

Georgia State Service Assembly January 2023 Delegate's Sharing

My name is Tracy and I am honored to serve as your Area 16, Panel 72 Delegate. Welcome to our first Assembly of 2023.

I would like to thank Tamera and Melissa and all the volunteers that make our Assembly possible, our Taper Lee, and the staff here at the OFTC.

General Service Conference (GSC):

Subcommittee on Conference Improvements: The subcommittee chair shared initial review of Conference evaluations and plans to focus on the developing of an Illness and Injury Contingency Plan for the General Service Conference. The subcommittee plans to explore voting options that will allow a Conference Member to continue participation during the Conference week if they are physically unable to attend the Conference sessions.

Equitable Distribution of Workload: The GSC 2022 Subcommittee on EDW is prioritizing a focus on how to improve year-two in service to the General Service Conference. They reviewed the 2022 Conference feedback. The subcommittee recommended using virtual meeting technologies before Conference Week to hold a joint committee meeting to discuss new EDW items.

Document Translation: We have a new Document Translations Manger that joined GSO in October. She will immediately assume the responsibility of project management of all document translation needs for G.S.O. She will also participate in the final recruiting of the additional in-house Spanish and French translators which we hope to have in place as soon as possible.

Simultaneous Translation of Conference Background: Our General Manager noted the adjustments to deadlines to receive materials sooner and expanded on the recent onboarding of a Document Translation Manager to support efforts to distribute Conference Background simultaneous in English, French, and Spanish.

Literature: Plain Language Big Book PAIs: The trustee's' Literature Committee agreed to forward to the 2023 Conference Literature Committee all new proposed agenda items related to the Plain Language Big Book as one grouped item. The committee also discussed requests from some members regarding access to the draft of the Plain Language Big Book. After due consultation, the committee agreed to provide a monitored, "closed" reading room for Conference members only during the 2023 General Service Conference, where Conference Literature Committee members will be given first viewing of draft chapters in a controlled environment.

The Trustee's' Literature Committee reviewed proposed agenda items related to the changes approved by the 2021 General Service Conference to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and noted the importance and interest of the Advisory Actions to the Fellowship. The trustees' Literature committee agreed to forward to the 2023 Conference Literature Committee all proposed agenda items related to the changes in the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* as one grouped item with the suggestion that the Conference Literature Committee consider forwarding the item to the General Service Areas for wider discussion looking toward a policy setting whether to edit AA's cofounder's words and, if so, then how to edit them in our current literature. The agenda item would be discussed by the Fellowship during the 2023-2024 Conference year and considered by the Conference Committee on Literature at the 2024 General Service Conference.

Communication Services Department: The Meeting Guide APP version 4.0 was released in September, concluding many months of design, development, user research, and testing. We are pleased that thus far no significant "bugs" have been reported. Based on the feedback we received, users regard the latest version as an intuitive and natural progression of the user interface and APP functionality. Now that version 4.0 has been released successfully, GSO is focused on making "back-end" and data improvements.

The CSD continues its work with Public Information and Publishing to create a GSO Podcast:

- GSO is working with developing a timeline for scheduling and planning episodes.
- Crafting an "elevator pitch" mission statement for GSO podcast like the AAGV's "People sharing their experience, strength and hope on their recovery from alcoholism." Something like, "People sharing experience, strength and hope on the services offered to the Fellowship of A.A. by the General Service Office."

CSD is working with the subcommittee on AA Membership Survey to communicate and disseminate the results of the survey to the membership and others on www.aa.org . Following the recommendations of the subcommittee on the membership survey, we will work with a graphic designer and website vendor to create a mock-up of the new survey results page.

Newsletters: Communications Services Department: Clorinda and her team have assumed responsibility for all "Newsletters" published by GSO. These include *Box 4-5-9*, *About AA*, *LIM*, and *Sharing from Behind the Walls*.

GSO Tours: On October 5th, the Office resumed receiving visitors again after a two and a half years hiatus. In just a little over three weeks, our GSO welcomed 46 visitors, including several international members. In the brief time, AA members came from as far as Tokyo, England, Germany, Florida, Guatemala, Maine as well as NYC and New Jersey. The Office shared that, while it has been busy, it has also been rewarding to

re-establish this vital spiritual opportunity to welcome visitors to our General Service Office.

We have also taken a further significant step in moving ahead from the implications of the pandemic. As of September 12th, remote work for all employees is holding at a maximum of two days per week. Depending on individual employee preferences and roles, several are now working in the office four or five days per week. This fits well with welcoming visitors as the office is now quite full on a regular basis.

AA Grapevine Upcoming Magazine Topics for 2023:

- January: Spiritual Awakening,
- February: Making Amends,
- March: Getting Involved in AA Service
- April: AA and Families.

Upcoming Grapevine Books, For the Spring:

- Home Group Book
-

AA La Viña Upcoming Magazine Topics 2023:

Jan – Feb: Prayer and Meditation,

- Mar – April: People who Ordinarily Would Not Mix

May – June: Relapse Prevention

Instagram / Podcast Update, thru September 30, 2022:

- GV Followers 8,403 and LV 1,012
- Podcast Downloads have exceeded 250,000.
- Mondays at aagrapevine.org/podcast

International Convention - Regional Forums :

Regional Forums: There were around 400 attendees with many first-time participants at our Southeastern Regional Forum in December in New Orleans. There were presentations and workshops on a variety of topics. There were opportunities for sharing and asking questions of our GSO Staff and Past and Present Trustees in attendance. Tom and I attended the Forum.

Virtual North-South Connections Special Forum and the 2022 Pacific Regional Forum

The committee reviewed the summary of the evaluation questionnaires for the 2022 and a proposal to provide technology services for interactive, online, real-time access to in-person Regional Forums. The committee had a robust discussion about the pros and cons of holding hybrid regional forums. The committee voted to continue in-person-only regional forums. However, the committee agreed that it may be useful to revisit the subject in a year.

2025 International Convention Consultant Update:

The first dispatch of the 2025 International Convention Membership Survey has been completed and we are evaluating the results. While air travel in the US/Canada has generally stabilized, the international implications of air travel due to COVID – especially in Asia – warrant ongoing monitoring. Within Vancouver, accommodations are plentiful, and the 2025 International Convention logo will soon be unveiled in an invitational flyer.

2025 International Convention Member Engagement Survey: The committee reviewed the survey results and noted that only 24% of the survey respondents indicated interest in a hybrid component to the 2025 International Convention. The consensus of the committee was that the options for consideration would be either: 1.) no hybrid component, or 2.) a hybrid component limited to the three big meetings plus the flag ceremony. This item will be included on our next Member Engagement Survey. Our International Convention consultant, provided a brief overview of recent activities in the planning process for the 2025 International Convention, including:

- Processes regarding key vendor selection including RFP selection, and approach to vendor review,
- Suggestions for estimating our 2025 attendance (e.g., Founders' Day, ICYPAA, International Women's Conference),
- Considering the hotel situation, and in discussions with Airbnb, we are confident that we will have units sufficient to accommodate our attendees,
- Continuing discussions with international border personnel who want to be as helpful they can under the law, and
- Focusing on meetings with stadium production personnel.

Volunteer Management: They are organizing the volunteer committee (estimated to be between 3,000-5,000+ people).

Draft survey regarding use of various prayers at the International Convention: The committee reviewed and approved the survey as submitted. The committee requested that the actual survey be dispatched on November 15 with a December 15 deadline.

Nominating: Currently processing nominee information in preparation to elect the Trustee-At-Large, Canada and two regional trustees [Northeast and Southwest] and at the 73rd General Service Conference. There are no vacancies to fill next year for Class A Trustees.

Treatment Facilities / Accessibilities/Loners and Internationalists Meeting:

The committee reviewed a draft pamphlet "*For Professionals How A.A. 'Bridges the Gap' to Help Alcoholics*

"A.A. Guidelines on Remote Communities": The Staff Secretary shared about the ongoing progress on the A.A. Guidelines on Remote Communities.

International: The International desk is working on the 27th World Service Meeting Final Report. The World Service Meeting, that was held Sept. 27 – October 2, serves as a forum for sharing the experience, strength, and hope of Delegates who come from all

parts of the world. It seeks ways and means of carrying the AA message to the alcoholic who still suffers, in any nation and any language. It can also represent an expression of the worldwide Group Conscience. The meeting encourages the planning of sound service structures and exploration of expanding AA services to reach the alcoholic through internal communication, literature distribution, sponsorship, public information, community relations and institutions service.

Held every two years, in locations alternating between New York City and rotating between another member country. Our two trustees-at-large typically serve as delegates to these meetings. This year, there were 62 International Delegates representing 51 countries.

Online Groups: The Conference Committee discussed the request for a progress report from the General Service Board's Ad Hoc Committee on the Participation of Online Groups (POG) in the US and Canada Service Structure be included as background for the Conference Committee on Policy / Admissions in advance of the 73rd General Service Conference. The Chair of the ad hoc Committee confirmed that this request will be met. The ad hoc POG Committee has focused its work on developing and sending a survey to all US/Canada Delegates. The data is still coming in - there have been many requests for workshops, town halls, and special meetings to report out on the work to date (as well as to hear additional perspectives on this topic). For example, a workshop was conducted at the 27th World Service Meeting and additional sharing opportunities have been provided at Regional Forums, as well.

AAWS Report on Self-support: Activities of the Self-support Subcommittee, included:

1. Incorporating Group search features in the online contribution portal,
2. Gathering stories received from GSO employees related to self-support, and
3. Compiling a report on Fellowship sharing on virtual baskets.

One specific improvement mentioned is that the member will no longer see the Group search feature unless they are making a Group contribution. This will decrease confusion when an individual member contributes.

Update on Contribution Flyer SMF-203: The committee had an extensive discussion on the flyer. The committee reviewed a revised draft, suggested editorial changes, and provided general comments. An updated draft will be forwarded to publishing with consideration that a black and white printer friendly version be available and that a contrast checker be used for readability as it relates to accessibility considerations.

Technology Services: Our Director of Technology Services evaluated vendors to conduct the Security Audit approved in the 2022 budget. Throughout October, the Technology team launched a month-long cybersecurity awareness program through KnowBe4. Each week short videos and games are automatically emailed to GSO employees with the content focused on security.

Public Information : The 2022 AA Membership Survey is completing the Delegate data collection and processing phase.

Every AA Membership Survey has been a current snapshot of a limited number of the total AA group population, based on a moment in time.

The committee would like to thank all the Area Delegates for their service and participation. While there were some difficulties in conducting the survey, perhaps it's a good time to remember ... progress not perfection.

Publishing Employees: GSO's Managing editor's final day as a full-time employee in the Publishing department was October 7. GSO is actively recruiting a new Managing Editor. In the interim, our Editorial Process Manager has stepped up as interim project-management point person, as are retired Staff employees.

"Plain Language" Big Book: Four new plain-language draft chapters have been delivered to the TABB Committee for review. The Writer continues moving forward and meeting biweekly with Publishing Director and Editorial project editor.

Publication Operations: Worldwide paper, printing, trucking, and other disruptions continue to beset the supply chain, causing backorders of books and other items throughout the publishing industry.

It is recommended that literature be ordered from your State Office or Intergroup or Central Office

AA's "online store" continues to notify members of any backorders when ordering (which has proven to be quite helpful).

Additions to our GSO Staff:

We welcomed Karina Cascante, Group Services, Michael Riley, CPC, and Misha Quill, Public Information as they joined the ranks of GSO staff.

Corrections: Corrections Service of Canada (CSC) is eager to work with AA to raise awareness as to what AA has to offer for the alcoholic reaching out for help, such as the Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS). Discussion continues how to make A.A.W.S and AA Grapevine literature available on tablets for those members in custody. Corrections desk has put out a "Call to Action" for all trusted servants in Canada to increase the awareness and participation of the Corrections Correspondence Service among our members who are in custody. We have a waitlist of members on the outside waiting to be of service.

Dr. Al Mooney, Class A Trustee, was appointed to be the chair of the working group with the hopes of getting tablets into the Canadian facilities. The group is also inquiring about having virtual meetings.

The committee revisited the request forwarded by the 72nd Conference Committee on Corrections to update the section "Singleness of Purpose" in the Corrections Workbook to reflect current terminology.

Young People: We have requested submissions of video content created by young people on how they carry the message to other Young People who may benefit from our life-giving solution.

Support is needed to help our young AA population know about this project: The landing page with details, follows: <https://www.aa.org/young-peoples-video-project> .

“Young People and AA”: The committee received a report from Publishing Department about the update of the pamphlet “*Young People and AA*” including the selection of a cover and the completion of the text.

Finance and Budget-Unaudited, Third Quarter performance stats are in:

Contributions - Unaudited:

- Year to September 30, 2022 Seventh Tradition Contributions are \$7,386,529. This represents approximately 67% of the 2022 budget of \$11,000,000 (with 75% of the year elapsed). Customarily, the Fourth Quarter experiences an increased tempo due to Gratitude month, Alkathon proceeds, and year-end contributions.

Literature - Unaudited:

- September marked the fourth consecutive month of gross literature sales more than \$1 million - a milestone which has not been reached in several years. However, supply chain disruptions throughout the worldwide paper and printing industries continue to unfavorably impact the manufacturing cost of A.A.W.S. literature.

Expense - Unaudited:

- Year to September 30 payroll and benefits expense is \$6,890,148, which is 70% of the budget amount with 75% of the year elapsed (so, we are ahead of budget).
- Total operating expense year to September 30 is \$12,638,367 which is 72% of the budget amount with 75% of the year elapsed (a slightly favorable variance).

Overall Deficit or Surplus:

- Our overall operating deficit year to September 30 is \$545,496 compared to a budgeted deficit of \$855,032. Given the circumstances, we are ahead of budget.

Reserve Fund - Unaudited:

- As detailed by Kevin Prior, our non-alcoholic Treasurer of the General Service Board, our Reserve Fund continues to hover at just under 8 months (7.67 to be more specific) and we'll be developing our forecasted General Service Board, AA World Service Board, and AA Grapevine Board budgets for 2023, respectively.

Office Operations: The Fellowship Connection (FC) training video for Area Registrars is now completed! The video was posted on FC portal in October and a communication to this effect was sent out to Area Registrars.

Archives Committee: The Committee plans to curate a new digital exhibit on A.A.'s earliest pamphlets from the 1940s. Draft of digital exhibit completed in 2022: then to be translated in 2023 following archives budget approval.

Note: Archives projects are typically long-term, sometimes spanning years through completion. Please keep in mind that factors such as the inordinate number of research queries, and assisting onsite visitors or researchers impact our projected goals.

For those who plan to visit our GSO, a new exhibit commemorating the history of International Conference of Young People in A.A. (ICYPAA) was installed in September. If you travel with a group, please contact the Office ahead of time at: gsotours@aa.org or (212) 870-3430.

Cooperation with the Professional Community:

Pamphlet for Mental Health Professionals: The committee received a verbal report from the working group on the development of a pamphlet for mental health professionals. Ten mental health professionals have agreed to be interviewed to provide the basis of the pamphlet..

The committee reviewed a progress report on the LinkedIn page. The committee noted the usefulness of the LinkedIn page to share information about AA and resources with professionals.

The committee reviewed a list of potential CPC exhibits for 2023. The committee reviewed the CPC exhibit evaluations from local A.A. volunteers and discussed the effectiveness of CPC exhibits at national professional conferences.

The fall 2022 issue of *About AA* is available
Box 459 Winter Issue is now available.

ROUND ROBIN DISCUSSION

It has been suggested that Literature items be forwarded to Areas for wider discussion, looking toward setting a Policy on how and whether to edit A.A. Founder's words in our current literature. I plan to have a Round Robin Discussion on some of the recurring Agenda Items regarding Literature. Details will be sent out before our May Assembly. This will be for all members to participate.

Our General Service Structure is our gift from our Co-Founders. I am honored to be a part of that General Service Structure. I believe I have a right to be grateful. There is a priceless freedom that comes with that right.

On the last page of the *AA Service Manual*, Bill ends with these few sentences:

“Freedom under God to grow in his likeness and image will ever be the quest of Alcoholics Anonymous. May our General Service Conference be always seen as a chief symbol of this cherished liberty. To a man, we of A.A. believe that our freedom to serve is truly the freedom by which we live-the freedom in which we have our being.

I am looking forward to 2023 and the opportunities that our Area has to participate in Alcoholics Anonymous. Let's get as many members as we can involved in carrying the message.

Thank you for allowing me to serve!

Tracy Miller
Area 16 Panel 72
Delegate

