

72nd General Service Conference Report

Greetings and salutations! Where do I start? First, thank you all for allowing me serve as your Delegate. And secondly, thanks to my Higher Power who I choose to call God for the serenity, wisdom, courage and strength that guided me through the weeklong 72nd General Service Conference.

The adventure began on Friday the 22nd of May when Linda B. picked me up early in the morning to head to the airport to catch our 6:45 am flight to New York's LaGuardia Airport. After a short plane ride, we landed in New York! We then headed to gather up my checked +87luggage and got on a bus to take us to the car rental to get our ride to take us up state to Katonah, New York to visit Stepping Stones, the historic home of Bill and Lois Wilson. On the way we stopped for a quick lunch of food truck hotdogs. After arriving at Stepping Stones and checking out the gift shop we gathered to take the tour we were introduced to fellow Delegates and their guests and other visitors. We began with the tour with Levi, our guide on the screened in porch of the house where we heard how Bill and Lois acquired the house. In 1941 a friend offered them the house. The house had 7 rooms and was located on 1.7 acres. Their contract called for forty dollars a month on a \$6,500 selling price. Before deciding to purchase their home, Lois and Bill were in the neighborhood and drove with friends to look at the house. Lois recounted, "We were charmed by its location and wanted to see the interior. A window was unlocked, and we clambered in." We were told by a tour guide that Bill's version was more like 'We broke in through the window!' After touring the house and hearing all about the life of Bill and Lois before we headed up the hill to "Wit's End" Bill's writing studio we had the opportunity to sit at the kitchen table for a photo op where Ebby shared with Bill when he lived in Brooklyn Heights, the Oxford Groups message of recovery that help launch Alcoholics Anonymous. After a short walk up the hill to "Wits End" we heard more about the history of A.A. and had another photo op of us sitting behind the desk where Bill wrote about the Traditions and Concepts and many other writings. After the tour we got in the car and headed back to check into the hotel. After checking in, we hooked up with Russ, the Delegate from Area 33. We headed out to hit the town! First, we grabbed a great dinner of cheeseburgers and onion rings at a dive called Blue Collar Burgers, then we headed to Times Square! After doing some people watching, and checking out the closed-up Crowne Plaza, and the lights and sounds of 7th Avenue we headed back to the Brooklyn Marriot to rest up and prepare for the following day.

Saturday morning began with a bagel and lox. Then I took a drive along the Hudson River down to Coney Island. After returning the rental car, I headed back to the hotel. Getting back to the hotel it was time for a meet and greet in the hospitality room for conference members and guests, I met fellow Conference Committee members in person, and chatted with fellow East Central Regional Delegates. Then it was off to the main ballroom for the 1728 meeting with a discussion on how A.A. as a whole has been affected by the pandemic and the need to go virtual and how we still get the job of helping the still suffering alcoholic done. After a short break it

was time for the Remote Communities meeting. A very informative presentation on the problems and needs of getting the message via technology when access to the internet is almost non-existent. Then, for dinner a bunch of us headed over to Junior's restaurant which is famous for their cheesecake, the sandwich and coleslaw was more than enough to fill me up so the cheesecake will have to wait till another time. After dinner it was double time to make it back for the Saturday Night Delegates only meeting. Made it just in time to catch the end of the introduction. Pam K. The Delegate Chair for the conference led the meeting. We heard from three Panel 71 Delegate Speakers, Ruth R from Area 14 North Florida, Brian T. from Area 73 West Virginia, and Connie R. form Area 40 Montana. All three welcomed us newbies, Panel 72 Delegates. Ruth shared how service kept her in the center of the boat, Brian got sober young and shared how both his parents are in the fellowship and both had 32 years of sobriety when he started a new life in sobriety. His parents recently celebrated 44 years. In Connie's share she talked of "Hitting the Wall " at the conference, which I also heard from past Delegates here in Area 34. I will be doing my best to get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids to avoid this from happening. She also said H.A.L.T. applies at the General Service Conference. I had Linda to help me if the need to vent comes up, but I feel that I should be ok.

Sunday April 24th, 2022

Today is the day! Registration for the Conference opens at 8:00 am so I'm up early and ready to go. Feeling like it's the first day of 7th grade school for me, excited and nervous at the same time. After an encouraging word from Linda, I head down to meet up with my fellow Delegates from Michigan, Don M. and Russ R. to register for the conference and receive our name badges and electronic clickers for use in voting. It was suggested the night before to sit at tables with new people every session to get to know as many of my fellow conference members as possible. So, I placed my stuff on an empty table and went to the restroom before the opening bell. When I returned, Cathi C., ECR Trustee was at one side of me and Josh E., General Trustee of the GSB serving on the Board for A.A Grapevine Inc. on the other. God is in charge. At 9:00 am a bell rang, and a hush fell across the room. We received a warm welcome from Linda Chezem, Chair of the GSB and a reading from Trudy D, Delegate Area 82 Nova Scotia. Before Roll Call, Bob W. Presented two recommendations from the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions, after a meeting they had at 8:00 am Sunday morning, the Committee recommended two Alternate Delegates be admitted to the 72nd General Service Conference because the Delegates where unable to attend. First Alt. Delegate Rio D. from Area 79 British Columbia/Yukon Territory and then Alt. Delegate Christopher M. form Area 47 Central New York. After a quick vote resulting in total unanimity, Bob began the rollcall of the 72nd General Service Conference. With him going alphabetically, the butterflies began to flutter as he got closer to the H's, then he said "Jim Hankinson, Area 34 Panel 72" and I enthusiastically said "Present". I official became a part of the 72nd General Service Conference's Annual meeting serving Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole! After Rollcall, Pam K. Delegate Chair for the Conference welcomed us all with some words of encouragement and advice as we prepare to begin our committee work on Monday Morning. Then Steve S., the Conference coordinator gave us an overview of the Weeks schedule and some housekeeping details and where to access new information on the Dashboard. After a Keynote address from Kathy F., rotating Pacific Regional

Trustee we began our first workshop: Your Third Legacy! A panel of three shared their experiences in service and then we had some great discussions from the rest us. One thing I heard and want to share with you all here especially the newcomers to service at the Area level is stay excited, stay involved and continue your study of the Traditions and the Concepts of World Service for all of you are potentially a future Delegate for Area 34. Then it was time for our Regional luncheon and Delegate orientation with the East Central Regional Trustee and the other 13 Delegates for our region, the best group of people I am glad to be a part of. Cathi went over again what to expect during the week and we went around the table sharing how we were doing. A range of emotions from anxiety to confidence and then some. All in all we were ready. The Food, a great lunch of chicken with broccoli and potatoes with a wonderful strawberry desert.

Then it was back to the Main Ballroom for the “Mechanics of the Conference” Sharing session chaired by Bob W. followed by a presentation on “A.A. International/World Service Meeting” from our Trustee-At-Large/Canada Trish L. and Trustee-At-Large/US Marita R. First Trish shared to the best of our knowledge there are currently (and this information can be accessed on the aa.org web site under the "About A.A." heading) more than 123,000 A.A. groups around the world; our literature has been translated into more than 100 languages; there is an A.A. presence in about 180 nations worldwide; and our membership is estimated at two million. That’s the bare statistical information. What it doesn’t convey is the love, the commitment and the respect for Alcoholics Anonymous, our message of recovery and our Twelve Steps, Traditions and Concepts that our compatriots around the world hold in their hearts, and the work they do to carry the message in their respective countries – many times in the face of obstacles that we in the U.S. and Canada could not even imagine. Because of the Pandemic she light-heartedly refers to herself sometimes as the “trustee-at-small” (and her husband calls her the “trustee-at home”) She reported that there are some 60 General Service Offices throughout the world, each of them serving their respective fellowships in the way that works best for their particular needs. Since the last U.S./Canada General Service Conference, Trish and Marita have been able to respond to invitations and attend 19 service-related sessions, events or celebrations. All of that “travel” has been virtual. That is a high number, but it’s also the breadth and nature of the events we have been able to attend that have been the silver lining in the pandemic cloud – the A.A. 2.0. Some of those events include the Asia-Oceania Service Meeting Zone, to share some World Service Meeting experience, the 52nd Anniversary of the formation of the General Service Office in Mexico, the virtual Sub-Saharan Africa Service Meeting (a zonal meeting) in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September. Normally, trustees-at-large do not attend zonal meetings – our office does. But again, the virtual world made this possible. Then the North/South Connection event held just after Conference last year was another example of being unified in love and service, by bring together people from throughout our home zone structure, from Ungava Bay in the North to Antarctica in the South for one day (May 15, 2021), sharing experience, strength and hope in carrying the message to Remote Communities. They are expanding that in 2022, with a Special Virtual Forum on July 16, working with our partner structures in Argentina and Chile to expand our discussion of remote to include not just geography, but language and culture as well. Please join in as we extend the hand of A.A. throughout Canada, the U.S., Mexico, Central and South America. Then Marita shared about the 22nd Meeting of the Americas (REDELA) held last October in Guatemala that is a body of 35 countries representing South and Central America, Mexico, U.S./Canada and the Caribbean which Trish L. and Marita R. as our trustees-at-large and World Service Meeting delegates, attended on behalf of our groups and the General Service Board. REDELA is an acronym for Reunión de las Américas. The theme “The Americas

United Under the Three Legacies of A.A.” shined brightly during our discussions. Because of the restrictions on travel, they were not able to participate in person. However, because they sent interpreters Hernán M. and Luciana C. with technical equipment, they were able to participate remotely. Because they added the virtual component to REDELA, Brazil, Panama and Paraguay were also able to attend virtually. Like many things during these pandemic times, we can always find the opportunity to serve others if we look. What they both felt coming out of the REDELA meeting was the amount of work yet to be done. They have all the same struggles we do – remote communities, local literature translations, and the need for sponsors to teach the love of serving the fellowship to their spouses.

After a short break it was time for the Joint Committee meetings where the Delegates Conference Committee meets with its corresponding Trustees Committee. The Conference Committee on Trustees meets with the Trustees Nominating Committee and because my Conference Committee on Trustees had a couple of Literature Items added to our Agenda due to the Equitable Distribution of Workload Process, an Advisory Action from the 72nd General Service Conference in its first year of a three-year trial basis, we first met with the Trustees Literature committee along with the five other Conference Committees that had Literature items added to their Agenda. This was a time for our committee to ask the Trustees committee any questions we had on the agenda items we were to discuss. Our items were straight forward with good background, the only questions asked were about the changes to the Literature procedures. Then my committee had an hour break before we needed to meet with the Trustees Nominating Committee, so I went up to the room for a quick break to relax for a few. Then I headed down to the Dumbo Room where our Committee would be having our meetings the next two days to have our Joint Trustees meeting. Jan L. (Eastern Canada Regional Trustee) Chair of the Trustees Nominating Committee introduced the other members of her committee, Nancy, Paz and Irma. There was some discussion about the revised “Procedures for a Partial or Complete Reorganization of the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. or AA Grapevine Boards.” that was on our Agenda. Basically, the changes were editorial to mirror the updated Conference Charter, and that the Conference in session at the time of Partial or Complete Reorganization of the boards would elect someone to preside as designated Chair for election of Class B trustees. The trustees’ Nominating Committee noted the current language in the General Service Board bylaws on filling unexpected trustee vacancies. The trustees’ Nominating Committee felt that a discussion of the request for action by a trustee of a region, and area delegates within the region, would be an approach that is consistent with the G.S.B. bylaws. So, it is up to Areas to have a procedure in place to have an “alternate” nominee to be nominated in the Regional Election of a replacement Regional Trustee. As far as nominees of Class A Trustees the is a “Pool” of Class A Trustees that could be drawn from, I asked how filled that “Pool” is and Nancy, Class A Trustee on the Nominating Committee mentioned that the “Pool” of candidates deep, but not very wide, which means that there is more of one certain type of professional in that pool such as from the fields of the Judicial, Medical, Religious and Financial aspects of profession. It was also noted that that in 2025 there will be three Class A Trustees rotating of the Board. So that “Pool” needs some more applicants which the General Service Board will be sending out a request soon.

Then it was time to get ready for the Opening Dinner and A.A. Meeting. A wonderful evening of food, fellowship and listening to the shares of five speakers, Mary Ann G. from Area 24 (Iowa), fellow Conference Committee on Trustees member, Wayne H from Area 65(Northeast Texas) also a member of my committee, John W. A.A.W.S. non-trustee Director, Cathi C. our East Central Regional Trustee and Jon W., senior editor, A.A. Grapevine. Wonderful shares from all, then it was time to get some sleep-in preparation of our Committee meeting in the morning.

Monday April 25th, 2022

Waking up early it was time to head down to the Serenity Group meeting, which meets one week a year during the Annual General Service Conference meeting. With a daily meeting starting at 7:15 am with fellowship and then a one-hour meeting at 7:30. With a lead share by the Chair, Sherri P. Delegate from Area 52 North Dakota followed with shotgun style discussion. Sherri did a great job with the topics she picked for each day. A was a great chance to get to know fellow Delegates a little better. Then it was time to head off to DUMBO room for our first Committee meeting which was ironic because I was a part of a very smart group of people. The conference rooms were named after the different boroughs of New York. After meeting via video conference, it was nice to meet everyone in person and after introductions and sharing a little bit about ourselves we got to know one another a little better. It was smooth sailing through our Agenda, it was easy discussing the agenda items with likeminded people, a lot of time was spent in wordsmithing our recommendations. It was nice to have Rick W, our secretary for Conference Week for his insight on guidance. Due to Staffing shortage at the Rick came out of retirement to be our secretary. Monday afternoon was report time from three Boards, General Service Board, A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board. All three reports will be available on the protected page of our website. For those in need of a hard copy due to accessibility issues please sign up on the "Board Reports" Request Form on the table with my tri-fold display.

Highlights of the General Service Board Report: Linda Chezem, Chair of the General Service Board said if felt strange to write her report weeks before we gathered in person, her first General Service Conference since she rotated in 2003. She said she was glad to be back. And she holds in her heart Bill's recollection of Dr. Bob saying as Bill left him, "Remember, Bill, let's not louse this thing up. Let's keep it simple." It is a wonderful reminder to not overthink problems. In August 2021, the Board approved an ad hoc committee to address the need for more people participating in service work. And two more new ad hoc committees for special issues and concerns, with the Office lease coming up for renewal in a few years, 1. Process for Development of Criteria, Design, and Initiation of the next GSO Location Study (Location Plus) and 2. Trustees' Committee on Participation of Online Groups in the General Service Structure (in response to the Advisory Action of the 71st General Service Conference). There was much sharing on this during the General Sharing sessions through out the week.

Highlights of the Corporate Board Report: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Jimmy D. A.A.W.S. Board Chair/Southwest Regional Trustee reported that that some major projects have come to the point of successful implementation even as the ongoing pandemic continued to negatively impact deadlines and timelines and the full reopening of our General Service Office. Whether virtual, physical, or hybrid, A.A.W.S. has continued to endeavor to meet or exceed expectations in performing its four main functions: Services, Publishing, Archives, and Finance. As for services, New Website Release, Reduced Shipping Charges/Mixed-Title Discounts with the support of Intergroups and Central Offices across the US/Canada structure, Fellowship Connection and much more. In Publishing, there were 50 translation reviews across 21 languages performed by our contracted translation-evaluation services in 2021 (2020 saw 27 reviews across 14 languages). 2021 saw 222 licenses across 14 countries executed to reproduce and distribute A.A.W.S. copyrighted items (2020 totals were 73 licenses across 6 countries). Various titles across the broad spectrum of A.A. literature exist in 111 languages worldwide. In Finance, another record year for 7th Tradition participation in the Fellowship with \$10,782,983 received from groups, members, and A.A. entities in 2021! 77% of these funds were received via postal mail (\$8.288 million) and 23% of contributions were made online (\$2.494 million).

Highlights of the Corporate Board Report: AA Grapevine, Inc. Josh E. the AA Grapevine, Inc. Board Chairperson reported that in 2022 nine overworked paid employees and a few part time assistants publish two sixty-four-page magazines, one monthly in English, the other bi-monthly in Spanish, with two unique websites, one for each magazine and each entirely in their respective languages. They record and publish the audio of every issue on the website. The updated website has continued to see steady activity. They continue to average about 100,000 sessions a month, they added Instagram accounts for both Grapevine and La Viña, the podcast debuted in October, in the brief time since they have seen over 80,000 downloads, and each month is more than the last. Print Subscriptions decreased 11 ½ percent, Subscriptions for the online and mobile app magazine increased 73.3%.

FINANCE REPORT: Our new Class A Trustee and General Service Boards Treasurer, Kevin Prior, gave an enthusiastic and informative report on A.A. Finances. He is a very energetic and entertaining person. He kept his slide show presentation down to around 30 slides compared to 64 slides of the previous Treasurers report last year. Some financial highlights from his report include Seventh Traditions Contributions to the General Service Board; 10.78 million, that's almost 8% more than budgeted for the year and 5% more than the previous of 2020. Literature Profits of 6.3 Million was 8% less than budgeted and about 4% less than 2020 profits. Ending with a Surplus of 1.6 million which is about a million more than what was budgeted and 1.5 million more than 2020. Average circulation of the Grapevine and LaVina was down again for the second year in a row creating a deficit of \$113,000 which is less than what was budgeted for the year. The General Fund support for LaVina was \$389,000 which also less than what was budgeted. And as for the Reserve Fund Coverage ratio for 2021 was reported at 8.5 Months, a slight increase over 2020. 7th Tradition Contributions to the General Service Board set a record for the third consecutive year. \$10,775,871! There was also an increase with online contributions for a second year in a row. This Pie Chart depicts the amount of individual contributions and shows that almost 45% of all contributions are less than \$50 showing that every contribution no matter how small has a spiritual value to A.A. as a whole. A little more information on the Prudent Reserve, at the end of 2021 the reserve balance after an addition of \$250,00 was at \$12,852,286. And according to 2022 budgeting, will represent 7.84 months of operating cost. So, keep up with the contributions to the General Service Board. As far as the impact that the Pandemic has had on the GSO Revenue Distribution, Literature sales fell dramatically and are back to increasing a little and with the record setting contributions over the last few years in my opinion A.A. is going to be Financially sound.

Tuesday April 26th, 2022

Another morning of meeting with my committee and finishing up our agenda. My new friend Rainier had some bagels and fruit delivered to sustain us till lunch. When we finished up, we had time to have a discussion on thread based forums and how it would benefit communication in the General Service Conference Structure, in a memo we drafted to send to the Conference Trustees' Nominating committee included several questions and comments and suggestions on the benefits of the forums, such as Maybe the dashboard could be opened up to the Fellowship; someone noted it has additional features we aren't utilizing now, a thread-based forum could be useful in clearing up misinformation, because information would be readily available. Then after an afternoon of more presentations and a workshop on the warranties it was time to get ready for the Delegates only dinner/meeting.

At the Delegates only dinner/meeting Tuesday evening, the Conference Delegate Chairperson, Pam K brought up the point that we as a group could have discussion on a topic and if a motion was made and we had substantial majority vote it would be an Advisory action to be sent to the General Service Board. Wayne H from Texas made a presentation of including Alternate Delegates in Conference Process including access to the Dashboard and all background information and there was a lot of discussion, but no motion was made. The reasoning behind that was we could not have an informed group conscience without input from the other 38 voting members that weren't in the room. I felt very uncomfortable. So, after that meeting I headed back up to the room to grab my coat and head out to get a slice of pizza at the \$.99 cent Pizza place a short walk from the hotel.

Wednesday April 27th, 2022

Bob W. opened the session up and we had a practice session with the clickers to make sure they were working for everyone and after about half hour or so the METS team had as all set for business. One of the test questions vote on was "Do you Love A.A.?" which passed with total unanimity. Then the announcement of Covid hitting the conference, several conference members tested positive for Covid and had to be quarantined to their hotel rooms. From what was being reported most cases were of the mild variety. While they could no set up the option for those quarantined to participate, they did set up audio broadcasting to those quarantined so they could at least hear what was going on.

Time to get down to business with Conference Committee reports and discussion of committee recommendations.

First up the Agenda committee, first recommendation was the theme for the 2023 General Service Conference be: "A.A.'s Three Legacies – Our Common Solution." Which passed 129-0.

Recommendation number 2: Presentation Theme be: "General Service – Our Mighty Purpose and Rhythm" which passed 122-3

Recommendation 3: Presentation Topics be:

1. "Our Common Perils and Common Solution" 2. "Using A.A.'s Literature in Carrying the Message" 3. "Fostering a Thriving Three Legacy Culture" and the following workshop topic for the 2023 General Service Conference: "Practicing Our Twelve Traditions Across All Group Settings" Which passed 125-1

And finally, the committee recommended that the General Service Board develop a status report on the progress and outcomes from the 2013-2015 Conference inventory and include a draft plan for another Conference inventory with considerations of its value, timeline and approach to be brought back to the 2023 Conference Committee on Agenda. Which passed 120-11.

Then it was time for Literature.

After reviewing the draft language regarding safety and A.A. to be included in *Living Sober* and the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship." The committee recommended that the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" be revised. This was a great lesson on how Roberts Rules of Order work. First the recommendation failed then after minority opinion was heard a motion to reconsider was made and passed, and during continuing discussion there was an amendment presented which failed, then a motion to recommit failed then another amendment presented failed the with no one at the mic another vote was taken. Then it passed 101-28.

Then the committee recommended that the booklet *Living Sober* be revised to add the following paragraph regarding safety and A.A. in chapter 29, page 76: "Of course, A.A. is a reflection of the larger society around us and problems found in the outside world can also make their way into the rooms of A.A. But by keeping the focus on our common welfare and primary purpose, groups can help provide a safe and secure environment for all their members." Which passed 114-6.

The committee recommended that the draft pamphlet "The Twelve Steps Illustrated" be approved with minor editorial revisions. After much discussion about the "minor editorial revisions" the consensus that there were some major ones needed to the pamphlet. After a vote the motion failed. 40-92.

The committee recommended that the pamphlet "Twelve Traditions Illustrated" be updated with non-offensive, contemporary text and illustrations and bring back a draft to the 2023 CCL. The motion passed

The committee recommended that the video animation of the pamphlet "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated" (currently published by the General Service Board of A.A., Great Britain) be adapted and produced by the Publishing department. An amendment to the motion to edit the video with non-offensive language and include all parts of our GSC structure. The amendment passed as did the amended recommendation to bring back a draft to the 2023 CCL. 121-10

The committee recommended that the updated pamphlet "Is A.A. for You?" be approved and after little discussion the motion passed. 122-6

The committee recommended that the updated pamphlet "Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?" be approved. With no discussion the motion passed. 122-6

The committee recommended that the updated pamphlet "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A." be approved. After a little discussion the motion passed. 120-6

The committee recommended that the updated pamphlet “This Is A.A.” be approved. With no discussion the motion passed. 123-5

The committee recommended that a second volume of the book *Experience, Strength and Hope* be developed with the stories dropped from the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and that a progress report be brought to the Conference Committee on Literature once development of the publication is in progress. There was quite a bit of discussion on this one, such as the current version does not sell to many, the cost of creating a new book, no cost estimates available, maybe just do an e-book. Motion failed. 14-114

The committee recommended that the draft of the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.” be approved. After some discussion on the content there was a motion to recommit which failed then after more discussion the motion passed. 111-17

We started to talk about the Literature Committee's additional considerations and was getting late so adjourned with discussion until Thursday morning. And with all the remaining recommendations from other committees it was decided to reconvene at 8:30 am. Which meant an earlier wake up call for those of us wanting to attend the Serenity meeting, and by now I was looking forward to that meeting for some serenity and guidance.

Thursday April 29th, 2022

After reconvening at 8:30 it was announced that more members were testing positive with Covid, it was around 10 at this time and one Delegate leaving the Conference for concerns of getting covid. I began taking extra precaution washing my hands more often, drinking lots of water, social distancing and wearing a mask, not only for my safety but those around me. Bob asked for a sense of the meeting about making mask mandatory and if you were for, against or indifferent. With no majority it was left to the individual Conference members to mask up or not. There was plenty of Instant Covid test, mask and sanitizer all around the venue. I was happy to remain symptom free the whole time.

After finishing up with the Literature's additional considerations, we moved on to the Conference Committee on Finance.

The Conference Committee on Finance met separately two times following the Equitable Distribution of Workload Meeting with the Trustees' Literature Committee and the Joint Meeting with the Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee on April 24, 2022. The committee accepted the report of the trustees' committee and made no recommendations: WOOHOO!!

We then moved on to the Conference Committee on Public Information. The committee recommended revisions to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity.” The FAQ on Anonymity in the Digital Age.

Anonymity in the digital age

Q. I maintain a website and social media pages. At what level should I protect my anonymity on the Internet?

A. Publicly accessible aspects of the Internet such as websites featuring text, graphics, audio, and video can be considered the same as publishing or broadcasting. Unless password-protected, a website requires the same safeguards that we use at the level of press, radio, and film/video. Simply put, this means that A.A.s do not identify themselves as A.A. members using their full names and/or full-face photos.

The motion passed 121-1

The committee recommended the following text addition to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity.”

Q. Are virtual A.A. meetings considered “Public”?

A. These online gatherings are not streamed to the general public; however, information about the meeting is provided to A.A. members, potential members, and the general public similar to in-person meetings. Many members feel comfortable using their full names and making their faces visible to fellow members and those new to A.A. However, some members/attendees have felt more comfortable having their camera off and just listening or using first name and last initial only. For safety purposes, some groups have provided helpful reminders in their group format that picture taking, or screen shots are not in keeping with anonymity principles.

The motion passed then after minority opinion there was a motion to reconsider which passed then a motion to recommit was made and failed, then an amendment to the motion passed and then the amended motion passed 96-26.

The committee recommended that the outdated “A.A. Fact File” be retired. A question was asked if there was any discussion in committee replacing with something else and there was and they said there was no need to do that. The motion passed 120-3.

The committee discussed 2022 Analysis Report on the A.A. Membership Survey. Then committee recommended that format changes, two new questions and six changed questions on a 2022 membership survey questionnaire, be approved. There was much discussion on the questions, and they talked about the best practices from Professionals who do this kind of work and was for the changes. The motion passed. 120-6

After a thorough review of the professional survey methodologist report detailing actions to perform a sound membership survey, the committee recommended that a 2022 A.A. Membership Survey be conducted with a budgeted cost not to exceed \$20,000. The process will include mailing, digital back-end response and analysis, creation of message and distribution,

including a “How to video” for groups/members. With all the discussion on the previous motion no one went to the mic, and we went right to a vote. The motion passed. 115-5

That was it from Public Information, so we moved on to favorite committee.

Conference Committee on Trustees

The committee recommended that the slate of trustees of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board on April 30, 2022, following presentation at the 2022 General Service Conference for disapproval if any: Passed 120-3

The committee recommended that the following slate of officers of the General Service Board be -elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board on April 30, 2022, following presentation at the 2022 General Service Conference for disapproval if any: Passed 118-2

The committee recommended that the following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board on April 30, 2022, following presentation at the 2022 General Service Conference for disapproval if any: Passed 120-1

The committee recommended that the following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board on April 30, 2022, following presentation at the 2022 General Service Conference for disapproval if any: Passed 114-3

The committee recommended that the “Suggested Procedure to Reorganize the General Service Board and the boards of A.A.W.S., Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc.” be approved as one acceptable pathway to a whole or partial reorganization of the Boards, understanding that, as provided by the Conference Charter, the final process will be determined by whichever General Service Conference might be considering reorganization. After little discussion a vote was taken, and the motion passed. 111-16

The committee recommended that the trustees’ Literature Committee revise the pamphlet “Do You Think You're Different?” to update the stories to represent greater diversity and bring back a draft pamphlet or progress report to the 2023 General Service Conference. After some discussion a vote was taken, and the motion passed. 110-13

The Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña met separately two times following the Joint Meeting with the AA Grapevine Corporate Board on April 24, 2022. The committee accepted the reports of the board chairperson and the publisher and made no recommendations.

Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

The committee recommended that the “Process for Approving Observers to the Conference” be changed. The revised process would allow the Policy/Admissions committee to approve routine admissions from structures outside the U.S. and Canada without having to poll the full

Conference. As with the current process, the trustees' General Service Conference Committee and then the General Service Board would first need to approve the request prior to forwarding it to the Policy/Admissions committee for their action. Was a little discussion then a vote was taken and the motion passed. 119-6

The committee recommended that the Scope of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions be revised to add: "and for approving routine requests for admissions from A.A. service structures outside of the U.S./Canada service structure to observe the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. "

And that the following be added to the Procedure of the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions:

Procedure

1. To approve routine requests from qualified representatives of other A.A. service structures to observe the Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference. After some discussion a vote was taken and the motion passed. 117-6

The committee recommended that the compilation of all Conference committee background be made available annually on or before February 15 in English, French, and Spanish. This was to reinforce the unity of A.A. that Spanish and French speaking members will all be informed at the same time. Lots of discussion on whether this is financially prudent, what is not going to happen as a result of this, suggestion of grassroots translations take place, and amendment was made to make agenda and background available simultaneously, with no date, after more discussion a motion was made to call the question. That vote was 111-11. The vote on adding the amendment of "Simultaneously" passed 95-29. After minority opinion a motion to reconsider was made and failed. After more discussion a motion was made to recommit and that failed, a motion to call the question passed 101-21, then the vote on the amended motion passed. 95-30

We then had a short sharing session before calling it a day. Scheduled to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. Friday.

Friday April 30th, 2022

We continue business with Report and Charter.

The committee recommended that chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of *The A.A. Service Manual* be revised to correct inaccuracies and to provide clarity and consistency on the roles, responsibilities and relationships between the General Service Office, AA Grapevine, and A.A. World Services, Inc. All the recommendations were read by the committee Chair, a vote was taken, and the recommendation failed, 77-42, after hearing minority opinion a motion was made to reconsider which passed, 105-13. As a point of information, it was mentioned that the Service Manual gets revised every two years. Then a vote was taken, and the motion passed. 110-7

The committee recommended that items 5 and 6 that relate to Regional Directories be removed from the Scope of the Report and Charter Composition, Scope and Procedure. There was no discussion, and a vote was taken, and the motion passed. 114-3

Then it was time to hear from Treatment/Accessibilities.

The committee recommended that the Long Form of Tradition Five be added to the pamphlet, *The A.A. Group* on page twelve in the section “What is an A.A. Group?” at its next printing. There was no discussion on this, and a vote was taken, and the motion passed. 117-3

Then we started into the nine floor actions that were presented through out the conference. Prior to the floor actions being presented the question was asked if we still had a quorum with the missing conference members, it was reported that there still 83 of 93 Delegates, 25 of 27 Trustees/Directors and 12 of 14 Staff. The Delegates still represented more than 2/3 of the Conference Body. So, the answer was yes, we still had a quorum.

Floor Action #1: It was recommended that:

With the translation of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition) into plain and simple language, that the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts, not be translated into plain language in any way: that these remain in the existing form in English as in previous editions of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Submitted on April 28, 2022, by Steve L. Panel 72 A35 Northern Minnesota

The Conference declines to hear. 82-37

Floor Action #2: It was recommended that:

The trustees’ Committee on Literature continue to make edits to the draft pamphlet “The Twelve Steps Illustrated” with a new draft or progress report to be brought back to the 2023 Conference Committee on Literature, keeping in mind: color, diverse expressions of spirituality and accessible interpretation of meaning in the illustrations.

Submitted April 28, 2022, by: Jenn D. Panel 72, Area 07 California Northern Interior

Motion passed 108-11

Floor Action #3: It was recommended that:

The 2022 Membership Survey questionnaire receive final editorial review by the trustees 'Public Information Committee after consulting with our professional survey methodologist, to address concerns raised by the 72nd General Service Conference related to the survey questions about Racial and Ethnic Background, and Employment Status.

Submitted April 28, 2022, by: Trish L. Trustee-at-Large Canada

Motion passed 107-9

Floor Action #4: It was recommended that:

The General Service Conference impose a one-year moratorium on any new agenda item received through September 15, 2022, with new agenda items held to be placed on the agenda for the 74th General Service Conference, allowing the General Service Board and its corporate affiliates time to adjust and align their processes to accommodate the 2022 Policy and Admissions recommendation to provide simultaneous translation of all background material.

Submitted by Pam K. Panel 71 A39 Western Missouri

The Conference declines to hear. 80-38

Floor Action #5: It was recommended that:

The trustees' Ad Hoc Committee on Participation of Online Groups develop a plan to create one or more non-geographic Areas for online and telephone groups in the U.S./Canada General Service Conference structure, with a progress report on the plan to be presented to the 73rd General Service Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions.

Submitted by Matt K. Panel 71 Area 11 (Connecticut)

A motion to decline to hear failed, 48-68. Motion is open for discussion, after much discussion a vote was taken and the motion failed, 51-65. After minority opinion a motion was made to reconsider and that motion passed, 73-45. After more discussion a vote was taken and the motion failed again. 48-68

Floor Action #6 It was recommended that:

That the following GSR Preamble be added to the pamphlet "Your Group's Link to A.A. as a Whole.: **The GSR Preamble**

We are the General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A. We realize the ultimate authority is a loving God as he may express Himself in our Group Conscience. As trusted

servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship. Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our group and A.A. as a whole.

Submitted by Gordon N. Panel 71 Area 21 Southern Illinois

The Conference declines to hear. 80-39

Floor Action #7 It was recommended that:

The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference evaluate the current process of developing Conference background material and bring back to the 2023 General Service Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions a plan that describes the process of developing background material, keeping in mind the Conference desire for background material to be targeted, balanced and with relevant historical content.

Submitted on April 29, 2022, by Monica F. Panel 71, Area 19 Chicago

There was a lot of discussion on this, then an amendment was presented. The amendment was not clear or concise, there was a motion made to call the question on the amendment and that motion passed 108-10. The vote on the amendment failed 50-69. Then discussion opened back up on the original motion, then a vote was taken, and the motion failed 27-92. After minority opinion was heard, a motion was made to reconsider and that motion failed 47-71

Floor Action #8: It was recommended that:

The Advisory Actions from Panel 71: Advisory Action 18 for changes to page 117 phrase "opposite sex" with the word "partner"

Advisory Action 19 changes to page 66, "No one wants to be angry enough to murder, lustful enough to rape, gluttonous enough to ruin his health. No one wants to commit the deadly sins of anger, lust or gluttony." in the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, be returned to the original text.

The Conference declines to hear. 75-42

Floor Action #9: It was recommended that:

The 1995 Conference Advisory Action be reaffirmed that the first 164 pages of the Big Book, the Forewords, “The Doctor’s Opinion,” “Doctor Bob’s Nightmare” and the Appendices remain as is.

Submitted on April 29, 2022, by Donna K. Panel 71, Area 53 Central SE Ohio

We spent almost 2 hours of discussion on this one, I think some had two or three times at the microphone. It was like a “Group Conscience” meeting time ten on steroids. There was an amendment to the motion which kind of “softened” it, there was a vote on the amendment and it failed, 51-64. Discussion reopens on the original motion, and after much discussion a motion to call the question was made and it passed 98-18. The final vote on the final floor action failed. 48-70

And that was it, we got through everything by 8:50 p.m. Friday Night!

After a short break we gather to hear remarks from the rotating panel 71 Delegates. Some good advice given to us 71’s on how to report back and stay excited. We all sang Happy Birthday to Cindy F. who was among the rotating Delegates. Some sharing how much better it was to be in person than looking at each other in those little squares on the computer monitor. Then one of the Delegates quarantined to his room was grateful for the opportunity to hear a floor action presented on his behalf. Another shared that the GSO tour should be canceled for the safety of the staff. But Bob W. said they gave the option to all staff to come in for the tour or not. One Delegate shared the Conference was like a weeklong family reunion, having fun then having fights but always loving each other by the end of the week. More shared the in person experience was much better than last year. One then shared that the 71st GSC was more about language of the head, and the 72nd GSC was more about the language of the heart! Then we closed with the Serenity Prayer in all three languages, English, Spanish and French. And Then I cried, again.

Saturday morning, we had a wonderful brunch and heard the Class A and Class B Trustees that were rotating off the Board. More wonderful words of wisdom and encouragement.

Then it was time to load the bus and head the General Service office for a tour! I guess that’s it for now, I look forward to sharing my experiences of the 72nd General Service Conference and the work that was accomplished with the Districts of Area 34, just remember I love a good picnic!

Humbly Submitted with gratitude by your Trusted Servant

Jim Hankinson, Delegate Area 34, Panel 72

