District 36 Meeting Agenda

Monday, January 13, 2020

Ask TMTL for topics they would like to see Workshop on.

- **Open with 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 that the ultimate authority in A.A. 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 the group can reach an informed group conscience. 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 groups and A.A. as a whole."

✓ • **Introductions / News from Groups:** Summaries/Actions*
(Actions will be addressed in New Business)

- **Concept 1:** Newton H., Past DCM, Panel 61 – God's in charge

- **Officer's Reports:** Secretary, Treasurer, ADCM, DCM – 1/22 Alicia needs questions for inventory

- **Subcommittee Reports:**
  - -Archives: Bob M
  - -Finance: Jeff – holding, waiting for structure manual Committee
  - -Workshop: Tonya – topics, location were discussed, dates May, Aug, Oct. Need subcommittee budgets
  - -Structure: Ed
  - -District Split: Steve – Done
  - -Ad-hoc Grapevine – Jen issued Grapevine Newsletter. Want GSRs to provide name & email contact and what they do. Bring to next meeting. OR email Nancy NKfarber@yahoo.com ✓

Area Mtg attendance is important for GSRs – should go at least once.

Open/closed Mtgs

- **Liaison Reports:** HAI/HBGICYPAA Bid – Intergroup 3 new groups – BBE Harris. Mens (one more)
- **Archivist's Alley** Bob –
- **Old Business:**
  - -Finance Subcommittee vote – change to Structure Manual (Ed S.)
  - -Proposed Officer at Large position description (Ed S., Joe W., Jason M.)
  - -EPGSA Registration – continuation of discussion re: cost reduction
  - -Area 59 Ad-hoc Literature Subcommittee motion (obo D55) re: revisions to 1st 164 pp BB

Steve. Celebrative Event – Vision for You 1/26 Retreat in Bethlehem

Need a Secretary

Table
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- **New Business:**

Next month

- **Tradition 1:** Tonya F., GSR, 19th Street Group
- Tradition 2
- **Close with Responsibility Declaration:** "I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that – I am responsible."

NOTES:

Dauphin Co Work Release is doing Joe/Charlie Meetings
Need books
Common Ground 1st, 3rd Tue
19th St/Manor 2nd 4th Fri } Speaker need volunteers.

Next Meeting – <u>Monday, February 10, 2020 – 6:30pm</u> – Fellowship House 1251 S. 19th St. Harrisburg, PA

*Summaries – Announcements, Anniversaries, etc. / Actions – Group problems or issues

Sierra - World Services Literature shows up
"Alcoholics Anonymous" on statement
aa.org
Alicia will take to Area.

Jeff - Dillsburg wants info on doing a group inventory.
Alicia has handouts and will give to Jeff.

Maggie - Veteran's Court - Required to get a Big Book,
Maggie would like to propose asking groups to donate
books to Veteran's Court - Can be given to Maggy, Kathleen,
or husband Paul.
Encourage Intergroup reps to bring up at group level

Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly
District 36
Treasurer's Financial Summary
12/1/19 through 12/31/19

				Income	Expenses	Balance
Beginning Balance:						$4,601.52
Income:	Source	CK #	Description			
12.2.19	Nooner Hershy	1738	Contributions	$60.00		60.00
12.11.19	ABSI 708032	287	Contributions	$60.00		60.00
12.18.191	19th St. Group	2197	Contributions	$27.60		27.60
12.23.19	Rebellion Dogs	114	Contributions	$8.29		8.29
12.30.19	Hershey Group	7174	Contributions	$29.56		29.56
12.30.19	Hershey Group	7177	Contributions	$88.69		88.69
			Contributions			
			Contributions			
			Contributions			
			Total Income:	$274.14		$274.14
			YTD Contributions	$3,873.73		
Expenses	Check Issued To	CK #	Description			
12.09.19	Alicaia S DCM	177	Printing		$13.20	13.20
			Pizza		$10.00	10.00
12.09.19	Katherine D ADCM	178	Printing		$10.18	10.18
12.09.19	Tonya F	179	workshop		$50.00	50.00
12.09.19	Jeff G	180	Workshop		$277.67	277.67
12.09.19	Neill D	181	Printing		$8.00	8.00
			Incurred Expenses Sub Total:			($369.05)
Year to Date						
Expenses:	Travel Expenses:				$1,347.55	
	Workshops:			327.67	$1,233.30	
	Printing:			31.38	$196.63	
	Archives:				$198.34	
	D36 Split:				$30.00	
	Structure:				$16.14	
	Donations:				$25.00	
	Rent:				$590.00	
	Postage				$0.00	
	Other:			10.00	$195.60	
			Year to Date Exp. Sub Total:		$3,463.51	
				After Incurred Expense:		$4,506.61
				Prudent Reserve:		$1,500.00
				Current End Balance:		$3,006.61

ubmitted:

Neill Dickson - Treasurer

Date:

December 31, 2019

Proposed District 36 Budget for 2019

Income

	Budget	YTD	Balance
Projected contributions	$4,500.00	$3,873.73	-$626.27
Prudent reserve	$1,500.00	$1,500.00	$0.00
2018 carryover	$5,422.39	$5,422.39	$0.00
YTD Total	$11,422.39	$10,796.12	-$626.27

Expenses

Category	Budget	YTD	Balance
Travel:	$2,500.00	$1,347.55	$1,152.45
Workshops:	$1,200.00	$1,233.30	-$33.30
Printing:	$700.00	$196.63	$503.37
Archives	$650.00	$198.34	$451.66
D36 Split Comm.:	$500.00	$30.00	$470.00
Structure Comm. :	$500.00	$16.14	$483.86
Donations:	$220.00	$25.00	$195.00
Rent:	$360.00	$590.00	-$230.00
Postage:	$120.00		$120.00
Other:	$100.00	$195.60	-$95.60
Reserve:	$1,500.00	$1,500.00	$0.00

Total:	$8,350.00	$5,332.56	$3,017.44

DCM Report - District 36 – January 13, 2020

Welcome to a new decade and the second half of EPGSA's Panel 69! There is so much happening in District 36 – get ready for an exciting year, everyone!

Events DCM Will Attend: District 63 Meeting 01/14/2020; District 45 Workshop "Mindfulness and AA's History" 01/18/2020; DCM Sharing Session/Mini-Assembly Planning Session 01/19/2020 in Lancaster, PA; SEPIA/EPGSA Share A Day 02/16/2020.

Last month I circulated District Inventory questions. Your answers will be compiled and results shared with all GSR's. Please submit your completed forms this evening, and if you have not yet completed the questions please do so and submit via email no later than 01/27/2020. We will hold a brief discussion during new business this evening regarding options for finalization of this inventory

District 36 is slated to participate in the **Mini Assembly I** to be held on **May 8th** in District 40 – Wilkes-Barre area. Unless there is an objection, I will volunteer our district to assist with clean up after the event, that way we won't have to leave as early to attend. It is my hope that there will be enough enthusiasm for this assembly that we will see fit to rent a large van and have a repeat District 36 Road Trip!

Our Delegate, Ken D., recently shared a document about how agenda items are submitted for the General Service Conference. Copies of this document are being provided to you as information and for review. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask!

Last month I reported that the December 2020 Quarterly Meeting was slated to be held in our district. Unfortunately, I was notified that because we hosted the Pre-Conference Sharing Session last spring, another district will be selected to host the Quarterly. Please remember that the GSR Responsibilities outlined in our District 36 structure manual include "Attends at least one (1) quarterly Area service meeting." If you haven't been to one of these meetings, please plan to do so in 2020 – it's a great opportunity to see A.A. at the Area level in action! The next Quarterly meeting will be held on March 8th in Quakertown and I have room in my car for YOU!

Please be sure to share with your group members: The PA Hospitality Suite at the 2020 International Convention in Detroit is seeking volunteers and accepting financial contributions. You can visit the area59aa.org website home page for the flyer and additional information. This is a joint effort between Area 59 and Area 60, Eastern and Western Pennsylvania A.A.

Winter Alert: In case of inclement **weather**, Suzanne will send a group email to GSR's advising whether our monthly meeting will be held or rescheduled. You can also text or call me for confirmation.

In grateful service,

Alicia Ann Shenk, DCM

DCMD36A59@gmail.com / Talk/Text: 717-602-9173

ADCM Report

Happy New Year. Looking forward to the second year of our panel!!! We all survived 2019.
I would like to identify some GSR's that have really stood out in the past year and give a special thanks for their service.
Tonya chairperson of workshops
Steve chairperson of district split committee
Jason and Maggie for stepping up and committing to go to Intergroup
Joe and the grapevine committee for the new addition of the grapevine newsletter
Ed for bringing a guest to every meeting
And to all GSR's for their continued commitment to our district.

So far this year I have completed the graphic formatting for the We newsletter publish date 1/15/2020. QR Code——————————————————————>

Events ADCM Will be attending:
01/19/2020 DCM Sharing Session/Mini-Assembly Planning Session
@ 9:00 AM
Emerald Foundation Community Center, 2120 Oregon Pike
Lancaster, PA 17601

02/16/2020 SEPIA/EPGSA Share A Day
@ 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
University of the Sciences Philadelphia, PA

Other Upcoming events

01/18/2020 District 45 Workshop "Mindfulness and AA's History"
@ 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Calvary United Methodist Church-York, PA, 11 N. Richland Ave.
York, PA 17404

2/21-2/23/2020 NORTHEAST REGIONAL A.A. SERVICE ASSEMBLY – Nashua, NH

Please review

- **AA Service Manual**
- **District 36 Structure Manual**
  - **http://aaharrisburg.org/Docs/district/D36%20FINAL%20Structure%20Manual%20Revised%20July%202018.pdf**
- **Area 59 (E.P.G.S.A Newsletter) "WE"**
  - **https://area59aa.org/services-resources/ (bottom right)**
- **Please keep group info updated.**
- **Please reach out to me or any officers if you have any questions regarding Robert rules of order the concepts or the traditions.**

Thank you for your service,
Katherine (Katie)
ADCM D36 A59
adcmd36a59@gmail.com

Frequently Asked Questions on Group Conscience Consideration for Proposed Conference Agenda Items

This overview is general and includes many but not necessarily all of the possible routes a proposed agenda item follows in the trustee, G.S.O. and Grapevine review process. There is no "one size fits all" procedure and, on a case by case basis over time, there may occasionally be inconsistencies. The trustees, corporate directors and staff bring together years of experience in A.A. service in making decisions about the appropriate process or disposition of proposed Conference agenda items.

Sources of agenda items are described in *The A.A. Service Manual* on page S53 of the current edition as "...individual A.A. members, groups, delegates, trustees, area assemblies, area committee members, and directors and staff members of A.A.W.S. and the Grapevine."

Routing of proposals

Q. Are all proposed Conference agenda items sent to the Conference Coordinator?

A. No. Items are often sent to other G.S.O staff members who are secretaries to trustees' committees or directly to the Grapevine. Also, there may be on-going projects in trustees' committees that are not forwarded through the Conference Coordinator.

Q. Does G.S.O. keep a master list of all proposed items submitted for possible Conference consideration?

A. In keeping with a 2016 Advisory Action, a list of agenda items proposed submitted to G.S.O. has been posted on the Dashboard for Conference member reference.

Q. What happens when a proposed Conference agenda item arrives at the Conference Coordinator's desk?

A. The Conference Coordinator acknowledges receipt of the proposed agenda item and lets the sender know which of the following options is most appropriate and, if necessary, an explanation of why and how the proposed agenda item is being directed

1. Forwarding to a Trustees' Committee via a G.S.O. Staff Member or Department Head:

   - If the subject of the proposal is related to a staff committee assignment, e.g. CPC, Literature, etc., or Department, i.e. Archives, Finance, etc., the item will usually be forwarded to the appropriate trustees' committee and the sender will also be notified of any actions taken.

2. Forwarding to G.S.O.'s Publications Director or Group Services Staff person:

   - If the suggestion is related to service material, the Literature Catalog, Publications Department procedures, etc. it is usually forwarded to G.S.O.'s Publication Director or Group Services staff person for gathering of experience or background material prior to consideration/review by A.A. World Services, Inc.

3. Forwarding to A.A. World Services, Inc:*

   The following topics are the responsibility of the A.A. W.S., Inc. Board:

   - Suggestions related to the general oversight of the G.S.O.
   - Suggestions for format changes to A.A. literature, literature pricing policies, matters concerning the literature catalog, shipping and invoicing practices.
   - Any matters related to the G.S.O. A.A. Website

4. Forwarding to Chair of the General Service Board;

   - Matters related to Board Decisions/Procedures or to the general oversight of G.S.O and the A.A. Grapevine are forwarded to the Chair of the General Service Board; the chair may answer directly or route the matter to a trustees' committee, another board, the full board, or they might be forwarded to the G.S.O. General Manager – a decision on where an item of this nature goes depends on the particular issue addressed.

5. Forwarding to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board/AA Grapevine Publisher:*

   - Matters relating in any way to the Grapevine or La Viña are forwarded to the AA Grapevine Publisher for disposition and an explanation of how the proposed agenda item will be handled.

***Note:** The A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Boards can forward proposed items directly to a Conference Committee if they wish Conference guidance, advice or direction.

Q. What happens when i is unclear what committee should address a proposed item or where an item should be routed?

A. When it is unclear where a proposed item belongs, it is most frequently forwarded to the trustees' Committee on the Conference for direction.

Q. When might a staff member assume direct responsibility for responding to a proposal?

A. The staff member is responsible for following up on items not being forwarded for consideration. The following are examples of instances when items have not been forwarded for consideration:

1. When the matter proposed is not suitable for Conference consideration or is clearly an outside issue; for example, a proposed item from a number of years ago asked that for environmental reasons the Conference discuss banning Styrofoam cups from A.A. meetings.

2. When there has not been a widely expressed need emanating from the Fellowship regarding a proposal, a staff member may respond after consultation with the chair of the appropriate trustees' committee and with other G.S.O. staff with the suggestion that wider, local sharing take place prior to the proposed item moving forward. Such a response is not a rejection of the item – it is encouragement for further discussion. The sender may choose to follow this suggestion or not, and is free to resubmit the item. Example: a district proposed that the word "disease" be removed from A.A. pamphlets. There was an area assembly taking place prior to the deadline for agenda items to come to G.S.O. and the staff member suggested that the matter be discussed at this assembly; this occurred and the issue failed to achieve substantial unanimity and the district declined to have the item moved forward for further consideration.

3. When Advisory Actions related to the proposed item already exist, the staff person may respond to the sender with this information – again, this is not a rejection, but a clarification that the matter proposed has been addressed by at least one previous Conference. The sender is free to resubmit the item. Example: an individual member requested that a 4th Step workbook be developed. A staff member forwarded research as to how this matter was addressed by previous Conferences.

4. When a proposal comes in that is so singular in nature or peculiar that it is not appropriate to pass it along to a trustees' committee, the staff member will let the sender know that their letter will be kept on file for future reference – this does not happen often. Example: an individual member wanted a pamphlet developed to explain the difference between "friendship" and "fellowship." This is a singular proposal and the sender was asked to seek wider discussion on the matter and notified that their letter would be kept on file for future reference if further interest in the development of such a pamphlet was expressed.

Q. Can the G.S.O. staff pass along agenda items directly to a Conference committee?

A. Before being placed on the agenda of a Conference committee, each item is reviewed by a trustees' committee. Items for Conference committees without a corresponding

trustees' committee are frequently reviewed by either the trustees' Literature Committee or the trustees' Committee on the Conference. There are times when the service committees, Cooperation With the Professional Community, Corrections, Public Information and Treatment and Accessibilities, have very light agendas for an upcoming Conference. Occasionally, in the past, Conference committee secretaries have added one or two discussion agenda items to flesh out the agendas – this has often proven beneficial because the topics get discussed at many pre-Conference events. The policy now is that one or two discussion topics may be added only if, after consultation with the trustees' and Conference chairs of the particular committee, they deem the discussion topics appropriate and useful.

Trustees' Committees

Q. Prior to the trustees' committee meeting, do the committee members receive background related to the item so they can make an informed decision?

A. Yes. Members of the trustees' committees receive extensive background material and subcommittee reports several weeks before their quarterly meetings. If background was not provided with the original agenda submission, the staff secretary may write to the sender and ask that pertinent background be supplied. In addition, the staff secretary will gather pertinent background from G.S.O. resources.

Q. Do the trustees thoroughly discuss each proposed item?

A. Yes, they do. Occasionally, they have studied the background and thought about the issue in advance of their quarterly meeting, and they will find themselves in general agreement to either move the item forward to a Conference Committee or not or to send the item in another direction in which case there may not be a lengthy discussion.

Q. What options does a trustees' committee have in disposing of a proposed Conference agenda item it is considering?

A. Here are some options:

- The committee can agree to forward the item to a Conference committee for consideration.

- The committee can approve implementation of the suggestion, and, when appropriate, choose not to seek Conference ratification of this decision. Example: three areas requested that a trustees' committee be assigned or formed to oversee the annual revision of The A.A. Service Manual. The committee agreed this was a good idea but one that needed to be addressed by the Chair of the General Service Board. It was forwarded to the Chair and after further consultation, it was decided to place oversight of this document with the trustees' Literature Committee.

- The committee can take no action on the item which means that, for any number of reasons, they do not feel Conference or further trustees' consideration is warranted at this time. The committee secretary is often asked to explain to the sender the reasons the committee made this decision. Often suggestions like the suggestion to publish the Fourth Edition of the Big Book are considered over many years before the concept is accepted by the trustees, and, eventually, the Conference.

- The committee can forward the item to another committee, to A.A.W.S. or the Grapevine Board, to G.S.O. or to the General Service Board if it believes more information is needed before making a decision, or if it believes that the item would be more appropriately handled by another group conscience.

- The committee can form a subcommittee to examine the matter more fully before making a decision.

- The committee can table the matter until its next committee meeting.

Q. Do the trustees' committees give more weight to an area's agenda submission than to other's submissions?

A. There is no absolute "yes" or "no" to this question. Every effort is made to act fairly and on principle on all items submitted. The trustees' most important consideration is the subject matter. The procedures outlined above have been in place for many years, over all have been accepted by the Fellowship and are consistent with the Conference Charter and Concepts. The committee members must determine if their informed group conscience feels the proposed agenda submission should be placed on the Conference agenda. Having said that, the trustees recognize that a proposal that has been put forward by an area assembly has been widely discussed, has received substantial unanimity at an area assembly and, therefore, has the overall support of groups who attended and voted at the area assembly.

Q. Shouldn't an area's submission take precedence over everyone else's proposals?

A. Based on the guidance in the Concepts, the Conference Charter and the A.A. Service Manual, the trustees' committees and the General Service Board are charged with taking each proposal primarily on its merits not its source. Nowhere is it stated that, in terms of proposing Conference agenda items, an area is more important than an individual A.A. member, group, district or anyone else eligible to submit items for consideration. As human beings, though, the trustees' committee members cannot but note, for example, that an item is coming from an area assembly, a past delegate or a trustee and, possibly, have some tendency to consider an item from these sources a bit differently. The procedure is not an exact science but, again, every effort is made to act fairly and on principle, to seek God's will for us and have the courage to carry it out in order to safeguard, support and serve the Conference process.

Backround:

The Area 59 Ad hoc Literature Subcommittee voted unanimously to bring forward the District 55 proposal to revise the first 164 pages of the Big Book for review by the Area Committee. Although our subcommittee members individually feel that this is an historical document that should not be changed, we believe that our few voices do not adequately represent our Area as a whole, and so we bring this matter to you. As always we encourage you to think of the next sick and suffering alcoholic and how we can best carry A.A.s message of hope, as well as would this be the best use of A.A.s resources of time, effort and money.

District 55 proposal to revise the first 164 pages of the Big Book

Version 4, April 26th, 2019

"We recommend that the Conference form a study committee to audit the first 164 pages of the Big Book with the purpose of identifying changes that can be made to make the Big Book more reflective of the A.A. membership composition. The focus should be on identifying the following for possible change:

- Pronoun usage – where possible the gender-neutral form should be incorporated.
- Passages or sections that are no longer consistent with or relevant when taken in context of society in general or the A.A. membership composition.
- The chapters *To Wives and The Family Afterward* should specifically be evaluated for revisions to be more consistent with today's membership.

Once items have been identified these should be prioritized both by the ease of editing and the possible impact to the context of the message. Changes to the overall message should be minimized or avoided entirely. Simplification of the vocabulary should not be considered and references to historical figures and events should remain unchanged.

Where possible, suitable changes should be suggested for incorporation into the text subject to Conference approval.

Examples of changes consistent with the proposal:

Pronoun usage: The gender-neutral form is not the same as no gender; rather it is the generally accepted form of writing that does not assign specific gender to an action or uses a *he or she* format.

From the Big Book page 17, the sentence, "But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about *himself,"* could readily be changed to "But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about *themselves,"* without altering the meaning. This would be considered an appropriate change.

Passages or sections that are no longer consistent with or relevant when taken in context of society in general or the A.A. membership composition

The following is a passage from the Big Book followed by the section rewritten in a fashion aligned with the proposal. This was done in a single pass, with little thought concerning the precise words that could be used. Even so, the message seems consistent.

Original text: *Into Action*, page 80

The chances are that we have domestic troubles. Perhaps we are mixed up with women in a fashion we wouldn't care to have advertised. We doubt if, in this respect, alcoholics are fundamentally much worse than other people. But drinking does complicate sex relations in the home. After a few years with an alcoholic, a wife gets worn out, resentful and uncommunicative. How could she be anything else? The husband begins to feel lonely, sorry for himself. He commences to look around in the night clubs, or their equivalent, for something besides liquor. Perhaps he is having a secret and exciting affair with "the girl who understands." In fairness we must say that she may understand, but what are we going to do about a thing like that? A man so involved often feels very remorseful at times, especially if he is married to a loyal and courageous girl who has literally gone through hell for him.

Revised test:

The chances are that we have domestic troubles. Perhaps we are mixed up with someone in a fashion we wouldn't care to have advertised. We doubt if, in this respect, alcoholics are fundamentally much worse than other people. But drinking does complicate sex relations in the home. After a few years with an alcoholic, a spouse gets worn out, resentful and uncommunicative. How could they be anything else? The alcoholic begins to feel lonely, sorry for themselves. They commence to look around in the night clubs, or their equivalent, for something besides liquor. Perhaps they are having a secret and exciting affair with "someone who understands." In fairness we must say that they may understand, but what are we going to do about a thing like that? A person so involved often feels very remorseful at times, especially if they are married to a loyal and courageous partner who has literally gone through hell for them.

Chapters: The chapters *To Wives, and The Family Afterward* and perhaps even *To Employers* are, for a variety of reasons particularly challenging. Perhaps applications of the first two revision criteria, which are essentially simple word substitutions, may result in improvement. However, the apparent revision level required for these chapters may result in rewrites on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis. The text would be recognizable, but may differ significantly from the original text. Thus, it is outside the scope of this document to address what may be done in these cases.

Examples of changes not consistent with the proposal:

Historical references to people or events should remain the same. For example, *Bill's Story* is a period piece. The vocabulary and descriptions should not change. Being able to connect to a period of 80-90 years ago when alcoholics experienced the same feelings we have today is of immense value to the continuity of the fellowship.

Similarly, when discussing a Higher Power in *We Agnostics* the proposal of travel to the moon is presented as a mechanism of faith in an idea we cannot know with certainty. Would changing that historical prediction to something new be more relevant? Or does it provide connection to the thinking of those that came before us? We think the latter, and such references should remain unchanged.

Additional Notes: The proposal has been made specific to clarify the objective. It should not be construed as an attempt to make a simple-language big book. The exact mechanism the committee uses to identify items, develop changes, and the subsequent approval process is left to the Conference. However, we think much of that is obvious. One important detail to note is the 1995 conference advisory action preventing changes to the first 164 pages remains in effect. That would need to be amended before any changes could be made."

Original District 55 Proposal Background:

"A communication audit was commissioned by the General Service Board (GSB) to perform a comprehensive evaluation of A.A.'s (GSO, AAWS, and AAGV) ability and effectiveness in sending, receiving, and sharing information with various audiences within the organization, as well as with key external constituencies. Impact Collaborative (IC) was selected for this effort. It is apparent in the opening pages of the summary report that IC made great efforts to understand A.A.'s principle of attraction rather than promotion. This understanding was important in formulating the conclusions as well as recommendations for moving forward. The full scope of this report is not addressed here but understanding the conclusions of the report might be helpful in assessing the importance of the proposal outlined here.

As noted in the Communications Audit presented to the GSB by IC, "There are significant challenges in communications that are negatively impacting A.A.'s relevance, and impeding its effectiveness in reaching the still-suffering alcoholic." The audit provides numerous examples of A.A. pamphlets that are not reaching their intended audiences and, if they do ultimately reach those audiences, are not providing a particularly compelling or current picture of A.A. and how it can help the still-suffering alcoholic.

A memo from the managing editor of A.A.W.S., contained in the background material for the 2019 GSC agenda item Literature – I, noted the following, "The audit continues by noting that many of these pamphlets are dated, with language and references that are falling further and further behind the times, **presenting an overall perception of A.A. as an organization obsessed with its own history and perhaps out of touch with today's population."**

This blunt assessment is followed by suggestions for working to more quickly update the pamphlets. A 2019 agenda item is specifically targeted to facilitate GSO's ability to do exactly that. It remains to be seen if that will pass.

What is not mentioned in the summary report is the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the primary text of the fellowship. The first 164 pages were completed in 1939 and have remained **largely**[1] unchanged since that time. There remain numerous passages

that are cringe-worthy when read in mixed company. The chapter *To Employers* contains suggestions that may not be permissible in today's environment. Considering that 38% of the fellowship are women, the chapter *To Wives* and some of *The Family Afterward* have ceased to be particularly relevant, as written, in the context of our current and future membership.

Some have suggested gender-neutral big book to maximize the inclusivity of text. That is part of the objective of the proposal. However, the gender-neutral notion, by some, refers to removal of all reference to gender. It seems likely though that efforts to make the first 164 pages of the Big Book more appealing to increasingly small segments of the population would paralyze the work as it has happened for the 2018 Membership Survey[2]. Thus, it seems important to be clear that this is not the objective of the proposal.

It has also been suggested that a plain-language big book be produced. The collective group conscience might one day make a plain-language book so, but that is not the objective of this proposal. At least one plain language version of the first 164 pages exists on Amazon[3], though it is not a Conference approved item. Having read much of the text I have the following observations:

- The reading is much easier than the Big Book.
- The chapter *To the Partners of Alcoholics* is considerably more readable, and even preferable, to the chapter *To Wives*.
- The change of references from God to Higher Power are not particularly noticeable. In places where it is clearly God being referenced, those remain in the text.
- Gender-neutral pronouns are used in a way consistent with what has been done with Conference approved pamphlets.
- Paragraphs/sections are missing, though it is not obvious why. These are not necessarily controversial sections, so it is a mystery why they were left out. This does impact the message being delivered.

Despite some positives, where this one attempt falls short is lack of depth of meaning contained in the Big Book. Language can be a precise tool when used by a skilled writer. The words selected for the Big Book have shades of meaning and an impact that is lost when plain language. This is especially pronounced when comparing the early chapters. For example, *Bill's Story*, is a period piece set mostly in the 1920's and 30's. Even though that fact is conveyed in the text, the plain language used makes it seem as if it happened just a short time ago. It is just not authentic. Finally, the plain language text lacks the authority that these people know what they are talking about that is clearly conveyed in the Big Book. A text book for school is usually not in plain language. Instead it is expected the reader will learn what is contained in the text book so that they might pass it on. A more skilled writer might be able to pull off an improved simple language book than this one attempt, but that is not the objective of this proposal.

Instead the focus is to modernize the Big Book to reflect the fact that 38% of A.A. members are women. It is difficult to ignore that the book is male-centric. Recognizing

that many of the anecdotes contained in those pages are based on historical figures renders the possibility that simply changing pronouns and names will solve anything. However, a general shift to be more inclusive and references of women subservient to men would be much easier to address. That social attitude has nothing to do with getting sober anyway. Further, redevelopment of sections that have lost much of their relevance such as *To Employers, To Wives, and The Family Afterward*, or perhaps complete replacement might be achievable as well.

It is the proper time to make this attempt for the following reasons:

- There is an agenda item for a 5th edition of the Big Book. Should it pass it will take several more years to make that a reality thus providing a window of opportunity to audit the first 164 pages.
- The stark findings of the Communications Audit confirmed what many already thought regarding the literature. The shortcomings are laid bare, and active steps are in being taken to improve the situation for pamphlets such that it could be similarly extended to the Big Book.
- This is an issue that will not improve over time. It will continue to chip away at the relevance of A.A., and the challenge of correcting it may come when it can no longer be ignored. Better to attempt it now when A.A. is strongly established than when it is nearly too late.
- We can wish otherwise, but the public perception of A.A. matters when it relates to carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. The issues with the first 164 pages are known. It cannot be known the consequences of not addressing these issues. However, conclusions from the communication audit, tends to suggest the impact will be negative if not addressed.

Previous Conference Advisory Actions:

The following are related actions drawn from the Conference Advisory Actions 1951-2018 booklet. The context or background of these decisions are not presently available. Failed actions are also not included. Further research into the archives is necessary.

GSC Literature Committee

It was recommended that:

1986 – As the preface to the Big Book clearly states that the text was written in 1939 and that is has not been changed, no further explanation regarding out-of-date phrases and/or gender-oriented pronouns or chapter titles is necessary

1992 – The 1986 Advisory Actions (listed below) pertaining to sexist language in the Big Book and other Bill W. writings adequately address the issue:

> "As the preface to the Big Book clearly states that the text was written in 1939 and that it has not been changed, no further explanation regarding out-of-date phrases and/or gender-oriented pronouns of chapter titles is necessary." (Advisory Action #31)

"The A.A.W.S. editorial staff continue to degenderize A.A. literature, with the exception of Bill W.'s writings, as the items are reprinted, e.g., 'staffing the booth' rather than 'manning the booth,' etc." (Advisory Action #35)

1993 – Because of strong sentiment against any changes in the first 164 pages of the Big Book, the request to rewrite the first three chapters of the Big Book not be implemented.

1995 – The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewards, "The Doctor's Opinion," "Doctor Bob's Nightmare" and the Appendices remain as is.[4]

1997 – 2001 : The Fourth Edition of the Big Book was in preparation. Each year the 1995 advisory action was reaffirmed.

2006 – The word "largely" be added to the second sentence in the second paragraph of the preface to the Fourth Edition on page xi, as it originally appears in the preface of the Second Edition so that the sentence reads:

"Therefore, the first portion of this volume, describing the A.A. recovery program, has been left largely untouched in the course of the revisions made for the second, third, and fourth editions."

NOTES:

[1] The refers to the 2006 agenda item (see above) where "largely" was added to the second sentence in the second paragraph to the Fourth Edition on page *xi* According to some reports this was done after it was pointed out that several hundred changes have been made to the original text. Some changes could be argued to be simple editorial changes, but many others were more significant and done without Conference approval.

[2] The membership survey is a voluntary survey made available to all A.A. members for the purpose of understanding the composition of the A.A. community, the access points to the fellowship, and other items such as length of sobriety. It assists the Conference in understanding how the application of resources to carry the message impact the membership composition, and where more work is needed. Ideally, these surveys are conducted every four years with the last carried out in 2014. As noted by the Northeast Regional Trustee at the 2019 NERAASA event, the 2018 survey has been delayed because it has not been fully determined how to address the gender question.

[3] *The EZ Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous: Same Message – Simple Language.* A second book has also been identified: *A Simple Program: A Contemporary Translation of the Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.* The latter was not obtained for review.

[4] This advisory action remain in effect today, and would need to be amended before any changes could be implemented.

Motion:

The Area 59 Ad hoc Literature Subcommittee makes a motion that the Area Committee consider the District 55 proposal to revise the first 164 pages of the Big Book to determine if we want to bring the proposal forward as a Conference Agenda Item.

The proposal "recommend(s) that the Conference form a study committee to audit the first 164 pages of the Big Book with the purpose of identifying changes that can be made to make the Big Book more reflective of the A.A. membership composition. The focus should be on identifying the following for possible change:

- Pronoun usage – where possible the gender-neutral form should be incorporated.
- Passages or sections that are no longer consistent with or relevant when taken in context of society in general or the A.A. membership composition.
- The chapters *To Wives and The Family Afterward* should specifically be evaluated for revisions to be more consistent with today's membership."

Alcoholics Anonymous®
www.aa.org

General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10115 / Telephone: (212) 870-3400

Please direct all communications to:
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

History of "Open" and "Closed" A.A. meetings

Although we cannot provide a definitive start date for closed meetings, our AA literature, namely, *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* and *Pass It On*, show the gradual development of 'closed' meetings as early as 1935. For a number of years, a few early A.A. members, along with Bill W., held 'special' meetings of their own, while still attending Oxford Group meetings. They realized how vital it was to address the single issue of recovery instead of the Oxford Group's program that was focusing on all aspects of Christian living. The first A.A. members started having a second 'alcoholics only' meeting after Oxford Group meetings – *"Tension began to develop between the main group at Calvary Church and Bill's struggling band of alcoholics. The Oxford Group leaders resented the fact that Bill was holding separate meetings for Alcoholics at Clinton Street. They criticized his work with the alcoholics as being "narrow and divisive." The alcoholics, on the other hand, felt that they needed these special meetings because many of the nonalcoholic Oxford Group members did not understand them."* [Pass It On; pp. 169]

Most likely first closed meeting started sometime in the late 1930s. However, it is important to keep in mind that as meetings were organized throughout the country and the world, many of those were still started by a non-alcoholic friend, such as a local medical doctor or member of the clergy who became aware of the A.A. program and believed that establishing groups would and could be helpful in the local community. We know about A.A.'s first gathering at doctors' or judges' offices, etc. Obviously, the development of closed meetings would be later step in these communities.

In August 1944, the *AA Grapevine* featured an article that addressed the issue of "closed" meetings:

> *"Closed meetings are for the purpose of discussing personal problems concerning alcohol, problems that one does not feel free to discuss in the presence of non-alcoholics."*

A.A. Headquarters' first secretary Ruth Hock addressed a concern raised by a member on "closed" and "open" meetings. Ruth wrote:

> *"Meetings all over the country vary but little. When meetings are small as they are in all new groups, usually they are held as open discussion meetings. That is,*

one man is appointed chairman for the evening – he tells something of his own story and how he applies A.A. to his own particular problems and needs. He then invites questions and answers them to the best of his ability or allows someone else to do so.

As the meetings grow larger, they must perchance somewhat more formal.....The same policy is followed, for a chairman is appointed for the evening and he in turn asks three or four others to speak in conjunction with him.

Almost all groups have at least one meeting a week where wives, mothers, and friends can attend if they care to. While the group is small the meetings are not thrown open to all corners unless the members themselves decide to do so, that is, they are usually restricted to close relatives, close friends, etc. But when they get larger and held along the lines of the New York meeting described above, they are usually thrown open to anyone who cares to attend. We sometimes have a minister address the meeting, or a priest, or a doctor, etc...." [Letter: September 16, 1941]

We can infer therefore, that in the early days, special types of group meetings were organized to accommodate the growing A.A. population.

Our co-founder's comments...

As you know, Bill refrained from intervening from local affairs and was therefore open-minded in his criticism when asked about formal meeting formats.

In response to a member's question of having non-alcoholic women at A.A. meetings, Bill wrote:

As groups get larger and break down into smaller units, a trend always develops toward:

1. *A large central mixed meeting, weekly or monthly. (Outsiders sometimes free to come)*
2. *Meetings in small groups for alcoholics only. (These sometimes take the form of instruction meetings in spots where there is no "sponsorship" system.)*
3. *Mixed social events. (Organized or spontaneous)*

While the form of these trends varies greatly from place to place, the underlying idea is always the same: That to be most effective for the alcoholic, AA eventually reaches into other areas such as family, friends, employers, doctors,

clergy, public relations as a whole – in fact into the whole community in which the alcoholic lives.

Just how a particular AA locality is going to meet this situation (after it becomes clear) is up to the people in it and never to an outsider like me.

My experience is that the dawning of the realization that AA has to be inclusive is often a slow process which can't be hurried. The more one pushes the more resistance is generated. Still slower to come is general agreement just how details ought to be handled. In these respects, AA is always a 'growth' – never a 'leap'. Leaping where angels fear to tread is just as unprofitable with us as elsewhere!" [Letter: January 25, 1945]

In the following letter dated December 14, 1949, Bill wrote to a member in Michigan who was instrumental in conducting the first "open meeting to the public" in Pontiac.

"While the so-called public meeting is questioned by many AA members, I favor them myself providing anonymity is respected at the public level and that we ask for nothing for ourselves except understanding.

Apparently you folks of Pontiac produced just such an event. I hope it brings you a lot of drunks."

Bill addresses the issue of both narcotics and A.A. members attending a group meeting to member Paul G. Paul had written to Bill stating that the Medical Facility in Vacaville, California had combined alcoholics and narcotics into one group – "The read the first step at their meetings as follows 'We admitted we were powerless over alcohol and narcotics.'" Bill responded with the following:

"A year or two ago I had quite a correspondence with Betty T. respecting the narcotic business. I think I advised her that she could certainly bring narcotic cases to an open A.A. meeting. Neither could I see anything but benefit if a person like herself, bearing the double stigma, tried to carry the message to addict groups not bearing the A.A. name. The principle is that no group should use the A.A. name which is not strictly an A.A. activity; on the other hand, any A.A. member has the right to participate and help any group that he or she wishes, purely as an individual matter.

There is a further principle. If, for example, an A.A. group actually votes to have a preacher or a psychiatrist or an addict on its program – and that is the will of the group – then no one can really object. But of course, a strong objection can

be raised where these speakers are forced on the attention of the group without the group's consent. This has sometimes happened, I believe. On the principle of group sovereignty, an A.A. group in prison can, and sometimes does, invite other inmates to their open meetings. This, it seems to me, is purely their own affair. Just so long as we don't form mixed groups and put the A.A. name in the title, we seem to be okay. That's the point where trouble usually starts." [Letter: October 8, 1957]

Yet on the subject of narcotics, Bill wrote:

"I perfectly understand the difficulty you are having on the Coast with the narcotic problem. Here the same principle is involved. A year or two ago I had an extensive correspondence with a gal who was trying to do her best for those poor unfortunates. She is an A.A. and also a narcotic which enables her to form a rapport with them. She was all for mixed groups, or worse still, introducing narcotics into A.A. membership.

These practices I very much discouraged. However, I did give her every encouragement, as an individual, to try to help these people. I did also say that I saw no reason why she should not bring them to open meetings where they might see and hear how AA. works in order to make an adaptation for themselves. After all, an open meeting is an open meeting. But this did not include group membership, or speaking to A.A. groups on the subject of narcotic addiction. I think this was made quite clear, and I hope that this is the line we ought to take.

While we should look with disfavor upon any misuse of the A.A. name in connection with these mixed groups or anything that resembles an endorsement, I do not however think that we can put an electric fence around ourselves and refuse individual members the privilege of helping in other problem areas. If we carry it too far, that could be considered anti-social.

My observations of these problems over a long period is this: do not use the A.A. name in connection with what is not strictly an A.A. activity." [Letter: October 18, 1957]

Various passages in our CURRENT literature about open meetings

As you know, the current version of the Conference-approved pamphlet "The AA Group" reads:

The purpose of all A.A. group meetings, as the Preamble states, is for A.A. members to "share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism." Toward this end, A.A. groups have both open and closed meetings.

Closed meetings are for A.A. members only, or for those who have a drinking problem and "have a desire to stop drinking."

Open meetings are available to anyone interested in Alcoholics Anonymous' program of recovery from alcoholism. Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers.

At both types of meetings, the A.A. chairperson may request that participants confine their discussion to matters pertaining to recovery from alcoholism.

Whether open or closed, A.A. group meetings are conducted by A.A. members who determine the format of their meetings.

The current version of the Conference-approved pamphlet "Speaking at Non-AA Meetings" contains the following passage about open meetings:

5. *What is an open meeting? A group meeting that anyone – alcoholic or nonalcoholic – may attend. Usually a leader opens and closes the meeting and introduces the speakers (almost always A.A.s, like the leader.) They tell about their lives before and after joining A.A. and may give personal views on its program.*

The current version of the Conference-approved pamphlet "44 Questions" contains the following passage about open meetings:

An open meeting of A.A. is a group meeting that any member of the community, alcoholic or nonalcoholic, may attend...

A typical open meeting will usually have a "leader" and other speakers. The leader opens and closes the meeting and introduces each speaker. With rare exceptions, the speakers at an open meeting are A.A. members...

The A.A. guidelines (not Conference-approved) on the relationship between AA and Al-Anon, last revised in 2002, read:

"The A.A. Group" pamphlet suggests, 'Whether open or closed, A.A. group meetings are conducted by A.A. members, who determine the format of their

meeting.' At open meetings, non-A.A.s may be invited to share, depending upon the conscience of the group.

Proposed change to District Structure Manual

Finance Subcommittee Section V, page 14

Current :

The Sub-committee: develops annual District budget; tracks expenditures against Panel-approved budgets; develops and submits revised budget proposals, as necessary; and submits proposed budget for approval. The District Treasurer acts as the advisor for this Sub-committee.

Proposed:

The Sub-committee: develops annual District budget, **using prior year's budget as ~~the baseline~~**; tracks expenditures against Panel-approved budgets; ~~develops and submits revised budget~~ proposals, as necessary; and submits proposed budget for approval. The District Treasurer acts as the advisor for this Sub-committee.

Motion carried and passes.

and actual a guideline

Amendment~~ed~~ - Proposed - "prior years actual" instead.

Motion carryest did not.

Original proposal.

RE: Finance Committee report

Date: June 10, 2019

In an effort to provide direction to the next finance subcommittee and to provide some clarity and transparency to the budget process the Finance Subcommittee proposes adoption of the following:

- Each new panel[1] will be provided with an annual budget based upon the previous years' budget which shall be prepared for them by the finance sub- committee of the preceding panel.
- Upon formation of the new subcommittee's in January each subcommittee will review the prepared budget and submit any proposed changes to the new finance subcommittee at the February meeting for year 1 of the 2 year term of the panel.
- The (new) finance subcommittee will review each request and make a recommendation to the panel based upon the districts' finances, at the March meeting.
- The revised budgets will be distributed no later than the April meeting in the first year of the panel period.
- Thereafter each subcommittee will conduct quarterly budget reviews and submit any reasoned changes to the finance subcommittee for consideration at the meeting in May, August, November and February, as applicable.
- The quarterly budget review process will continue through the second year of the 2 year panel period.

[1] A panel is the group of GSR representatives which turns over every two years.

SECTION V
SUB-COMMITTEES

All GSRs are requested to voluntarily join one or more of the Sub-committees. All Sub-committees meet at times set by the Sub-committee members. A District Officer must be assigned as an advisor to each Sub-committee. Each Sub-committee will elect a chairperson and secretary at its first meeting and report this information as part of its report at the next District Meeting. Each Sub-committee will make monthly reports at the District Meeting, as appropriate. The chairperson must be a GSR unless otherwise noted. Sub-committees can only make recommendations and all recommendations must be voted upon and approved by the District Panel. AGSRs are welcome to participate on Sub-committees and will be eligible to vote on any Sub-committee matter.

Archives Sub-committee

The Archive Sub-committee gathers, organizes, and maintains, and is responsible for the safety of the archives. The Sub-committee provides materials to the District or Area as needed. The District Archivist acts as advisor to the Archives Sub-committee. Refer to published AA Guidelines for Archives for more detailed information.

Structure Sub-committee

Responsible for ongoing review of the District 36 structure manual, making recommendations for change consistent with the District's role in supporting the Groups.

Workshops Sub-committee

Coordinates all aspects of District 36 workshops. They can be independently run or done in conjunction with other Districts.

Finance Sub-committee

The Sub-committee: develops annual District budget; tracks expenditures against Panel-approved budgets; develops and submits revised budget proposals, as necessary; and, submits proposed budget to Panel for approval. The District Treasurer acts as the advisor for this Sub-committee.

Ad-hoc Sub-committee

Ad- hoc Sub-committees are created by the DCM to address unique issues that are not well served by the existing sub-committees, e.g.: District Split Ad-hoc Sub-committee. There are no requirements to be part of an Ad-hoc Sub- committee other than to be a current member of AA in good standing.

In all cases, the Ad-hoc Subcommittee will be terminated when:

a) The current DCM determines the issue has been resolved;
b) By 2/3 majority vote of the current District Panel, or;
c) When the current District Panel ends, whichever comes first.

Succeeding DCMs may restart the same Ad-hoc Sub-committees at his/her sole discretion.

DISTRICT 36
RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT: OFFICER AT LARGE JOB DESCRIPTION
AD HOC DESCRIPTION COMMITTEE: ED, JASON, JOE

The Ad Hoc Committee on Recommendations met as requested to work on a Proposed Job Description and Related Recommendations for the Newly-Adopted Officer At Large (AOL) Position. We did so in order to be able to act on this starting in January 2020. The entire Ad Hoc Committee of Three persons met on Friday, January 10, 2010. We unanimously suggest that the District Officers and GSRs consider adopting these job description recommendations.

It was our understanding that this is to be a One Year Experimental Position starting January 2020. This may become permanent. With that in mind, we recommend the following description:

1. Learn the Duties of the Treasurer, Secretary, and ADCM.
2. Assume the Duties of the other officers (except the DCM) when that officer is unavailable.
3. The AOL Should Not Serve in Any Officer role more than 3 months without an election (since three months is in the Structure Manual)
4. Participate in Mini-Assemblies, Workshops, and Workshop Planning, EPGSA when the other attending officer designed to attend cannot attend. The AOL is compensated for that work as would the officer who would normally attend but was unable to attend.
5. Resign any other District Service Position (including their current group GSR position)
6. Be an Experienced GSR (This can be met from any of the current GSRs since this is Year 2 of the Current Panel and is experimental for this year. This can be easily met if made permanent at the end of this Panel because the selection of the AOL will be made in December of the end of this Panel when the other officers are made as well).
7. Should Not Serve as GSR for any other group.
8. Three Years of Continuous Sobriety (like the Structure Manual for District 36 Leadership Positions)
9. Term Length is Two Years (the current one is Temporary for One Year but if this is made permanent it would be made at the same time that the other Officers for the District are made.)
10. Performs Other Duties Upon the Request of any District Officer.

- Note: The other general descriptions in the document we examined are tasks that the current District Officers are already doing. Consequently, we did not examine the other general tasks provided to us that were in the document arising from a survey of 12 Groups when it comes to suggesting what the Office At Large Responsibilities are in Area 59.

I. Group Related Topics.

A. **Unity within the AA Group.**
What works for and against unity within a group? How can problems be addressed? A review of the Traditions as they apply within the Group

B. **The AA Group and How it Functions**
About the variety of ways AA Groups work. Just what is an AA Group anyway? What's a Meeting? Who is a member and what are the responsibilities of a member? What trusted servants might a group have, and what is their purpose. What about meeting procedures, group consciences, business meetings, inventories etc? What about self support?

C. **The AA Group in Relation to its Community**
How might we better reach out the alcoholic who still suffers just down the street from our meeting house? Do people in my town know that AA is there, and how to find it should they, or someone they know need it? Do the Doctors, Social Workers, Judges etc in my town know what AA is (and isn't) and how to refer their clients to AA? Is my group reaching out to the alcoholic who still suffers in my town's jails, hospitals and treatment facilities?

D. **The AA Group in Relation to Neighboring Groups and the rest of AA**
How can AA groups cooperate with each other and learn from each others successes and mistakes? How can my group do its part in carrying the message across the nation and around the world? (In other words, how the AA Group fits into the General Service Structure.)

E. **How the Group can reach out to the Alcoholic who still suffers**
It isn't enough just to open the doors and wait for alcoholics to find us. Tradition 5 suggests carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. How might we better reach out to the alcoholic, using attraction rather than promotion?

F. **Working with an Influx of Court Ordered People**
How can we genuinely welcome the court ordered newcomer into our group without compromising our group's order and singleness of purpose? How can cooperating with judges, parole officers, etc help?

G. **Questions & Answers on Sponsorship**
A review of the Sponsorship Pamphlet and sharing of experience.

H. **Conducting Beginner's Meetings**
Why some groups choose to provide Beginner's Meetings. What types of formats they use, and how to start one. A review of the GSO Packet on the subject, and sharing of experience.

II. Unity Oriented Topics.

A. **Understanding Anonymity**
Our Traditions 11 and 12 discuss Anonymity at the public level, the personal level, and as a spiritual concept. How can we better understand and practice that principle?

B. **Singleness of Purpose: Balancing our Welcome and our Limitations**
Tradition 3 states our purpose and welcomes all who want it. Tradition 5 states our limitations. Do we sometimes lose sight of one when we focus too much on the other? How can we best maintain our single purpose while continuing to extend our welcome? This would be a study of traditions 3 and 5.

C. **AA's Relationship with the Outside World**
How can AA members and Groups best relate to the world we live in? A review of the traditions as they apply to our relationship to the outside world. About anonymity, non-affiliation, self support, opinions on outside issues, and professionalism.

D. **Anonymity as a Spiritual Principle and Principles before Personalities**
A review of Tradition 12.

III. Service Oriented Topics.

A. Service Committee Workshops
Presentations on individual Service Committees. (CPC, PI, Corrections, Treatment, Bridge the Gap, Gratitude, Grapevine, Policies and Procedures, Archives, Media Services) Presentation designed to help understand what the committee is about and how you, your group, or your district might help.

B. Speaking to Non-AA Meetings and Groups
Experience on how best to talk to groups (or individual) students, teachers, professionals and other non-AA audiences.

C. The Role of the District in AA
What is a District? What is their purpose? What does a GSR bring to the District Meting, and what might he take home? What does a DCM bring to the meeting, and what does he take away. How about the Service Committee Chairs As a GSR, DCM etc, am I doing contributing my part?

D. The Roles of the DCM
What is a DCM? What is their purpose? What is their responsibility to the Area? What is their responsibility to the District? How do they relate to the Delegate, the Groups, and the GSRs? What makes for a good DCM Report?

E. The Roles of the GSR.
What is a GSR? What is their purpose? What is their responsibility to their Group? What is their responsibility to the District? What is their responsibility to the Area? How do they relate to their group's officers and to the DCMs? What makes for a good GSR Report?

F. The Roles of the Service Committee in the District.
What are the Service Committees? Why do we have them? How do they help carry the message? What is the responsibility of a Committee Chair? Who are the committee Members, and what is their role? What makes for a good Service Committee Report?

G. Leadership in AA
What makes a good Leader in AA? How can we improve our leadership skills? How can we be both leader and trusted servant? A review of Concept 9.

H. Our Rights in AA Service.
The right of decision, the right of participation and the right of appeal. How do they apply at the various levels of service? Concepts 3, 4, and 5.

I. Responsibility and Authority for AA's General Services.
What are AA's General Services? Who is responsible for them, and who has the authority to conduct them? Concepts 1 and 2.

J. AA General Service Entities and how they operate together.
The Conference, the Trustees, AAWS, and the Grapevine. What are their roles and how do they relate to each other? Concepts 6, 7, 8.

K. Our Warranties
About avoiding wealth and power in AA Service entities. Concept 12.

L. Your AA General Service Office
What is it and what services does it provide to the Fellowship?

Contact: Joe W., District 36
Email: jowi681@yahoo.com

Does Your Group Have A Grapevine /La Vina Subscription?
Does Your Group Have a Grapevine/La Vina Representative?

"'He's not coming down until we subscribe to Grapevine...."

-ANONYNMOUS

GRAPEVINE - LA VINA NEWSLETTER DISTRICT 36

January 2020

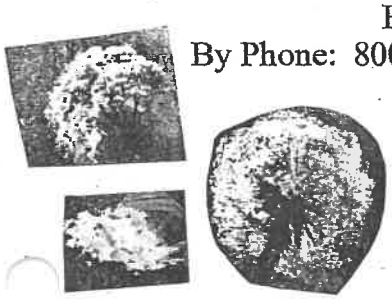
All the Recovery News that Fits To Print (or Cut/Paste From Past Issues!)

News To Me!

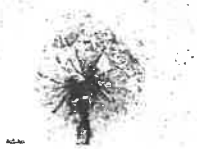
AA Grapevine is the International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous or "our meeting in print"

AA Grapevine is online at www.aagravevine.org or email at customerservice@aagrapevine.org

By Mail: Grapevine, 475 Riverside Drive, NY NY 10115
By Phone: 800 631 6024 (English), 800 640 8781 (Espanol), 818 487 2093 (Francais)



Subscription: Grapevine: $28.97 per year (12 issues)
Subscripcion: La Vina: $11.97 para un ano (12 ediciones)



News To You!

Authors/Humorists in Recovery – Try the Grapevine!

To Submit: www.aagrapevine.org/contribute (guidelines)
Email: gveditorial@aagrapevine.org
By Mail: Grapevine, Editorial Dept.
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115

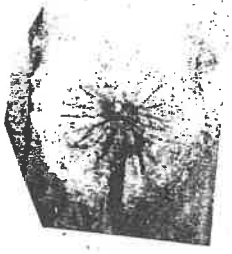
Submit Your Story: Upcoming Topics

AA: Sober & Out (LGTBQTI) 2/15/20
AA: Young & Sober 3/15/20
AA: Money – 4/15/20
AA: *New Book - Our Great Responsibility: Bill W's GSC Talks 1951-1970*

News We Can Use!

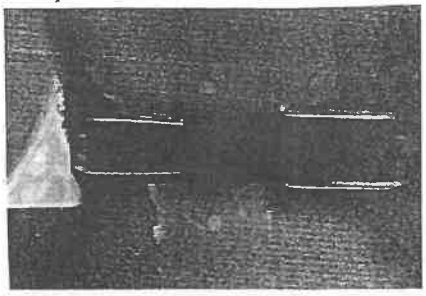
International AA Conference

July 2-5, 2020, Detroit, Michigan
Theme: Love and Tolerance Is Our Code
Advanced Registration: September 9, 2019 – April 14, 2020 ($115)
More Information: www.aa.org

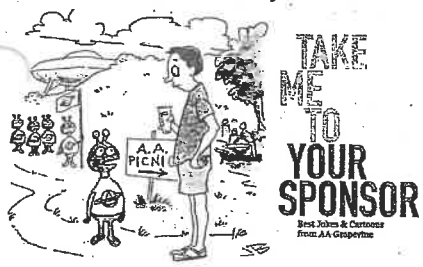


Grapevine Suggested January 2020 Discussion Topic:

Challenge: What Is THIS?



Answer Next Issue!
Answer Last Issue - Kandinsky.



DISCUSSION TOPIC

Learning about our Traditions

THE writer of "What's Best for the Group" says she's still learning a lot about AA's Traditions, even though she's been sober for a while. She shares an example about Tradition One at one of her group's business meetings, which changed the way she votes.

Have you had an experience like this at a business meeting? What are some things you've learned about the Traditions? Do you participate in your group's business meetings? Do you go to Traditions meetings? How does it help you? Do you have a favorite Tradition? Have the Traditions helped you in your personal life?

You may use this topic in a discussion meeting, or pick one of the Traditions and send us a story of your own (or your group's) experience with it at www.aagrapevine.org/share