

**Pacific Regional Trustee Report
January/February 2022
General Service Board Weekend**

Greetings, Pacific Region!

The January General Service Board Weekend is always my favorite! It is the time that the Delegate Committee Chairs join us, and they always bring excitement, ideas and the voice of the fellowship! Most participants, Trustees, Staff, Delegate Chairs, came to Brooklyn in person, however we also had participation virtually. Virtual participation did not go as smoothly as the October meeting. We tried to do conference call in for the virtual participants and sound was not up to par.

One of the highlights of the weekend for me was a Trustee 3-hour Strategic Planning Session which was just a beginning of an updated Strategic Plan. The things that stood out most for us, was the need to focus on the bigger “rocks” instead of getting bogged down in minutia. At times, there is just so much to do that we spend too much time in the details and maybe should look at restructuring our Board Weekends to be more efficient and give us the time needed to have more visionary conversations.

This weekend we again did town hall style meetings with everyone. This really helps all to hear what is on everyone’s minds. I will include some of that sharing further on in my report.

A.A. World Services

Accessibilities/Treatment

The assignment has resumed work on the Military audio interview project. Two retired military consultants were selected from Canada and the U.S. The consultants will work with the TCPC/TA Subcommittee on Armed Forces audio interviews with gathering more interviews of A.A. members in active military duty, assisting with the development of a questionnaire for military interviews that includes topics such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), injuries, and barriers that sober alcoholics on active military duty face in getting sober.

Group Services

The Group Services coordinator shared the newly completed New Group Form. 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 include hyperlinks: a free subscription to Box 4-5-9, a digital group handbook, lists of area registrars, and area websites. Also updated is the Change of Information Form, now titled “G.S.O. Group Information Change Form.” The D.C.M./D.C.M.C. form update will soon be complete.

The GSB Online Group Sub-Committee has met many times and will be giving a 30-minute report and power point presentation at the General Service Conference

Public Information

Phase one of the public information project “Alcoholics Anonymous 2021 English and Spanish TV PSA Distribution” was completed on December 1, 2021. The two most recent Conference approved broadcast-quality video PSAs are getting aired. The distribution and tracking for Canada require further preparation, but phase two will soon be complete regarding Canadian TV stations. As of December 31, 2021, the airings have reached 2,792.

Regional Forums

The Regional Forums assignment is coordinating plans for four in-person 2022 Regional Forums:

- May 13-15 ... Eastern Canada ... Charlottetown, P.E.I.
- June 3-5 ... Western Canada ... Winnipeg, MB
- Sept 16-18 ... Pacific ... Salt Lake City, UT
- Dec. 2-4 ... Southeast ... New Orleans, LA

Planning continues for a one-day virtual “North South Connections Special Forum” in mid-2022. The event is hosted by the General Service Board of the U.S. and Canada service structure. In addition, the G.S.O.s of Argentina and Chile are partners in the project. Participants from all four countries will share experiences on the theme “Beyond Language, Culture and Geography: Sobriety Within Everybody’s Reach.” The Special Forum is open to all interested parties, and interpretation will be available in English, Spanish, and French.

GSO

November 17, G.S.O. and AA Grapevine attended an Employee Recognition virtual event. The general manager highlighted the milestone anniversaries of employees who celebrated for 5, 10, 15, 20 years of employment at G.S.O., 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 the office continue. Many of the employees at G.S.O. are nonalcoholic friends of A.A. In a workplace survey, a number of employees expressed a desire to increase their knowledge of A.A.’s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service. As a result, the GM, along with the help of the staff coordinator, developed an in-house G.S.O. 1728 meeting, the first of which was held Friday, December 10. These meetings will be held virtually and continue the second Friday of every month. The virtual format is intended to encourage wide participation from all employees of A.A.W.S. and AAGV as well as trustees, nontrustee directors, and appointed committee members, providing the opportunity to learn and understand more about the boards and our various roles and responsibilities.

Sandra, our Director of Staff Services, announced that Eileen A. has accepted the position of GSO Staff member and began on Monday February 7, 2022. Although as yet undetermined, I expect that Eileen will begin her excellent journey at the Corrections Desk. If the past is any reliable indication of the future, additional details, as well as a brief bio, will be forthcoming in Box 4-5-9.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in Job postings at our GSO, please see:

- <https://www.aa.org/contact-gso> and scroll down to “Careers.”

There, you’ll find a current vacancy (with a stated preference for a bi-lingual candidate).

Technology Services

The Technology Services team played a significant role in the successful aa.org launch on December 20, 2021.

Progress report on Meeting Guide App: The App team launched the fourth 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. The number of connected entities continues to increase. Version upgrade, App v.3.9.0, includes:

- The attend option allows users to display only in-person or online meetings. Hybrid meetings will show up under both attend options.
- The ability to change the distance radius of the location search.
- The inclusion of online notes on Meeting Details provides a specific area to display such information as online platform meeting IDs and passwords.

Publishing

Mixed-Title Volume Discount Test Pilot: A six-month test pilot will run: March 31 - September 30, 2022. Orders will receive a quantity discount based on the quantity ordered for all titles combined --- as opposed to purchasing a quantity of one specific title.

Update on supply chain disruptions and backorders: The worldwide paper, printing, manufacturing, trucking and other delivery disruptions continue to beset the supply chain – and cause backorders of books and other items throughout the publishing industry. A communication was sent to the Fellowship regarding the paper supply disruption for printing the Big Book (English hardcover, B-1) causing the current backorder situation of this item in this format. The demand for the Big Book during the fourth quarter of 2021 was better than expected. Unfortunately, however, B-1 is currently out of stock. In addition, the department is unable to reprint expeditiously due to a serious supply-chain matter regarding disruption in the necessary paper delivery especially during the holidays. In the short-term, a solution is to schedule small printings.

Our Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, is available in 73 languages, with 28 languages pending and 20 new translations in progress. Our *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* book is available in 51 languages, with 3 translations pending.

Throughout 2021, the total number of translation reviews completed by our independent translation-evaluation services stands at 50 reviews across 21 languages. This signifies a significant uptick in review activity for 2021 over 2020, when reviews totaled 27 across 14 languages. As of December 31, 2021, items of A.A. literature are available in 111 languages, including Haitian Creole.

SMF-209 Safety Material Update

A working group was formed at G.S.O. to review and revise SMF-209 after the December board meeting. That revision was received by the board chair and general manager in the first week of January and immediately sent to legal counsel for review. Legal revision was received last week. A special meeting of A.A.W.S. will be called in February to discuss the revision and the members of the working group will be invited to participate in forming a group conscience around the revised materials.

Due to an apparent lack of clarity amongst interested parties in Service Material, the chair named a Service Material Subcommittee charged with the following tasks:

1. Review history of Service Material and how that has informed current processes.
2. Identify how the collective experience of A.A. is gathered in order to warrant production of service material and suggest possible improvements to that process.
3. Determine what defines Service Material and what determines whether a broader conscience is sought prior to publication.

AA Grapevine

AA Grapevine Upcoming Magazine Topics through 2022:

- February: Getting Through Tough Times,
- March: Emotional Sobriety,
- April: What's on Your Mind?
- May: 60th Anniversary of Our Twelve Concepts
- June: Oldtimers.

Upcoming Grapevine Books, Planned for 2022:

- *Fun in Sobriety* (due our April 23, 2022).

Top Three Selling Grapevine Books:

- *Emotional Sobriety*,
- *The Language of the Heart*, and
- *Prayer and Meditation*.
- Honorable mention: *Free on the Inside*.

AA La Viña Upcoming Magazine Topics (2021 – 2022):

- Mar. – Apr.: Newcomers,
- May - June: The Three Legacies
- July – Aug.: Prison Issue.

Upcoming La Viña Books, Planned for 2022:

- Production has begun on *Emotional Sobriety* in time for a Fall release.

Grapevine Podcasts:

Following the 71st General Service Conference, AA Grapevine has developed a pilot podcast program. With a new episode each Monday, Don and Sam (our current hosts) will interview a different member about their experience, strength and hope, in a casual “meeting after the meeting” manner.

- To nominate someone as a guest: podcast@aagrapevine.org .
- Come check us out, Mondays, at: <https://www.aagrapevine.org/podcast>

La Viña Strategic Planning Meeting

The full board met in person along with the Associate La Viña editor on December 4, 2021. The Board confirmed that the mission for La Viña is the same as the Grapevine mission. It was further determined that the Spanish speaking community may require tools developed specifically for the Spanish-speaking community. One of the primary commitments of the AAGVB was to engage the Spanish-speaking community in decisions impacting products and services made by the Board through a variety of avenues. This concern is the baseline of each of the strategic goals developed for La Viña.

Nominating and Governance

The chair reported the Nominating & Governance Committee received 37 resumes for the open NTD position. We narrowed the list down to 11 candidates for the August Quarterly Board meeting. Trustees’ Nominating Committee disqualified one of the 11 candidates, leaving 10 candidates in our pool. We started meeting virtually on September 9, 2021, to determine which candidates we would select for interviews. The Nominating & Governance committee selected 5 candidates for preliminary interviews held on October 6 & 7, 2021. From these interviews, we brought forth three finalists for interviews with the entire Grapevine Board. One of our finalists withdrew their name from consideration, leaving two candidates for us to interview on October 28, 2021. Following the interviews, we selected David S. to advance to Trustees’ Nominating as our recommendation. In addition to selecting a candidate for NTD, we also discussed a recommendation for the Class B and Class A positions opening due to rotation. For the Class B position, we recommended Tom H., Southeast Regional Trustee. For the class A Position, we recommended Molly A. The slate of directors for the Grapevine Board for approval at the 72nd General Service Conference includes all three names

Trustee Committees

General Service Conference

The list of Final Agenda Items has been completed ... subject to Floor Motions, of course. At present, our skilled Staff and able assistants – pretty much everyone, is pitching in to compile and translate the background material that was approved at our Winter Board meeting.

Ideally, within a week or so, the background material will be available on the AAWS Dashboard. If anyone has difficulty accessing the Dashboard, please contact conference@aa.org or try <https://support.hyperoffice.com/index.php/en/>

Equitable Distribution of Workload (EDW). 12 Items were redirected to 6 Conference Committees from the Trustee's Literature Committee through the EDW process. The subcommittee on EDW has a very thorough report of this past year's process and this will be sent to the Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions.

Evaluation Form for General Service Conference. The committee discussed the suggestion to include a question on the evaluation form related to the Equitable Distribution of Workload. The committee agreed to revise the form as follows:

(Add in prior to final summary page of Conference week questionnaire)

Equitable Distribution Workload

In what ways, pro and con, did the EDW pilot affect your experience of the conference?"

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value:

Comments:

The committee requested that the revised evaluation form be implemented for the 72nd General Service Conference.

Draft 2022 Conference Week Schedule:

The committee discussed the proposal to include an additional workshop-like session. The committee agreed to include a workshop "Your Third Legacy" on Sunday during the Conference.

The committee discussed the format of the standing workshop on The Warranties schedule and expressed appreciation for a diverse set of roles in the setting. The committee also considered a variety of settings and agreed to a fishbowl setting for the workshop session.

The committee also noted that the schedule's joint meetings would need to be adjusted to accommodate changes to support Conference committees receiving EDW items from the trustees' Committee on Literature. On this note, a joint committee meeting with the Trustees' Literature Committee and the receiving committees of EDW Items will take place at the GSC.

CPC

Health Care Media distribution process report:

The committee discussed a demonstration video on how to distribute PSAs on digital TV screens in offices, pharmacies, and community-based organizations with relevant messaging to viewers. The committee requested that the staff secretary continue efforts to develop a draft plan on PSA utilization in cooperation with the Public Information desk.

Treatment

“A.A. for the Older Alcoholic -- Never Too Late”:

The committee reviewed and discussed the progress report from the subcommittee on the pamphlet “A.A. for the Older Alcoholic -- Never Too Late.” The committee performed the first-round review of 84 stories and selected 23 stories to be part of a second-round review. The goal of the second round is to select the top 12 stories. The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities the 12 stories to review and identify any gaps in the targeted categories of the older alcoholic experience.

Corrections

The Publishing director reported to the committee that several contracts have been signed with five different vendors allowing distribution – via tablets – of A.A. literature to correctional facilities. A report was distributed reflecting that in one day over 500 items were made available to those behind the walls. It is anticipated that future reports will provide information broken down by area/province and literature item. The Grapevine publisher reported to the committee that Grapevine is also successfully working with several vendors to get Grapevine material into correctional facilities; and that through the Carry the Message project, started distributing free Grapevine subscriptions to insiders. The Grapevine publisher asked the committee to think about how to better engage local corrections committees in carrying the message to those behind the walls.

Consider suggestions for retitling the pamphlet “Memo to an Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic”: The committee discussed and agreed to “Behind the Walls: A Message of Hope” as a retitle for the pamphlet “Memo to an Inmate Who May Be an Alcoholic”

Finance

AAWS financial results: Paul Konigstein reported only final unaudited 2021 revenue information. Gross literature sales for 2021 were \$11,700,254. This exceeds the 2021 budget of \$11,400,000 by \$300,254 (3%) and is \$2,538,846 more than last year.

This is the highest annual gross literature sales since 2019. However, this is still about 3 million less than 2019. December gross sales were \$1,211,891. Gross sales averaged \$975,021 per month compared to a budget of \$950,000 per month. Contributions for 2021 were \$10,782,983. This exceeds the 2021 budget of \$10,000,000 by \$782,983 (8%) and is \$526,296 more than last year. This is the highest annual contributions total in GSB history, breaking last year’s record of \$10,256,687. Online contributions of 23%

for the year is also a record. December contributions were \$1,365,912. Contributions averaged \$898,582 per month compared to a budget of \$833,333 per month.

2022 Budget: The committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the amended 2022 AAWS budget, which reflects total revenues of \$16,741,400, total expenses of \$18,111,969 and a bottom-line deficit of \$1,350,569.

Grapevine financial results: Average paid circulation of the Grapevine magazine was 56,081. This compared with a budget of 60,970 and 2020 actual of 63,397.

Total income for the year was \$1,738,097 which is \$274,463 more than budgeted and \$122,337 more than the \$1,615,760 achieved in 2020. This amount includes an insurance payment of \$180,000 for the International Convention.

Total costs and expenses of the magazine for the year were \$1,712,588, which were \$105,270 lower than budgeted and \$201,871 less than the \$1,914,459 in 2020.

After adding interest earned, there was a net income for the period ending December 31, 2021, of \$25,509 compared to a budgeted net loss of \$354,225.

2022 Grapevine Budget Presentation: The 2022 budget assumed average paid circulation of the Grapevine magazine of 62,000. Grapevine ePub is forecasted to be 5,340 and Grapevine complete at 3,502. Total income for the year is estimated to be \$1,706,208. Total expenses which include Editorial costs, Circulation costs and General & Management costs are \$1,686,975. After adding interest earned there's a budgeted income of \$19,234.

The committee recommended that the General Service Board approve the 2022 Grapevine budget, which reflects total revenues of \$1,706,208 and a bottom-line income of \$19,234.

La Viña results: For the unaudited results for December 31, 2021, average paid subscriptions for La Viña were 6,312 compared to 5,597 budgeted and 7,205 in December 2020.

Income from magazine sales was \$41,163 compared with a budget of \$24,813. After deducting the costs and expenses of \$429,810, a shortfall between revenue and expenses of \$388,646 resulted for this service activity. This compares with a budgeted shortfall of \$401,970 and a shortfall of \$385,772 for 2020.

The shortfall for the La Viña service activity has been funded by a transfer from the General Fund of the GSB.

La Viña Budget: The 2022 budget for La Viña projects gross profit on the magazine of \$2,248 and content related items of \$22,740, totaling \$24,988. After deducting costs and expenses of \$427,055, the 2022 budget reflects a shortfall of \$402,067.

Reserve Fund report: As of September 30, 2021, the Reserve Fund balance net of Grapevine subscription liability is \$12,806,277, which represents 8.48 months of G.S.O. and Grapevine expenses. This was based on 2021 Expenses. Based on the 2022 budgeted expenses this falls to 7.5 months (Target is 9-12 months.) The balance includes the \$250,000 the G.S.B. voted in July to transfer to the Reserve Fund.

The committee unanimously approved recommended the sharing of the Reserve Fund Study Policy and background to the Conference Finance Committee for further input and engagement.

Grapevine Joint Services Discussion: The committee had a robust conversation about the different times that the shared services agreement has been discussed. The committee also realizes that this is a much broader conversation than just this committee. They suggested moving this discussion to the corporate boards when they meet during Conference.

International

At their REDELA zonal meeting's (Meeting of the Americas) monthly sessions, the committee reviewed the Trustees-at large reports, noting that the ability for REDELA countries to meet online monthly provides an opportunity to more thoroughly discuss topics that are relevant to our greater connectivity and enhance our ability to extend the hand of AA in the Americas.

Though virtual, during December and January alone, the committee participated in such wide-ranging celebrations in such geographically diverse cultures as Mexico, Iran, Peru, Chile. In-person trips are tentatively scheduled for Cuba, Portugal, and Honduras.

Literature

Keep your eyes and ears open for a call for stories for the following items. Formal announcements will be made through Box 459, Meeting Guide App, etc.

Black and African American Pamphlet

Native American Pamphlet

5th Edition BB

4th Edition Spanish BB

The committee will work with AAGV on different ways to collect stories that they have been able to utilize.

The Trustees' Literature Committee will be seeking an ACM for the Native American Pamphlet update

There are several progress reports moving forward to the Conference Literature Committee

Nominating

The committee discussed proactive approaches to effectively fill Class A trustee vacancies on the General Service Board. The committee discussed the usefulness of a consultant's expertise and guidance to the General Manager Search Committee. With that in mind, the committee felt that working with a consultant could prove useful to help identify Class A

candidates from a diverse cross-section of society to serve on the General Service Board. The committee also raised questions such as whether a Class A's membership in another Twelve Step Fellowship would make them an appropriate candidate, or if inviting potential Class A candidates to observe a General Service Board sooner in the year, might be helpful.

The committee discussed ways the local A.A. committees could proactively recruit Class A trustees. The committee noted that at the 2022 General Service Conference, before the election proceedings, an announcement by the chairperson of the trustees' Nominating Committee could raise awareness about the Class A trustee vacancies and encourage Conference members to start thinking about potential Class A trustee candidates. The committee also noted that the regular meetings between area delegates and their regional trustee could be an opportunity to share information about the Class A trustee role on the General Service Board. The committee discussed how local CPC committees that cooperate with professionals within their area could identify potential Class A candidates. The committee agreed to continue this discussion at their next meeting.

The committee recommended to the General Service Board that Hon. Kerry Meyer and Anadora (Andie) Moss be forwarded on the slate to the 72nd GSC as new Class A Trustees.

Public Information

G.S.O. podcast pilot episode: The committee discussed three proposals in the GSO Podcast Plan of a path forward for the GSO Podcast. The committee is asking the Conference committee to discuss the proposals as part of the forwarded Podcast Plan. The committee looks forward to the Conference committee's feedback. The committee agreed to forward the following to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information:

- 1) The Progress Report and GSO Podcast Plan
- 2) The corporate boards' and office staff feedback survey results
- 3) The new iteration of the pilot episode which incorporates specific committee suggestions. As well as any additional pertinent information for the discussion.

Feasibility study on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms: The committee discussed the feasibility study on paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms. The committee agreed to forward the research conducted by GSO regarding paid placement of PSA videos on streaming platforms, including added detail on the variety of streaming and video platforms that are available, to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Discuss a revision to "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings": The committee discussed and agreed to forward substantial revisions to the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings" to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information. It was suggested by the committee that the list of available publications in the pamphlet also be reviewed. The staff secretary reported to the committee that a suggestion to update to a template PowerPoint presentation for the purpose of providing shared experience on "how to" present about A.A. at non-A.A. events will need to

be considered after a decision is made on the revision to the pamphlet, "Speaking at Non-A.A. Meetings." The committee looks forward to a progress report on this effort at the July 2022 meeting.

Discuss A.A. Membership Survey: The committee discussed the 2022 final report requested from a survey methodology consultant regarding an assessment of the questionnaire used for the triennial Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Membership Survey and the approach the organization currently uses to report the results of that survey. The committee agreed to forward both the 2022 final report and the 2021 final report from the Survey Methodology working group on the Triennial A.A. Membership Survey to the 2022 Conference Committee on Public Information for full consideration of next steps.

General Service Board Sharing Session

Theme: What's on Your Mind?

January 29, 2022

Regional trustee Francis G. warmly welcomed those in the room and those joining via Zoom through a laptop, though participation was limited through the laptop. Francis explained the town hall format and invited trustees, directors, appointed committee members, Class A candidates, G.S.O. employees, and especially our delegate chairs to share whatever was on their mind and any elephants in the room. Throughout the session, several who came to the mic took the time to acknowledge and greet the virtual attendees. A Class A trustee, wearing a gold elephant necklace for the occasion, spoke about how we all contribute our treasure, our talent, and our time when doing service in A.A. She cautioned against wasting time as it is something that cannot be replaced. Another Class A trustee shared his philosophy on the Reserve Fund. "It is a contract between the present and the future, affording us the chance to look at the needs of today and the opportunities of tomorrow." A delegate chair talked about wasting time and money in her drinking days. Now she shares the "avocation" that our co-founder talked about, serving the Fellowship.

Another delegate chair shared she was expecting an "us vs them" situation between trustees and delegates, but after seeing the preparation trustees put in and getting to spend time with them, she now feels it is a "we" situation. A Grapevine director shared his mixed feelings about video-conference platforms. On the one hand, Zoom enabled his group to keep meeting during the pandemic and helped five or six people get sober without ever attending an in-person group. However, he expressed concern over the wording of Zoom's terms of use and thinks we must be careful. He suggested we should update the A.A. Guidelines on this topic. Affiliation and anonymity are concerns for him. One of the Class A candidates expressed her gratitude for the weekend. She feels this is sacred ground with amazing history and she appreciates the work we do in A.A. to make everyone feel welcome.

Another Class A candidate who serves as a pastor and military chaplain agreed that it is a sacred time and a sacred space when we are helping others and providing service. He feels that if we lose the service of just one person in the military it affects the entire country and believes it is the same if we lose a member of A.A. A trustee emerita took the opportunity to thank all the delegate chairs for all their contributions last year at the General Service Conference. "You did amazing work. I was honored to be a witness to it and I love you all." A delegate chair shared about the backlash he felt in his area regarding actions taken by the

Conference. With all the requests to rescind actions, he felt very alone at times. However, he appreciated being listened to by the trustees' committee and the rapport he felt this weekend. Another delegate chair shared about his experiences giving his Conference report backs. He realized that groups don't necessarily want everything their way but they do want to be heard. "Our job is to listen and it's a real growth opportunity. Everyone including the trustees want the groups to know they've been heard." A nontrustee director described how he gave a scathing report about A.A. being behind the times and directly after was approached by his regional trustee inviting him to apply to become a nontrustee director. The position has helped him create a new fellowship in his life. He was concerned the people would be too "fancy" for him but he's found that they're just alcoholics and people who want to help alcoholics. A delegate chair shared how impressed she is with the way trustee chairs conduct meetings and how much the staff secretaries do to help committees stay on course. Regarding participation, her area is hurting and so is her home group. Some groups have no alternates, other groups are not represented at all. She would also love to see A.A. have more of a presence on social media and the internet. A general service trustee shared that time is precious and she wants us to use our time more effectively. Time is tied together with participation, communication and trust and she is always looking at how she can invite more participation. Encouraging the "we" leaves no room for distrust because we are all involved. One staff member recalled her experience as a delegate chair, seeing the spirit of how decisions are made and that we're all trying to use our time and talent as best we can. Another staff member who got sober young and literally grew up in A.A. said, "It didn't used to be if we did service in A.A., it was what service are you doing?" An appointed committee member shared her concern that the public perception of A.A. affects our ability to talk to young people. While we're taking good actions now, we likely won't see the results for several more years. Her home group folded, her local clubhouse folded, and she's concerned about all the young people who've never been to an in-person meeting.

A nontrustee director expressed similar frustration about how slowly we move in A.A. We have great ideas, and she is going to stick around but she wishes we could move faster. Working together is the key to moving forward whether we agree on everything or not.

She also expressed that she does not always feel safe here, even with long term sobriety and "if I don't feel safe how does the newcomer feel?" A general service trustee shared that he got to A.A. because a therapist knew that a 16-year-old kid could suffer from alcoholism, and that is why he continues doing Public Information work. He reflects on all that has happened in life and thinks about the grace of how it all comes together and is bigger than us. He's grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Another general service trustee shared that we don't always get to see progress but that many of the things we're doing today he wouldn't have dreamed of a few years ago. While this is a time full of friction, we can still have uncomfortable conversations in a loving and healthy way. "We need to assume good intention in all things." A delegate chair described how his experience at last year's Conference was overwhelming, but the process works out the way it is supposed to work out. Sitting here today has helped him to see how the whole process really works from start to finish. A regional trustee talked about rotation. "We are not in a marathon; we are in a relay race." She is comfortable passing the baton because that is

the way A.A. works. We can trust even though we disagree and rely on a better future in A.A. when we work through things together and use the warranties of the General Service Conference. A staff member spoke about how the Fellowship is using social media; sometimes it's beautiful and sometimes there's misinformation, hateful comments, and disunity. She worries about a member just getting involved in service being exposed to this. She also sees more members going to special interest groups because they don't feel safe in most groups. A delegate chair shared that his area has issues with low levels of participation and that lately he hears more complaints than unity. He recently read *Our Great Responsibility* and found that its focus on change and unity is very relevant to our time. He joked that people in his area think all delegates do is get together for a week, eat fancy dinners, and mess up A.A. He began a "delegates corner" so that they can understand the process more. Another delegate chair expressed how grateful she is for the weekend and the opportunity to collaborate. Participation is so important to the spirit of A.A. service and she felt that discussing hybrid and finding an effective way to be in the same room together is important. One last delegate chair shared about getting sober young. She also talked about the importance of celebrating the joy of service and what she has received in her family life with a family member getting sober because of A.A. service. For her, service work led to growth in her Step work. Having reached the end of our allotted time, Francis suggested we keep the conversations going over dinner – and beyond - and adjourned the session

Yours in love and service,
Kathi F

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