

Georgia State Service Assembly

DuBose Porter Center, Dublin

Sunday January 16, 2022

1. Delegate's Sharing: Tracy M.

Good Morning

It is so wonderful to be here with a room full of Trusted Servants at our first Face to Face Assembly since January 2020.

I am Honored to be able to serve as your Panel 72 Area 16 Delegate. I would like to welcome everyone that is able to be with us this morning. How many folks do we have that are here for their first Assembly? I want to give a special welcome to all our new GSR's and DCM's. I am so grateful that you are here today.

We go to great lengths to be available and show up where we are needed. We carefully plan our yearly Budgets for our Area Service Committees so that we can go out to the Prisons, Treatment Centers, Military Bases, and Hospitals. We have also gotten much better at providing information on a virtual format. I am grateful for the technology we have available to us today. We will continue to move forward taking advantage of technology, and also suiting up and showing up in person, for the next suffering Alcoholic whenever possible.

The service work we do in Alcoholics Anonymous is about more much more than a location. Being willing to be a Trusted Servant has a commitment of time and sacrifice that comes with it. There are benefits to being in a room where our energy and enthusiasm can be experienced. When we look at what it cost to travel and meet, I hope we always consider how valuable the Fellowship of the Spirit truly is.

I remember the first time I came to Assembly in Macon. I'd heard about Assembly in my home group's Business Meeting, and they encouraged me to attend. I was about 6 months sober and already sponsoring women and taking them through the steps. I came to the Saturday night Speaker meeting and Charlie Y. from Savannah was telling his story. There were hundreds of AA members laughing and enjoying being together. The energy in that room was amazing. I knew I wanted to be of service even though I still had a lot of fear.

Since our last Assembly

We have had the opportunity to see that we can adapt to whatever means necessary to get the work of Alcoholics Anonymous done. Area 16 held the first Virtual Prepaid Convention in October.

- The 2021 Prepaid Committee, faced with the challenges of converting to a virtual format, stepped up and along with our Web Committee and Communications Committee met those challenges. The Speakers were amazing, and the workshops and other events made for a full Program. The 68th GA Prepaid Chair will give their Final Report later this morning.
- We look forward to the 69th Prepaid Convention in Dublin in October. You can register at their table here at Assembly or online at aageorgia.org.
- The DCM Planning Meeting was held virtually in November. The DCM's approved the Budget for 2022.

Committee assignments were given for Pre-Conference in April.

We welcomed our new Area Service Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs. You will have a chance to approve them a little later this morning.

Rotating out were, Chuck H., Micah G., and Mike S. Our Area has been so fortunate to have them serve.

- I want to remind everyone that in May at our Assembly we will be taking Nominations for Secretary and Treasurer for Area 16.
- Today, I am grateful to get out and be with the fellowship! Suiting up and showing up today is a privilege. The connection we have when we are together in person is powerful.

District 17's Cluster Forum was the first Face to Face AA event that I attended as Incoming Delegate and it was a Celebration. I saw gratitude for recovery and dedication to Service in District 17's Presentations and our Area Service Committee's Presentations as well.

GSO

Our General Service Office began returning to the office in October.

The GSO staff is hard at work and things are beginning to return to normal.

I am learning more about the volume of correspondence and work that is done through our General Service Office.

- I attended a meeting with our Southeastern Trustee Tom H. and other Delegates and Alternate Delegates.
- Bob W., General Manager and Carolyn W. NTD on AAWS, each gave presentations and answered our questions directly.

Bob W. shared about the focus on improving "Service Standards", regarding response times on emails and phone calls and service training.

Some of the topics addressed were:

- Plain Language Big Book,
- New Service Material- "Safety and A. A." flyer

- Current Financials.

As a new Delegate, I am so grateful to Tom H. our Southeastern Regional Trustee for his support

Treatment/Accessibilities Committee.

As your Delegate, I have been assigned to the Treatment/Accessibilities Committee. Our Conference Committee has met, and we are looking forward to serving together.

Our Agenda Items for Conference (tentatively) are:

Treatment and Accessibilities

- Review progress report on the pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic."
- Review progress report on pamphlet of "For Professionals: Bridging the Gap to Help Alcoholic."
- Review progress report on military audio interviews.
- Review contents and format of Treatment Kit and Workbook.
- Review contents and format of Accessibilities Kit and Workbook.

New PO Box for Contributions

A separate post office box has been established for Seventh Tradition contributions:

GSO

Post Office Box 2407

James A Farley Station

New York, NY 10116-2407

You may also make your Contributions online at www.aa.org

This change will enable us to process contributions much more efficiently and at a significant savings to the Fellowship.

To be clear, only contributions go to the new box. All other Correspondence will still go to PO Box 459

Box 4-5-9 Winter 2021

This issue highlights important A.A. events, both in the U.S./Canada and around the world. The issue also reports on some developments at G.S.O. that will help A.A. members in custody and A.A. members on the outside to connect more quickly and to share experience, strength, and hope through correspondence.

Highlights from A.A.W.S

The A.A. World Services Board met on Friday, December 3, 2021, at the General Service Office in New York, NY, with a videoconference/in-person hybrid meeting.

General Manager's Report

The general manager noted the recent Employee Recognition virtual event and the milestone anniversaries of employees celebrated for 5, 10, 15, 20 years of employment at GSO, remarking that their dedication to the mission of Alcoholics Anonymous is unparalleled.

The ongoing efforts to infuse A.A. principles into the daily life and operations of our office continue. The first in-house GSO 1728 meeting will be held on Friday, December 10. It will be held virtually and continue to be held on the second Friday of every month.

Archives

- From January through October, the Archives staff responded to approximately 605 inquiries. Staff is currently aiding two International A.A. entities with their research inquiries. Italy has reached out to us for information about the start of A.A. in Milan and Japan has contacted us for materials on the history of A.A. in that country for their archives. These are extensive and time-consuming projects. Approximately 20 cubic feet of unprocessed materials from past International Conventions were brought into the archives for future processing. The archivist participated at the 65th Ohio State Convention, held on August 20 – 22, 2021. The theme of the Convention was “Our Great Responsibility,” which was the topic of the Archives presentation

Operations:

- Fellowship Connection Release 3.0 launched in October with:
 - New, user-friendly Dashboard
 - Ability to automatically provide end dates to outgoing position holders
 - Ability for area registrars to see when the service kits were ordered
 - Ability to choose to receive digital or physical kits or to opt out of receiving any kits. The last phase of Release 3.0 is to provide area registrars the option to bulk upload information to Fellowship Connection.
- **Technology/Communications/Services**

Website – The newly updated Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) website www.aa.org has launched.

G.S.O. coordinates many services that help groups and members fulfill their purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers, and aa.org plays an important role in that work. Among the many benefits of our new website, it will serve as a significant resource for A.A. members, those seeking help from A.A., professionals working with alcoholics, the media, and the public at large. Above all, it will provide consistent information about Alcoholics Anonymous.

Progress report on Meeting Guide App: The App team launched the third major application upgrade since App development was handed over to Foster Made. The App team has received positive feedback regarding this latest release, which included features requested by our users and entities, as well as code updates.

Conference

The Equitable Distribution of Workload (EDW) process has overwhelmed the Conference assignment.

By September 15, the Conference desk received 178 proposed agenda items forms, some on the same items, which were all processed and forwarded to the appropriate committee/board for the fourth quarter General Service Board weekend. The first Conference planning meeting was held November 10.

Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment

With the opening of events in the coming year, the C.P.C. coordinator put together a list including past events where we have exhibited and outlining upcoming opportunities to determine where we can be a presence in carrying information about A.A. to professionals. This list was reviewed by the trustees' C.P.C. Committee at their meeting October 31. The C.P.C. coordinator looks forward to working with local area C.P.C. committee chairs to volunteer for these events.

Corrections – The new Corrections Correspondence System (C.C.S.) launched in September 2021. The new C.C.S. provides an expedient process whereby we can match volunteers and persons in custody automatically, obtain statistics and reports, and generate personalized letters that can be sent via email to outside A.A. members and via postal mail to persons in custody. Since the launch, 267 were paired that for a myriad of reasons had been sitting in the old system. Phase Two will focus on added features and increased functionality.

Group Services – the Group Services coordinator and Online Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous. The vision moving forward is continued support with each other in making Twelfth Step work possible. Group Services is working with management to finalize the plan for the 2021 Virtual Day of Sharing with at least ten other Twelve Step organizations.

Literature

A [few](#) of the preliminary Agenda Items for Literature are:

- Review draft language regarding safety and A.A. to be included in *Living Sober* and “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship.”
- Review progress report regarding development of a Fourth Edition of the book “*Alcohólicos Anónimos*” (Spanish)
- Review progress report regarding the translation of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition) into plain and simple language.
- Review progress report regarding development of a Fifth Edition of the book, English
- Discuss the existing version of the pamphlet “Twelve Traditions Illustrated.”
- Discuss changes to the text of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* directed by the 71st General Service Conference.

Services available through G.S.O.’s Literature desk including providing resources to local A.A. committees, regional correspondence (Southeast), and secretary support to committees, continue to achieve success. This is the time of year when new panels of trusted servants are elected and G.S.O. service desks, including Literature, welcome new chairs and provide service material to support their local efforts.

Nominating

The Nominating assignment coordinated the work of many groups on revisions to current Nominating procedures and on scheduling interviews with new Class A candidates.

Public Information

A few of the preliminary Agenda Items for PI:

- Review 2021 annual reports from the trustees’ Public Information Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org.
- Discuss feasibility study report on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms.
- Review progress report on the development and implementation of a G.S.O. podcast.

As of October 2021, a draft podcast pilot episode has been recorded and is being edited within our Communication Services Department. This will ultimately be reviewed by an internal Working Group as well as the AAWS corporate board and the trustees’ Public Information Committee

Regional Forums, International Conventions and Accessibilities

The East Central Regional Forum, held November 19-21, marked the completion of four successful virtual regional forums this year

Forums in 2022 will return to in-person settings and may include a virtual component. In addition, planning for a virtual Special Forum focused on remote communities is underway with partners from Argentina and Chile.

FINANCE

The board accepted the October Finance department report highlighting the following information as of September 30:

- Actual contributions are \$7,416,647, which is \$293,439 more than this time last year.
- Gross literature sales are \$8,613,803 which is \$1,477,745 more than this time last year.
- Payroll and benefits are \$6,978,975, which is \$567,919 less than this time last year.
- Total operating expense is \$11,543,559 which is \$512,887 less than this time last year.
- 2021 includes depreciation while 2020 does not.
- Surplus for the first nine months of 2021 is \$1,448,089 (The surplus is attributable primarily to greater than budgeted literature sales).
- Operating cash was \$1,687,249 which represents 1.3 months of operating expenses.
- As of October 15, operating cash is \$1,551,246, which represents 1.2 months of operating expenses

Update Supply chain, paper, print and delivery disruptions 2021 – 2022:

- Members and IGCO's (Intergroups and Central Offices) were notified the disruptions and delays are expected to continue. This is an industry-wide, world-wide issue.
- Our Production and Member Services teams are actively addressing in myriad ways. Contact Member Services for help in ordering by emailing memberservices@aa.org

The Board Recommendations from Publishing:

- That the eBook Our Great Responsibility in English, French and Spanish be sold at a list price of \$9.99.
- That the reduced shipping test pilot be implemented as policy for the Publishing Department and requested that appropriate advanced announcement be sent to Central Offices and Intergroups by G.S.O. management.

Technology/Communication/Services (TCS)

- The digital production manager gave a demonstration of the new aa. org website scheduled to launch on December 20. Continued work will follow the soft launch, including ability to listen to books on the site and download PSAs along with refining search, accessibility and reporting capabilities.

- The Group Services coordinator shared the newly completed New Group Form, which is being translated. New features include the option to list a meeting as in-person or virtual per the advisory action, “The U.S./Canada General Service Structure recognize online groups and encourage their participation, listing those groups who ask to be listed within the group’s preferred district and area, with the default option being the location of the group’s primary contact.
- ” Other additions included hyperlinks: a free subscription to Box 4-5-9, a digital group handbook, lists of area registrars, and area websites.
- Next to be updated is the Alcoholics Anonymous Group Information Change Form. met with key stakeholders. The DR/ BCP is expected to be completed for the committee’s review in February 2022.

Grapevine Highlights

One of the preliminary Agenda items for Grapevine will be:

- *Discuss the wide-ranging impact the Preamble change has had on our A.A.Fellowship.*
- Financially AA Grapevine is trending ahead of budget and ahead of prior year on sales of both subscriptions and literature.
- La Viña is trending ahead of budget on subscriptions and on budget for costs which are below the year prior.
- The AA message is certainly seeing growth in where and how it is carried. Additional outreach via Instagram and the new Podcast have generated fantastic traffic increases to both website and store.
- 5200 people have listened to the Podcast.
- **Instagram account** for AA Grapevine has 4,752 follows to date, and has had 110,000 impressions to date. La Vina’s Instagram has just over 500 followers and is trending interestingly at about 10% of the English version which is comparable to what we see in print and online
- Prayer and Meditation is a proving to be a popular success.
- Thanks to the fantastic cooperation of the Corrections Desk and Grapevine Staff we are now directly receiving the list of inmates who have reached out for help from AA and can report that the GV is officially at a deficit of carry the message subscriptions.

GV has received a list of over 2000 requests from the Corrections desk, and they have only 1,200 English “Carry the Message” Grapevine Subscriptions and 401 La Vina subscriptions in the pool. Please let those know that contributed their subscriptions that they are making it to prisoners and there is a need for more.

- **Additional Activities**

The A.A.W.S. Board reviewed General Service Conference proposed agenda item submissions from the Fellowship for consideration.

1. The A.A.W.S. Board to create an Intergroup-Central Office Committee (IGCO) manned by a non-rotating staff member.
 - The submission was tabled for discussion during A.A.W.S. Executive Session.
2. That the General Service Conference consider a proposed agenda item to produce the Service Manual, including the 12 Concepts, in a compact disc (CD), audio format, as has been done for the "12 and 12" and the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
 - The A.A.W.S. board took no action to forward this to the General Service Conference. Format changes are within the purview of the A.A.W.S. board. Therefore, the request and background will be sent to Publishing department for consideration. It was noted that we are consistently keeping front of mind the necessity of making available all A.A. literature in print, audio, and visual formats whenever possible.
3. For the General Service Conference, thus the entire Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, to discuss the most equitable and fair pricing model for both A.A.W.S. and Central Office/Intergroups
 - The submission was tabled for discussion during A.A.W.S. Executive Session

A few of the Proposed agenda items agreed to be forwarded to the 72nd G.S.C., details pending the EDW process.

- Reconsider use of the term "person in custody" in A.A. literature.
- Consider request to revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" to reflect shared experience on service sponsorship.
- Consider request to revise the pamphlet "The A.A. Group" to reflect the importance of the group as a "spiritual entity" as stated in the Long Form of Tradition Five.
- Consider requests that the chapter titled "The Doctor's Opinion" in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition.
- Consider request to revise text in the chapter "Getting plenty of rest" in the booklet *Living Sober*.
- Consider request to add a historical disclaimer to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.
- Consider request to restore a paragraph in the story "Freedom from Bondage" in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

- Consider request that all proposed changes to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* be handled in footnotes.
- Consider requests to limit changes to the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- Discuss request to make A.A. literature changes slowly and with A.A.'s primary purpose in mind.

As we move forward in this new year, I know that as our Fellowship faces challenges, we also have new opportunities to Carry the Message of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our willingness to work together is vital to our future.

A.A.'S LEGACY OF SERVICE by BILL W.

Our Twelfth Step—carrying the message—is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die