests:

1. That Grapevine communications regarding the Grapevine Audio Project specify that GV is not recording meeting speakers at A.A. events.
2. That an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future, be provided to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.

The Committee reviewed the results of the 2012 assessment of La Vina as a bimonthly, perfect bound, black and white, 68-page magazine and concluded:

1. The committee recognized that funding La Vina as a service, through the General Fund, is an issue affecting the overall Fellowship.
2. The committee acknowledged the increase in circulation by 8.6% from January 2011 to December 2012 may be tied to the changes in format and additional content.

3. The committee acknowledged that the 2012 increase in La Vina deficit results in large part from the allocation of pension funding expense.
4. The committee expressed concern that funding La Vina through the General Fund of the General Service Board, while AA Grapevine, Inc. has responsibility for the production of La Vina, may suggest an imbalance between responsibility and authority.

The committee requested that the GV board submit a proposal to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine that would significantly reduce the La Vina deficit.

The committee considered discontinuing the requirement for the current format of the La Vina print magazine (i.e. 68 pages, perfect bound) and took no action. The committee needed more background regarding La Vina's financial history and information regarding what a new format would be.

The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2014 or later:

1. **Making Amends**
2. **How I Found My Higher Power**

Lastly, the committee requested a report from the A.A. Grapevine Board on the feasibility of producing one book in American Sign (ASL) format.

There were eight considerations from **Public Information**, here are three that may be of the most concern to you:

1. The committee considered production of one or more video P.S.A's to be produced in the calendar year 2013 using the current five "Young People's Videos" and took no action. The committee requested that the trustees' Public Information Committee define more specifically the target audience, the cost, the method of distribution appropriate to the targeted audience, and any format issues, and bring back a report to the 2014 Conference Public Information Committee.
2. The committee reviewed the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on establishing a Public Information Social Media Page and agrees with the trustees' conclusion that A.A. World Service, the General Service Office, and the A.A. Grapevine and La Vina cannot establish a presence on Facebook in a manner which would be consistent with A.A. Traditions.
3. The committee suggested the General Service Board encourage the trustees' committees to review existing literature that discusses how A.A. members apply the

Eleventh Tradition, e.g., “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” and “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated,” and suggest updates to the literature that reflect current experience with anonymity in a digital age, with an eye towards reaffirming the importance of the Eleventh Tradition to the Fellowship.

The last Additional Committee Consideration had to do with “The Plan.” The Conference Committee on Trustees reviewed the General Service Board’s proposed plan regarding the slate of directors for the A.A.W.S Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board and took no action. The committee did not support the proposed interlocking directorate.

The committee noted that the General Service Board has sufficient authority to implement changes in Practice as outlined in the initiatives in the sections under the heading “Communications and Unity” and “Efficient Operations and Financial Stability” and expressed their support for those ongoing changes. It was the sense of the committee that the changes in Practices could address the concerns of the General Service Board.

The Committee requested that, before implementation, any changes proposed in the section “Governance,” regarding “Non-trustee Director Service,” “Eligibility of General Service

Trustees” and “Eligibility of Appointed Committee Members” be brought to the Conference Committee on Trustees for review.

There were six **Floor Actions That Did Not Result In Conference Advisory Actions**. They were:

1. The General Service Board develop a process in which the Conference can be participants in the development of its own agenda to include agenda items and present the process to the 64th General Service Conference. **(Not Approved)**
 2. The General Service Board’s proposed plan of an interlocking directorate serving the A.A.W.S. and Grapevine, shall be continued in scope and procedure as proposed to the General Service Conference. **(Conference voted not to consider)**
 3. To discontinue the current formatting requirements for the La Vina print magazine (i.e., 68 pages, perfect bound), in order to return the responsibility for formatting La Vina to the A.A. Grapevine Board and management. **(Not Approved)**
 4. The commemorative 75th Anniversary Edition of the First Edition, first printing of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be published in April 2014 in English, Spanish and French. **(Not Approved)**
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5. Propose that the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous develop, implement, and maintain a nationwide online, searchable meeting list and locator.
(Conference voted not to consider)
 6. That any vote on reorganizing our General Service Board and two service corporations be decided by $\frac{3}{4}$ rather than $\frac{2}{3}$ substantial unity vote as this is a matter of vital importance. **(Not Approved)**
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In closing, I'd like to share a short story with you.

Recently there was a famous author who was being touted in the must be seen literary and social circles. On a visit to the Hamptons last summer he was at a gathering where his host pointed to several of the guests saying "see him over there, he's worth 3 billion. And that couple over there, 5 billion and him, two and a half billion." After being a passive participant in this he quietly spoke to his new friend and declared he had something neither one of them had. The room silenced to a murmur and they asked him what was it he had that they did not? He said "enough."

Thank you for my life, and allowing me to see that I have enough. I hope you have enough.

Gratefully Submitted,

Brian O.

Area 31/Panel 62