

Good Afternoon, my name is Mark and I am an alcoholic. I am currently serving Area 31, as it's Panel 66 Delegate serving on the Literature Committee for the General Service Conference. I thought I would first tell you what the **AA Service Manual** advises the Delegate what to report. In Chapter Six, "**The Delegate**" states "What I Saw and Heard and Felt". In Chapter Seven, **The Annual Conference Meeting** states "The most productive Conference sessions are of little value **unless** the Area committees and groups back home hear about them." **From the A.A. General Service Conference Inventory** states - The Delegate is both a leader and a reporter - one job is subjective and the other objective; reporting to the areas requires delegates to be both: sharing facts in a balanced way while reflecting thoughts, feelings and emotions; a Leader has the capacity to accept the ideas of others while a reporter informs to Fellowship about what happens; Being both is difficult because one leads from passion and one reports facts; one can't do the task of leader and reporter simultaneously, but one can be both at the same time. So that is what I am supposed to do. I would also ask you to hold your questions until after I am done...if there is any time ...**So here goes...**

First, I want to thank the Area for preparing me for the General Service Conference. Over many years, many individuals taught me about service, afforded me the attendance at Conventions, Service Assemblies, Forums, District and Standing Committee, Institutions, Inter-groups and WMYPAA meetings. I will always be eternally grateful.

To the best of my ability, I will give you a report of the activities, meetings, workshops and ultimately the decisions that were made at this conference.

I decided to go a day early, so I arrived Friday evening at the Crown Plaza Hotel to visit Stepping Stones Saturday morning with other Delegates and GSO staff. Stepping Stones is the historic home of Bill and Lois Wilson, who lived in the house from 1941 until their deaths in 1971 and 1988.

The desk on which Bill wrote *Alcoholics Anonymous* ("[The Big Book](#)", the principal text of AA) resides at "Wit's End," the office retreat he built on the property. Bill, after moving to Stepping Stones, wrote three more books at the desk: *The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions*, *As Bill Sees It*, and *AA Comes of Age*.

The famous kitchen table Bill mentions in several accounts of his meeting with [Ebby Thatcher](#) at Bill's former home in 182 Clinton Street, [Brooklyn](#) is also on display. I thought it sensible to visit the home of one of our founders to get a better perspective to the task I have been given. It was a beautiful sunny day and we walked the grounds and visited each structure and viewed Bill & Lois's possessions. His love of service, fellowship and learning inspired me. **"Giving away his experience while seeking help from individuals and the fellowship to help carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous"**.

We returned to the Crown Plaza hotel to attend the 1728 Meeting. The number 1728 comes from multiplying 12 times 12 times 12. We had two speakers, Trustees, Joel (Pacific Region) and Paz P. (Grapevine Director) speak on the 3rd Step, Tradition & Concept. Culminating the speakers' messages, **making a decision, knowing the only requirement for AA membership and the right of making decisions** gave me some inspiration for the upcoming week.

Following the 1728 Meeting, was the **Remote Communities meeting**. By definition, is any community where it is difficult to carry the message because of language, culture or geography. We were presented with three speakers from, Saskatchewan, Alaska and Hawaii. In Remote areas there is a real desire to disconnect from the Area and from the rest of AA. The speaker from Alaska commented the hours of driving it takes to get to an Area meeting, also commented she has familiarity with LA traffic. We know what the desire to **isolate** does to an alcoholic. She added, I would venture a guess a group or district decides to do the same will become just as sick. We broke out into work groups and discussed remoteness, but also accessibility needs to our deaf, blind, elderly, military and home bound.

We had two visitors from the Ukraine being allowed to attend the conference. One of them, Yuri, spoke that not only the distance to drive to meetings was far, but the conditions of the road are terrible, full of pot holes ...only the drunks drive straight.

The last meeting of the night was the **Delegates Only** meeting. This meeting was put on by the 65 Panel Delegates to give us Panel 66s an Orientation to “Why are we here”, “Trusting the committee process” and “Full Conference Process”. One suggestion I took was to sit in a different seat at each conference meeting throughout the week to meet as many participants as possible. Each person I sat next to was always pleasant and helpful. And I offered the same kindness.

Sunday – Registration from 9:00 to 9:45a.m... This time allowed me to not only get the material for the week but also exchange our pins and other memorabilia with each other. Next came the first conference meeting. Terry B, Class A (non-alcoholic) chair of the General Service Board warmly greeted us the 66th General Service conference. **It begins I though and I was nervous.** He introduced Greg T., General Manager of the General Service Conference to take roll call. Greg asked us to respond by saying “here” or “present” when our names were called. Later on in the week, talking with other new panel 66 delegates, we admitted that the decision to respond by “here” or “present” was one of our toughest decision we had to make. After the roll call, a delegate requested to be heard regarding the workshop topic being changed from Anonymity, our Spiritual Foundation to the Feasibility Study. Although, there was communication between the General Service Board and the Delegates regarding this change several delegates believed the process did not consider minority opinion. Also, other delegates gave feedback, and asked why an approved agenda topic got changed. Not knowing what was going to happen next. I was impressed that all who wanted to be heard, was and each person who shared their point... **was right.** And then amicable solutions started being presented. We could have both, we could do one or the other. What do **we** want to do? There was no “us and them”. We eventually settled on keeping to

the agenda as planned. Apologies were given from all with emphasis to better communicate in the future. All of this transpired over two hours, pushing our schedule back some. So after lunch, we were treated to a 91-page power point Finance presentation which I am going to share with you. 😊 David M, Treasurer & Chairperson for the trustees' Finance & Budgetary Committee gave us an extensive financial overview of GSB, **A.A.W.S. and Grapevine**. We were reminded that we would have the opportunity to ask questions tomorrow during a **Presentation/Discussion** on the **Feasibility Study**. I had the pleasure to sit next to him once during the conference and discuss some. Today, I will share only a few of David's presentation.

Present slides:

Slide one – Is the General Service Board Summary of Operations ending 12-31-2015. As you can see Through GSB General Fund, contributions total \$7.1 million with Program and Supporting services of \$2.9 produced a net loss of \$2.3. AAWS publishing with Sales of \$12.5 million with operating expenses of \$9.8 produced net income of \$2.7. Total Grapevine revenue \$2.97 with operating expenses of \$2.72 million produced a net income of \$241K. La Vina produced a net operating loss of \$146K. All combined entities gave us a net income of \$300k. Including the \$210k net loss from the International Convention we ended the year with a \$89K profit. 2014's net income was \$1.57 million. Reserve fund at year end 2015 was 14.6 million representing approximately 10 months operating expenses.

Slide two – I wanted to show you the Reconciliation of Gross Publishing revenue and units sold. 2014 had extraordinary events. Sale of 75 Anniversary Big Book and increase volume of purchases placed with announcement of price increase of the Big Book. So with groups, intergroup and central offices throughout the fellowship and retailers who sell our literature stocked up their inventories. By normalizing these events we would show reduction of 325K units or \$649k in sales.

Slide three – we can see from 2013 to 2015 contributions have increased about 3.5%. However, we have seen the number of groups contributing trending downward.

Slide Four – Budget Outlook and Trends, **if we were to continue** (based on these trends) to operate using our reserve fund to cover all operational expense we would reduce our prudent reserve to seven months.

It was these figures and projections that instigated doing the Feasibility Study **workshop** instead of doing **Anonymity our Spiritual Foundation**. Contributions flat, literature sales down, and expenses rising does raise concerns. **In addition to the Feasibility Study the General Service Board implemented a Strategic Plan that was published in February**. From the report states the(GSB) is concerned with all matters affecting the Fellowship's primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the still-suffering alcoholic. In the process of strategic planning and assessment, the GSB has examined a number of challenges and opportunities facing the GSB and the Fellowship. These are factors affecting the outward reach of A.A. to still-suffering alcoholics, the relationship of the GSB to the Fellowship and the overall fiscal health of the organization. To address these challenges and opportunities the GSB has developed goals and possible processes to achieve these goals.

One of the challenges is a lack of growth in the Fellowship in recent years that indicates we have an opportunity do to a better job of reaching out the hand of A.A. There are a number of processes that might be undertaken by the GSB, AAWS, Grapevine, along with their office staff, and the Fellowship to improve our efforts in this area. The GSB strives to be responsive to the Fellowship and have good communication throughout our service structure.

Next came all attendees reporting to their assigned committee, we all went to our perspective committees to meet for an hour and organize ourselves to the task of addressing our agenda items.

My Literature committee had several items to review and discuss, so we agreed to meet an hour earlier each morning and have working lunches. We had a great chair Jay E, from Northern New Jersey, with recording secretary from the GSO, Sandra and Office Staff support, Mary. Although our individual Areas gave each of us their views on the agenda items, we were to thoroughly consider the thoughts of other areas when making a vote for or against any of the items. Our committee also agreed that any decisions being made would have substantial unanimity and minority opinion heard. I will state now that we discussed thoroughly and thoughtfully each of the agenda items and I will disclose the Literature recommendations to conference later on when I give you committee reports and whether the conference approved or asked why recommendations were not made, in other words “took no action”. Sunday evening, from 6 to 9pm was the opening dinner and AA meeting. We heard from five speakers.

Monday morning – Reports from the GSB, AAWS and Grapevine (I have summarized each)

Terry B. Chair of the General Service Board

The General Service Board has met four times since our last Conference: for the annual members meeting in April, and quarterly board meetings in August, November and February. A major focus throughout the year has been on strategic planning.

Board welcomed two new Class A Trustees, At the end of this year’s Conference three trustees will rotate. On the G.S.O. front, we welcomed a new general manager, Greg T. He welcomed two new staff members, while saying farewell to a number of longtime A.A.W.S and Grapevine employees.

Construction has been underway for the G.S.O./Grapevine co-location project, and as of the second week in January, the Grapevine has moved into its new area on the 11th floor, reducing overhead and streamlining the use of space.

Since the 65th Conference, the General Service Board has hosted Regional Forums in Albany, New York; Casper, Wyoming; Whitehorse, Yukon; St. Louis, Missouri; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

On the international front, trustees and G.S.O. staff were invited to A.A. events in Poland, Italy, and Ukraine. Additionally, our trustees-at-large attended the 19th REDELA (Meeting of the Americas) in Mexico City, Mexico, which is the AA zonal service meeting corresponding to the A.A. service structures in North, Central and South America. Staff members and trustees also attended zonal service meetings in Dubai (the Asia-Oceania Service Meeting), England (the European Service Meeting), and South Africa (the Sub Saharan Africa Service Meeting). Zonal meetings are designed to provide a forum for A.A. representatives in far-flung places to discuss the challenges of creating service structures, literature distribution and practicing A.A. principles in all their affairs.

In 2016, our trustees-at-large are scheduled to attend A.A. events in Germany and Panama, and will be participating in the 24th World Service Meeting, which will be held in Rye Brook, New York.

One of the highlights of the past year was celebrating A.A.'s 80th birthday at the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. With 56,900 registered attendees, this was the largest International Convention yet, and was well attended by members from around the world

The next International Convention in Detroit, Michigan in 2020, and on to Vancouver, British Columbia in 2025.

Chet P., Chairperson, A.A.W.S., Inc.

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S.) is responsible for oversight of the General Service Office (G.S.O.), group services, printing and distribution of Conference-approved literature and service material. The A.A.W.S. Board has met seven times since the 65th Conference to receive reports from G.S.O. management and staff, review updates on group services activity, track progress on

implementation of Conference and board recommendations., the A.A.WS. Board met twice to conduct strategic planning sessions. Publishing reviews format requests, reprints, international translations of literature and other publishing matters.

Group Services – A net total of 1,195 new A.A. groups in the U.S. and Canada were listed at G.S.O. last year. The service piece, “Services Provided by G.S.O. /A.A.W.S.” describes in detail the services provided by the A.A. staff assignments and other employees at G.S.O.

G.S.O.’s A.A. Website – Oversight of G.S.O.’s A.A. website is the responsibility of the A.A.W.S. Board of Directors, acting through its Technology/Communication/Services and Publishing Committees and in accordance with the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. The website received a total of 12,793,449 visits for the year 2015, an increase of 35% from last year’s total of 9,422,166. New features include a “What’s New” page to highlight new content on the site, dynamic web banners to “A.A. ORG Web Banners” page for linking to aa.org, and 2015 International Convention logo to home page as a link to Convention information.

Representatives from G.S.O. attended the National A.A. Technology workshop held October 2-4 in St. Louis, MO. The purpose of this event is to share the message of Alcoholics Anonymous through technology to help the next alcoholic.

Forums and Other Events – Throughout the year, G.S.O. staff members are invited to attend and participate in many local and area service events, conference and conventions. They include Regional Forums, National A.A. Archives Workshop, and Intergroup/Central Offices.

International – Trustees, G.S.O. management and the International desk staff member received invitations from A.A. in other countries to share information regarding licensing and translations and experience with A.A. groups and trusted servants in local service structures.

2016 Budget: The A.A.W.S. Board approved the 2016 budget of the General Service Office with a net loss of \$26,691; after review by the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee, the budget was approved by the General Service Board.

Publishing Sales: (I already gave you publishing sales), but Total eBook gross sales for 2015 stand at \$244,132.01 with 62,409 units distributed.

International licensing and translation: 2015 saw a noticeable surge in international requests, submissions and licensing. Translations shepherded through the review process reached an all-time-high record of 58 (up 45% from the previous year) across 28 languages (up 47% from 2014).

Notable languages / countries include (but are not limited to): Arabic, Croatian, Karen (Burmese immigrant populations), Farsi (Iran), Konkani (Goa, India), Maltese, Mongolian, Navajo, Russian, Somali, and Ukrainian.

At the 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous closing meeting featured a presentation of the **35th millionth copy** of the Big Book to the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, the order to which longtime A.A. friend, Sister Ignatius, belonged.

Employees: At year-end 2015, G.S.O. had 79 full-time employees, 4 part-time employees, and 5 temporary employees.

Corporate Board Report: A.A. Grapevine, Inc. Albin Z. Chairperson

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. also publishes Spanish- language content in La Viña magazine and its related book, CD and audio formats, as well as Spanish language web pages on aagrapevine.org.

The purpose of the Grapevine Corporate Board is to serve the A.A. Fellowship in the following ways:

To oversee the publishing operations of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.
To provide sound financial management of the corporation.

To establish corporate policies and set corporate priorities.
To engage in the ongoing process of strategic planning.
To operate in accordance with the principles of A.A. as expressed in the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts.

The A.A. Grapevine Board met in person seven times since the last Conference and once via an all-day teleconference. A.A. Grapevine, Inc. has produced 12 issues of Grapevine, six issues of La Viña, an annual wall calendar and pocket planner, and three eBooks.

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. distributed 103,193 Grapevine and La Viña books, CDs, and other items, including the two latest book titles: *Forming True Partnerships* featuring stories by A.A. members about the many ways members use the Twelve Steps, sponsorship, and the tools of the program to improve and repair relationships, old and new and commemorative editions of *Happy, Joyous and Free* were published in English, Spanish and French for the International.

Circulation – Grapevine’s average monthly print circulation was 71,966 in fiscal year 2015 The Grapevine Online averaged 5,233 subscribers in 2015. The average bimonthly circulation of La Viña was 10,355

A.A. Grapevine and the Reserve Fund – A.A. Grapevine maintains a balance in the Reserve Fund to fund its unfulfilled subscription liability. The balance at December 31, 2015 was \$1,943,500, and the actual subscription liability as of that date was \$1,873,708, meaning that the liability is overfunded. In March 2016, A.A. Grapevine, Inc. will be making a transfer of \$260,000 into the Reserve Fund. This is the third consecutive year in which A.A. Grapevine, Inc. was able to make a substantial transfer of excess working capital to the Reserve Fund.

Website – The website was updated to better serve the Fellowship and to engage a wider and more diverse audience; A dedicated audio page for Grapevine’s audio offerings was created for the website, including a showcase for the Audio Project, featuring up to 7-minute-long recorded stories submitted by

members; 261 audio stories have been received and are in the process of being archived. Two member's audio stories are offered online as samples.

Grapevine continues to produce a complimentary Grapevine Daily Quote, featuring excerpts drawn from the archives of classic Grapevine literature. Selections are posted daily on aagrapevine.org and may be requested on an opt-in basis for daily email delivery. Subscriptions number 39,368 as of February 2016.

In addition, the Grapevine Board is considering for 2016 and 2017:

Launch the Grapevine subscription app.

Celebrate La Viña's 20th anniversary through a dedicated engagement effort.

Launching the Grow Your Grapevine effort in March 2016.

Introducing regional pages to the website.

Update the GVR/RLV interface online.

Review international shipping vendor relationship.

Incorporate video and audio on the Grapevine subscription app.

Continue expanded communications with groups directly through broader use of group contact information provided through Fellowship New Vision (FNV).

Exploring the use of opt-in selections on local roundup, Convention and Conference registration forms for those who wish to receive Grapevine email messages.

Offer existing GV CD content in MP3 formats.

Expand the digital subscriber base and communications.

We are half way there... I was impressed of the volume of work and time dedicated by our organization to find and help the alcoholic who still suffers.

Monday through Wednesday, at specified times we heard the Highlights from the new 66 Delegates (including me). It was interesting listening to all the highlights describe their geographic size, service committees and genuine appreciated to serve Alcoholics Anonymous. I liked what "Bub" from Area 37 Mississippi stated "**We have overcome many diversity challenges and continue to meet those demands with PI and CPC work, trying to break through cultural perceptions of the nature of the illness, plus an awareness of the discomfort that being different can bring.**"

Also during the week, we heard assigned speakers being panel 65 delegates share our Presentation/Discussion topics for the 2016 Conference:

Connecting with Each Other

Singleness of Purpose
Informed Group Conscience
Be Involved, Be Inspired, Be of Service

Connecting with the Newcomer

All Inclusive – Never Exclusive
Are we doing enough to help the newcomer
Home Group – Where it begins

Connecting with AA as a Whole

Participating in all of AA
Understanding Self Support
Reaching out to the Next Generation of AA's

These presentations will be available in the Annual report we will receive in the fall. I was moved by the fact that many presenters claimed “nervousness” at giving a report at the General Service conference. I have no idea what they are talking about. 😊 The thoughtfulness and heartfelt messages were received with gratitude left the attendees with inspiration and strength to share the experiences shared with our fellowship.

Next, for the conference on Wednesday, the General Service Board, had previously created an ad-hoc committee on Feasibility. To help them in their goal, all attendees were assigned to one of four workshop committees to brainstorm questions assigned to their particular section and share their experience, strength and hope. The four sections with questions were:

Ideas on improving internal and external communications for:

Still suffering alcoholic looking for help
A.A. Members
Friends of AA
The General Public

Increasing Revenues

Needed specific changes or enhancements to 7th Tradition contributions

Regarding variety and price of literature

Changes to Grapevine to entice increase in subscriptions and other GV publications

Reducing Expenses

What specific services or items be changed or eliminated

What back office functions could be combined to reduce operating expenses

Structure

Considering GSB, GV and AAWS, are the better structures that could be developed that would allow AA to better deliver its spiritual message of hope and recovery?

With and without regard to either cost or efficiency.

Some of the ideas I heard shared on:

Revenue – using Box 459 to promote needs

- Focus on groups that do participate

- Encouraging birthday envelopes

- Workshops on 7th traditions – communicate pie chart

- Sell drunk junk

- Books on AA history, AA dictionary

Expenses – email vs mail

- Report finances online

- Conference every other year

- Conference outside of NY

- Service kits provided by Areas not GSO

- Contributions for Regional forums (currently free for attendees)

Communication-better communication on Sponsorship

- Review area guidelines

- Improve Technology – imagine AA rack of the future

- Website is no longer just a PI functions

- Reaching out to Judges, Attorneys, Parole Officers, Domestic Relations

- Nurses, Therapists, Doctors

- Better connections to DCM/GSR Committee Chairs

Structure – Combine AAWS/GV/GSO

- Self-supporting is spiritual

- Contract outside professional to assess

- Improve passing on knowledge

Just a reminder a printed report will be available in the future Annual report. This is just what I noted.

The 2016 General Service Conference Committee Agenda Items – And the Advisory Actions passed

Starting with Agenda:

The theme for the 2017 General Service Conference will be: “Supporting Our Future.”

The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2017 General Service Conference:

Growth:

Diversity -- Outreach and Attraction

Safety – An Important Consideration

Communication – Today and Tomorrow

Participation:

Fellowship vs. Membership

Leadership: “I am Responsible...”

Is Your Voice Heard?

Contributions:

Spirituality and Money

Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations

Apathy and Power of the Purse

The Conference Agenda Committee review the summary of the previous year’s Conference **evaluations** and, where appropriate, make suggestions for improvement to the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference.

The General Service Office post to the Conference dashboard, and regularly update information concerning the status of all proposed Conference agenda items.

Cooperation With The Professional Community

1. A new section on A.A. and medications be added to the pamphlet “If You are a Professional...” with the following text:

A.A. Members and Medications - A.A. does not provide medical advice; all medical advice and treatment should come from a qualified health care professional. The suggestions provided in the pamphlet “The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs” may help A.A. members minimize the risk of relapse.

2. Text be added to the last paragraph of the first page of the pamphlet “Is there an Alcoholic in the Workplace?” to read: A.A. can help organizations, corporations and businesses, regardless of size, contact men and women who have achieved sobriety, and are willing to share their experience freely with anyone who seeks help.

3. Several minor revisions to the pamphlet “How A.A. Members Cooperate With Professionals” be approved.

4. An introductory paragraph for professionals be added to the pamphlet “Problems Other Than Alcohol” addressing the notion that while some language in the 1958 pamphlet is dated, the issues are prevalent today, and asked that a draft introductory paragraph be brought back to the 2017 Conference Cooperation With the Professional Community Committee for review.

Corrections

The video to replace “It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell” with the title “A New Freedom” be approved.

Grapevine

The delegate chair for the Grapevine Conference Committee be allowed the same participation at the January A.A. Grapevine Board Meeting as all other delegate chairs at their corresponding trustees’ committees.

Literature

1. The trustees’ Literature Committee develop a plan that includes a systematic schedule for the annual review of recovery literature items, taking into consideration the following: content, relevance, and usefulness; and prioritized by time span since last review. The committee requested that the plan also

include an annual report, to be forwarded to the Conference Literature Committee, reflecting the results of their review and any other items for proposed updates or revisions.

2. The trustees' Literature Committee revise the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." to include information about young people's conferences and that the proposed text be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee for review.

3. The trustees' Literature Committee update the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." to better reflect the experiences of young people in A.A. today. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee.

4. The trustees' Literature Committee undertake a comprehensive revision of the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" with a modernized presentation of both text and illustrations to reflect contemporary A.A. experience. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee.

Policy/Admissions

1. Representatives from Ukraine be admitted to the 66th General Service Conference as observers.

2. Implementation of Phase 1 of the Conference Translation Project to translate pre-Conference and Conference material into Spanish and French, as described in the 2015 Advisory Action, continue with an estimated cost of \$50,000 - \$100,000.

3. The 69th General Service Conference be held April 28-May 4, 2019 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.

Public Information

1. A proposal for implementing a Google-for-Non-Profits account for carrying the message of A.A. to the public be developed and brought back to the 2017 Conference Public Information Committee for review.

2. A proposal for the implementation of a Twitter account for carrying the message of A.A. to the public be developed and brought back to the 2017 Conference Public Information Committee for review.

3. The English- and French-language versions of the video public service announcement “Tengo Esperanza,” be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, in addition to distribution by local committees, and that the information gathered from the process be forwarded to the 2017 Conference Public Information Committee for their review.

4. The video public service announcement “I Thought” be discontinued.

Report and Charter

1. A new section on “Local Forums” be added to Chapter 9 (The General Service Board) of *The A.A. Service Manual*, after the “Regional Forums” section with the following text:

Service Manual, after the “Regional Forums” section with the following text:

Local Forums -In October 2006, the concept of Local Forums was approved by the General Service Board.

The purpose of Local Forums is to bring Forum information to A.A. members in remote, sparsely populated areas, urban neighborhoods or underserved A.A. communities. Any A.A. community or service entity may request a one-and-a-half or two-day Local Forum. Unlike Regional Forums, the responsibility for Forum expenses such as meeting room rental and miscellaneous expenses are assumed by the Local Forum Committee. The General Service Board will send two participants, one from the Board and one from the General Service Office or Grapevine office, and display literature at Board expense. Like Regional Forums, Board participation in Local Forums requires the approval of the trustees’ Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums. The Regional Forums coordinator works closely with the Local Forum organizing committee to create an agenda that is responsive to local needs.

2. The following text in endnote 4 be removed from Concept XII on page 73 of the *Twelve Concepts for World Service*: Bill here, apparently inadvertently, used the phrase “in action and spirit,” instead of “in thought and action,” that appears elsewhere in both the Conference Charter and the statement of Concept XII.

3. The following text be removed from the Concept XI essay on page 58 of *Twelve Concepts for World Service*: - Women workers present still another problem. Our Headquarters is pretty much a man's world. Some men are apt to feel, unconsciously, that they are women's superiors, thus producing a reflex reaction in the gals. Then, too, some of us — of both sexes — have been emotionally damaged in the area of man-woman relations. Our drinking has made us wrongly dependent on our marriage partners. We have turned them into our "moms" and "pops," and then we have deeply resented that situation. Perhaps maladjustment has taken still other turns which leave us with a hangover of hostility that we are apt to project into any man-woman relatedness that we undertake.

It is possible for these forces to defeat the good working partnerships we would like to have. But if we are fully aware of these tendencies they can be the more easily overcome, and forgiven. We can be aware also that any sound working relation between adult men and women must be in the character of a partnership, a non-competitive one in which each partner complements the other. It is not a question of superiority or inferiority at all. Men, for example, because they are men, are apt to be better at business. But suppose we replaced our six women staff members with six men? In these positions could the men possibly relate themselves so uniquely and so effectively to our Fellowship as the women? Of course not. The women can handle this assignment far better, just because they *are* women.

4. Endnote 10, on page 59 in *Twelve Concepts for World Service* in the Concept XI essay be revised by the Publishing Department with language noting that two paragraphs have been removed from the Concept XI essay and are available upon request from the G.S.O. Archives Department as a reference to A.A. history.

5. *The A.A. Service Manual* be revised per existing schedule after the 2016 General Service Conference and that a new edition be published biannually (i.e., every two years), beginning in 2017 at a savings of approximately \$45,000 - 50,000 in alternate years when a new edition is not published. The next edition

of *The A.A. Service Manual* is to be published in 2018 (after the Conference), the subsequent edition in 2020 (after the Conference), etc.

6. The category title “Online Meetings” be changed to “Online Meetings/Online Groups” on page vi and vii in the A.A. Directories.

Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities

The term “Special Needs” be removed from the name of the Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities and throughout the committee’s Composition, Scope and Procedure. The new name of the committee will be the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

Trustees

If a vacancy for a regional trustee occurs prior to September 1 in the first year, then an election for a three-year term would occur at the following General Service Conference (GSC) for the affected region. If a vacancy for a regional trustee occurs between September 1 in the first year and August 31 of the third year then the delegates from the affected region would be given an option to hold an election for a six-year or five-year term, or leave the position vacant, depending on when the vacancy occurs. Regardless of whether the term was for three, five or six years, the regional trustee would be expected to serve two years on one of the two operating corporation boards.

Floor Action

1. General Service Conference delegates be provided a copy of the final approved annual General Service Office and A.A. Grapevine budgets with the pre-Conference material for all future Conferences.
2. The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda Review and Selection Process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference.

3.The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference create a plan to translate Conference background material, considering all possible methods, with a progress report to be forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Policy/ Admissions that describes the process and costs.

Some of the Additional Considerations

Cooperation With the Professional Community

The committee discussed the manner in which we exhibit at professional conferences and suggested that the trustees' Committee on C.P.C./Treatment/Accessibilities explore ways to integrate technology into C.P.C. exhibits, such as:

Adding a digital response or QR code to the back cover of C.P.C. pamphlets.

Adding a digital response or QR code to a tabletop display.

Developing an audiovisual presentation for continuous screening at professional conferences.

QR code - a machine-readable code consisting of an array of black and white squares, typically used for storing URLs or other information for reading by the camera on a smartphone.

Grapevine

The committee reviewed the 2016 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and requested that the Grapevine office provide an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future to the 2017 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.

The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2017 or later:

Stories by Atheist and Agnostic A.A. members (working title)

A collection of stories by A.A. members who are atheist or agnostic, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

Steps Four and Five (working title)

Members tell helpful, hopeful stories about how they did Step Four and/or Step Five and how it changed their lives—from previously published stories in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

International Conventions/Regional Forums

The committee noted ongoing efforts by the General Service Board and the General Service Office to review all aspects of the 2015 International Convention in order to plan effectively for the 2020 International Convention in Detroit, Michigan.

Special notice was made that over 700 A.A. members who are deaf participated in the 2015 International Convention.

Literature

The committee considered a request to develop a plain language version of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, and took no action. While sympathetic to the spirit of the request, the committee agreed that developing a plain-language Big Book was not appropriate at this time.

The committee suggests that the trustees' Literature Committee explore the need for expanding the availability of "plain-language" recovery literature.

Policy/Admissions

Committee Considerations:

The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference, as well as the General Service Office, explore ways to provide information to local translation committees and encourage a coordinated effort among local committees in translating Conference background into French and Spanish.

Public Information

The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Public Information explore ways of providing guidance to the Fellowship on carrying the A.A. message to the public online and in social media.

Recommendations That Did Not Result In Conference Advisory Actions

FINANCE - The committee recommended that the maximum annual limit for individual contributions to [he General Service Board from A.A. members be increased from to \$5,000.

POLICY/ADMISSIONS - The committee recommended that background material continue to be provided in English because it is not feasible at this time to move forward with translation or Conference background into French and Spanish

Floor Actions That Did Not Result in Conference Advisory Actions

That the trustees' Committee on Public Information begin work on a Google-for-Nonprofit account to be used for carrying the A.A. message to the public. This request is limited to "You Tube for Nonprofit" to share video content and "Google Ad Words" which will help in search result placement. The trustees' committee is asked to provide a progress report to the 2017 Conference Committee on Public Information. (Not approved)

That the standing agenda items on the Conference Finance Committee which read as follows:

I. To review the contribution for delegate expense for the General Service Conference-

~~2.~~ To approve individual bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members.

~~3.~~ To review maximum annual contribution to [he General Service Board from an individual A.A-

member of \$3,000.00 be removed as standing items on the Conference Finance Committee agenda.

(Not approved)

That a subscription app for La Vina be created with the same technical components as the A.A.

Grapevine app (Withdrawn by submitter)

That 2-3 hours be provided in the 67th Conference agenda to permit the Conference to consult on matters brought forward by the trustees of the General Service Board. (Not approved)

~~4.~~ That the minutes of the General Service Board meetings be posted to the General Service Conference dashboard as soon as they are approved so that all Area delegates have equal access to the minutes.

(Withdrawn by submitter)