

**Pacific Regional Trustee Report**  
**GENERAL SERVICE BOARD WEEKEND**  
**OCTOBER 29-31, 2022**

Here are several items of interest from the October 2022 General Service Board meeting. In addition to my Regional responsibilities, my commitments include:

Member of Trustees Committee on **International**

Member of ad hoc committee for **Participation of Online Groups in the General Service Structure.**

Member of Trustees Committee on **Public Information**

Member of sub-committee on the **Membership Survey**

Vice-Chair of Trustees Committee on **Literature**

Member of sub-committee on **Fifth Edition Big Book**

**A.A.W.S. Board**

**Conference**

The Conference assignment received and processed 184 Proposed Agenda Items (PAIs) within the September 15 deadline and supported trustee meetings related to the Equitable Distribution of Workload (EDW) and Conference Improvements (SCI). The Conference Coordinator has implemented thoughtful innovations and clarity to the assignment including holding “office hours” with Conference committee secretaries, and reviewing software for assigning the Panel 73 delegates to their respective Conference committees.

**Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)**

CPC Working Group met with Area CPC Chairs and other trusted servants to share their experiences, including opportunities to carry the message to potential members and connecting with professionals. Consideration continues to develop service material to help A.A. members speak with their healthcare providers about A.A. and proposed literature for mental health professionals. There is continued work on potential posts for the LinkedIn project. The Fall 2022 issue of About A.A. was distributed on October 11.

**Corrections**

Corrections Service of Canada (CSC) is eager to work with A.A. to raise awareness as to what A.A. has to offer for the alcoholic reaching out for help, such as the Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS). Discussion continues on how to make A.A.W.S and A.A. Grapevine literature available on tablets for those members in custody. Corrections desk has

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put out a Call to Action for all trusted servants in Canada to increase the awareness and participation of the Corrections Correspondence Service in Canada among those members who are in custody. We have a waitlist for members on the outside waiting to be of service.

### **Group Services**

The IGCOs reached out to several areas affected by natural disasters in the last month: Puerto Rico, Florida, and Nova Scotia. The October Quarterly IGCO meeting addressed a number of topics: status of backorders, positive feedback around the mixed title discount and possible price increases, quick order testing and the ability to participate more fully in project development, and a request from the Communications Committee to have an identified Meeting Guide app contact. Communication will be sent out in small batches to assess the status of virtual/online groups or meetings and simultaneously provide information on the newest developments regarding the participation of online groups.

### **Administration**

On October 5th the General Service Office reopened with 46 visitors, several of whom were international guests. As of September 12th, each department is now back at the office three days a week or more.

Beverly Jones-King, our new Executive Legal Administrator, is the point person for all legal matters, and is designing written workflows and procedures for contracts, licensing, intellectual property (IP) and copyrights. Our licensing administrators, originally in Publishing, are now reporting to Beverly on the 11th floor.

Stephanie Bozino-Routier joined us as our Document Translation Manager, and will project manage all document translations at G.S.O. We are in the final stages of recruiting for in-house Spanish and French translators. With this department coming into place, we expect to have all the background identified and translated from the General Service Conference in time for the January 2023 board weekend.

The Communications department has assumed responsibility for all the “Newsletters” to bring more consistency with style guidelines and messaging. These include Box 4-5-9, About A.A. and Sharing From Behind The Walls and LIM.

Progress continues on the implementation and development of translation and licensing software tool within our ERP system. To better manage the volume of license requests from around the world, we have created a new email address [tl@aa.org](mailto:tl@aa.org).

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## **Archives**

The Archives Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Response Plan, revised in Sept. 2022, is currently under review with the Internal Audit Committee (IAC), once finalized, a copy will be distributed to Archives Staff as well as primary and secondary contacts.

Draft of the new digital exhibit (A.A.'s earliest pamphlets from the 1940s) is now complete with translations to follow in 2023. Started in August 2022, 147 identified manuscripts are either partially or fully organized using our database system Re:Discovery. As of October 2022, digitizing Bill's correspondence with members on subject matters is now complete with a digital count of 14.22GB.

New exhibits were History of International Conference of Young People in A.A. (ICYPAA) in September and in October Evolution of Media Formats in A.A. showing various changes in technology A.A. has used.

## **Communications**

The Communications department has been busy with several initiatives including the release of the Meeting Guide app version 4.0 this September, the conversion of Universal Analytics to GA4 and with guidance from the Grapevine podcast team, PI and Publishing continued development of G.S.O podcast.

## **Human Resources**

August 15th we officially welcomed Dina Friedel our new HR Director who has been busy with a variety of initiatives: Day One Orientation with all new employees at G.S.O., followed by a 90-day check-in, creating hybrid workplace guidelines for scheduling and communication, creating a Member Services training deck, coaching managers on employee relations and feedback.

## **Operations**

The Fellowship Connection training video for Area Registrars is now complete as of October 3rd. Video link here: [Fellowship Connection Training Video](#). French and Spanish video dubbing is expected to be complete in 2023.

From July 16, 2022, to October 14, 2022, the Member Services team received and responded to approximately 6,659 email inquiries. A total of 2,412 phone calls were also received; 1,220 were routed from the Front Desk and 1,192 were direct calls to the Member Services line. The Receptionist received and routed approximately 4,459 phone calls from July 16 to October 14. The Member Services team executed 1,400 District/Area/Group updates in NetSuite and Area Registrars performed 1,795 updates via Fellowship Connection. The team also reviewed and processed 7,909 literature orders during this time-period.

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The Mail and Shipping team of two managed 9,184 pieces of incoming mail and 2,975 pieces of outgoing mail from July 16, 2022, through October 14, 2022.

### **Technology Services**

October was Cybersecurity Awareness month—the TS team launched a month-long cybersecurity awareness program through KnowBe4. The TS team also led a comprehensive redesign of the Contributions Site with significant input from Staff Services and the Finance Department, and worked with the Operations department, Member Services and RSM to identify process changes that will allow the warehouse control commitment of the inventory in our ERP (Enterprise Resource Management) platform.

### **A.A.W.S. Finance**

Contributions: Year-to-date contributions are \$7,386,529. This represents 67% of the reforecast budget of \$11,000,000 (with 75% of the year elapsed) and is \$30,118 less than last year.

Literature: Gross margin for September is \$720,059, which is \$167,035 more than August even though September gross sales were \$45,887 less than August. This indicates that gross margin improved during the month of September.

Expense: Year-to-date payroll and benefits expense is \$6,890,148 which is 70% of the reforecast budget amount of \$9,849,446 and \$88,827 less than last year. The variance-to-budget is due to employee turnover. Total operating expense year-to-date is \$12,638,367 which is 72% of the reforecast budget amount of \$17,569,432 and \$1,094,808 more than last year. The increase from last year is due to the increased travel and meetings expense associated with the return to in-person meetings offset by professional fees being less than last year.

Surplus: An operating surplus of \$177,178 was realized in September. The operating deficit year to date is \$545,496 compared to a reforecast budget operating deficit of \$855,032 and an operating surplus of \$1,166,815 at this time last year.

Cash Position: As of September 30, operating cash was \$842,076 which represents 0.58 months of 2022 reforecast budget G.S.O. operating expenses of \$17,569,432. Budget 2023 2.0 has a deficit of \$138,199. An interim budget 3.0 review meeting will be held prior to the December 8, 2022, A.A.W.S. Board meeting for continued budget development.

### **Publishing**

The implementation of the new jacket-less Big Book Alcoholic Anonymous and 12 x 12 are being printed with expected ship dates in November and December. This design remodel will help circumvent supply chain back orders and reduce printing costs.

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## **A.A. Grapevine/La Viña**

Work has started on Grapevine and La Viña apps, researching distribution channel logistics and costs. We continue to receive feedback from the Fellowship regarding features they would like to see on the app. Once we have integrated the store, magazines and archives for both websites under Drupal 9, we plan to begin development of comprehensive smartphone apps for both magazines.

The apps will include all things Grapevine and all things La Viña, including the current magazine, all archived stories, access to the podcast, daily quote, sobriety calculator, meeting guide, and store. Subscribers will be able to personalize the app so it provides a daily sobriety checklist, and a morning pop-up that tells the user their daily count and their favorite meeting of the day. The apps will allow for extra audio, video and written content, and we are researching ways to allow the fellowship opportunities for greater engagement with the Grapevine, La Vina and with one-another. We have developed a 5-year business plan, and we are currently seeking a freelance app project manager. This plan will require additional staff phased in during implementation to manage the app content.

While we have seen a decline in print subscriptions, we have enjoyed an increase in Other Publishing Items. We recently marked the one-year anniversary of the podcast in October and reached a milestone, surpassing ¼ million downloads!! (currently over 263K downloads) Additionally, Instagram accounts continue to increase (GV has 8,491 followers and LV has 1029).

### **GV/LV Financial results**

Grapevine financial results: The unaudited year end results for the period ending September 30, 2022. Average paid circulation of the Grapevine magazine was 52,720. This compared with a budget of 52,994 and 2021 actual of 57,250.

Total Gross Margin for the first nine months was \$1,114,377 which is \$44,609 less than budgeted and \$141,026 less than the \$1,255,404 achieved in 2021.

Total costs and expenses of the magazine were \$1,406,999, which were \$36,727 less than budgeted and \$194,991 less than the \$1,212,008 in 2021.

After adding interest earned, there was a net loss for the period ending September 30, 2022, of \$282,122 compared to a budgeted net loss of \$274,240.

La Viña results: For the unaudited results for September 30, 2022, average paid subscriptions for La Viña were 6,658 compared to 6,361 budgeted and 6,298 in September 2021.

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Total Gross Margin of the magazine were \$58,210 compared with a budget of \$31,375. After deducting the costs and expenses of \$493,934, a shortfall between revenue and expenses of \$435,724 resulted for this service activity. This compares with a budgeted shortfall of \$401,539 and a shortfall of \$260,021 for 2021. The shortfall for the La Viña service activity has been funded by a transfer from the General Fund of the GSB.

### **Circulation, Development and Customer Service:**

Fulfillment house conversion has begun with the full change-over to be complete on November 30, 2022; product testing continues; deployed an email campaign in August to the “A” split expires who did not receive the free book offer in June; Feb. and Mar. ’23 issues roll out with the free book offer “Best of Bill” on the cards; holiday subscription offers testing going out to store buyers and active subscribers in early September; Free On the Inside sold as of Aug. 26: Online Store: 5,264; Ingram: 361; Mujeres en AA sold as of Aug. 26: Online Store: 3,718; Ingram: 1,185; Prayer and Meditation sold as of Aug. 26: Online Store: 11,312; Ingram: 6,207; Fun in Sobriety sold as of Aug. 26: Online Store: 4,252; Ingram: 1,842; Sobriedad Emocional sold as of Aug. 26: Online Store: 337; Ingram: N/A.

Price increase to start on January 1, 2023. Price increase notice went out on August 29, 2022.

### **Grapevine Editorial:**

Recent Grapevine magazine released SEPT —Young & Sober; OCT —Stories About Relapse; NOV —Gratitude & Stories from new Fun in Sobriety book. Magazines in production; DEC — Remote Communities & Sober Holidays—stories edited; JAN —Spiritual Awakenings—stories selected, editing; FEB —Making Amends—selecting stories; Home Group book (revised with new cover and new virtual stories)—due spring 2023—on schedule; Podcast – working with hosts to connect with interview subjects from current stories in magazine and important information.

Audio Project: Working with freelancer to develop more playlists; publishing more AA News and interviews with Class A & B Trustees and important AA announcements (working closely with GSO staff desks); GV Workbook draft being finalized for upload to website by January 1; International Convention notices began running in magazine in November issue; working with Publisher on book bundles for holiday Free Shipping.

**La Viña Editorial:** The senior editor reported: Recent La Viña magazine released: November/December: La Viña Short Stories –include news about price increase, instagram ad,

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new book “Sobriedad Emocional”. It also included information for submitting stories for the new edition of the Big Book in Spanish, along with the QR code; La Viña magazines currently in production and on schedule: January/February: Prayer and Meditation; March/April: Newcomers edition; LV informational workshops continue; LV Editorial Assistant attended the first XIX National Hispanic Convention in Boston and the Pacific Regional Forum in Utah; LV freelance editor attended the 1st workshop for Hispanic Woman in Georgia.

### **Web:**

The Web Coordinator reported monthly web traffic in the 3rd quarter averaged 86,717 new visitors; 11,148 returning visitors and 331,839 page views; upgrade to Drupal 9 to be completed in September.

The committee revisited the request forwarded by the 72 Conference Committee on Corrections to update the section “Singleness of Purpose” in the Corrections Workbook to reflect current terminology. After a brief discussion, the committee requested that the terms “substance abuse” and “chemical dependency” be replaced with “substance use disorder.” This update will be made in both the workbook and all other literature that references these terms to ensure consistency of current terminology.

Publishing Update: Due to a large inventory, the committee discussed whether to dispose of the current inventory of the pamphlet “Carrying the Message into Correctional Facilities” as the revisions changing the terms “inmate” and “offender” to “person in custody” have been made and are awaiting printing. The committee decided to use current inventory, track demand, and discuss this again at subsequent board meeting.

### **GSB Finance**

Kevin Prior, GSB treasurer, reported to the committee on the status of the reserve fund policy project and advised that all the feedback from the various discussions at prior meetings have resulted in the final version they see today. After a lengthy discussion the committee amended the policy with minor edits to include collaboration with the AAWS and Grapevine boards on decisions pertaining to a Reserve Fund balance in excess of 12 months of operating expenses.

The last meeting of the Self-Support Subcommittee was held via Zoom on October 7. The subcommittee received an update on the group search features in the online contribution portal. The tech team is working with RSM to improve the features of the web page. A robust conversation about groups receiving credit for individual contributions (i.e., birthday) followed this update.

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The subcommittee also discussed ways to encourage online contributions. The subcommittee received one more story from GSO staff on a real-life example of how group and member contributions are used to carry the message and discussed additional ways to collect and share these stories.

Suggested revisions to the draft flyer on contributions (SMF-203) were discussed and a new draft incorporating the changes has been received from publishing. Lastly, a Box 4-5-9 article on the importance of self-support is planned for the winter edition. Three members of the subcommittee were interviewed and one of the stories collected from GSO staff was submitted for the article.

## **Trustees Committees**

### **International**

Licensing and translations activity report: The committee accepted the A.A.W.S. literature Translations and Licensing report. The committee noted with appreciation the updated reporting procedures and requested that this type of detailed translation and licensing reporting be forwarded quarterly to the committee. The committee also provided suggestions to the Translation and Licensing Department regarding additional content that would be helpful to include in the report.

International Literature Fund (ILF) and World Service Meeting (WSM) Fund accounting: The committee discussed the development of the new A.A.W.S. accounting procedures for the International Literature Fund (ILF) and World Service Meeting (WSM) Fund. The committee noted the responsibility and importance that these funds be maintained by A.A.W.S., and clearly and accurately reported to the World Service Meeting and REDELA zonal meeting. The committee looks forward to quarterly reporting from GSO Finance on the progress of the maintenance of these accounts as well as any updates to the procedures of maintenance and distribution of the funds.

World Service Meeting (WSM): The committee accepted a report on the online 27 World Service Meeting from the our delegates to the WSM, as well as sharing from the WSM coordinator, Publishing Director, and General Manager. The committee appreciated the vast connection and learning that was gained from this global online meeting and looks forward to ongoing discussions relating to post World Service Meeting activity and topics related to the planning of the 28 WSM which will be held in New York in 2024.

### **Subcommittee on Participation of Online Groups (POG)**

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The committee has focused its work on developing and sending a survey to all of the US/Canada Delegates. That task was accomplished, and the data from it is still coming in. The preliminary results have been provided to the Trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference as background to their Possible Agenda Item discussions.

The next step for the ad hoc will be a follow up survey. The information gleaned from the first survey was very valuable, and in continuing to analyze responses, there is an opportunity to delve a little deeper and get further clarity on some of the insights provided.

### **International Convention/Regional Forums**

2025 International Convention Consultant update: Gregg Talley, International Convention consultant, provided a brief overview of recent activities in the planning process for the 2025 International Convention.

Salient points included: Events are seeing lower attendance levels post-Covid. The committee offered suggestions for estimating the 2025 attendance (e.g., Founders' Day, ICCYPA, Women's International Convention) and requested that Talley management develop a full list and plan for tracking attendance, and present to the January 2023 board meeting.

Event insurance - TMG is working with AAWS Finance to identify viable options post-Covid. Currently, high airline costs are impacting decisions on air travel to events. It is predicted that airline fares will return to pre-pandemic rates by 2024. Currently, international travel in some parts of the world continues to be hampered by Covid restrictions, especially in the Asia Pacific region.

Housing – continuing to review hotel situation and in discussions with Airbnb. Confident that we will have units sufficient to accommodate our attendees. Continued discussions with international border personnel who want to be as helpful they can under the law. Next site visit will focus on meetings with stadium production personnel.

### **2025 International Convention Member Engagement Survey:**

The committee reviewed the survey results and noted that 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: no hybrid component, or a hybrid component limited to the three big meetings, including the flag ceremony.

2035 International Convention Site Selection: The committee agreed to extend the 2035 International Convention Site Selection deadline from November 30, 2022, to December

15, 2022, to allow for greater participation. The staff secretary will send out a communication to the Area delegates advising of the extended deadline and inviting proposals. It was also discussed that members interested in bidding should be encouraged to speak with their city's convention and visitor bureau for key information.

Hybrid Regional Forums: The committee reviewed a bid proposal to provide technology services for interactive, online, real-time access to in-person Regional Forums. It was noted the bid did not include travel and lodging expenses, or charges by the hotel for high-speed internet access. 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.

## **Literature**

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 Action 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 setting a policy on how and whether to edit A.A. founder's words 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.

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 legal 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.

## **Nominating**

The committee formed an Ad Hoc committee on accessibility and inclusion of all possible candidates to General Service Board and its affiliate boards with a plan to share a progress report with the 73rd General Service Conference.

## **Public Information**

You tube channel: Analytics indicate that people are not watching our entire videos because our content is older and lengthy. The PI Coordinator reported on two projects in progress to produce new content: converting audio PSAs to video files and the young people video submissions.

AAGV/La Viña Website, Marketing and Podcast report. The AA Grapevine Publisher shared that there are over 250K downloads of the weekly podcast. Initial feedback surveys have been distributed to help with the initial creative planning of a new AA Grapevine app.

The committee reviewed the progress report on the 2022 Young People's Video Project. The project asked for submissions through November 7, 2022. The committee asked the staff secretary to communicate with the chair regarding the concept of extending the deadline.

## **Subcommittee on Membership Survey**

The subcommittee has developed a detailed listing of the elements that will be included in both reporting concepts along with ideas on the layout of each to be provided to the creative design team members. Each item in the survey be designed and created in such a way that it will be a standalone element. That a library of all elements be created to be for use by AA members, the professional community, the media, and other constituents.

With gratitude for Service in the Fellowship,

Reilly K., Pacific Regional Trustee

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