

64th General Service Conference

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ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

Advisory Action 40 of the 1990 General Service Conference states: "Items discussed, but no action taken or recommendation made, as well as committee recommendations which are not adopted, be included in a separate section of the Final Report." All items, listed by committee, are as follows:

Conference Agenda Committee

- The committee reviewed the General Service Conference Evaluation Form and made no changes. The committee discussed providing the General Service Conference Evaluation Form in a digital format and agreed that was not appropriate at this time.
- The committee reviewed and discussed their Composition, Scope and Procedure and agreed that point #3 of the current Scope, which is to consider "The Conference Agenda and where appropriate to make suggestions for improvement to the trustees' Committee on the Conference," is ambiguous. The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on the Conference explore the potential role that the Conference Committee on Agenda might play in the selection process of Agenda items in the future and provide a report to the 2015 Conference Agenda Committee.
- The committee requested that the 2015 Conference Agenda Committee be provided with a report regarding the current and historical process of Agenda item selection.

Conference Committee on Archives

- The committee reviewed the Archives Workbook and suggested adding sharing of experience with regard to preservation procedures, as well as on legal considerations for Archives collections.

Conference Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community

- The committee reviewed the contents of the Cooperation With the Professional Community Kit and Workbook and suggested:
 - Adding an index of past issues of *About A.A.* to the publications tab.
 - Including a copy of the A.A. Grapevine, La Viña and La Vigne in each Kit, subject to cost considerations.
 - Include a copy of the April, 2010 A.A. Grapevine article entitled, "Spirituality and 'God Talk,'" by former Class A chair of the General Service Board, Ward Ewing, and a copy of the Fall 2003 *About A.A.* newsletter entitled, "The A.A. Program – Spiritual But Never 'Religious.'"

- The committee suggested that changes be made to the service piece *Information on Alcoholics Anonymous (F-2)* under the section "Proof of Attendance at A.A. Meetings" to reflect changes proposed for the pamphlet "If You Are A Professional...."

Conference Committee on Corrections

- The committee reviewed the contents of the Corrections Kit and Workbook and suggested that the DVD, "Carrying the Message Behind These Walls" (DV-06) be included in the Corrections Kit (MV-45).
- The committee noted from the trustees' report that the number of requests from male inmates (U.S.) for Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.) continues to increase at a rate significantly higher than the number of "outside" male volunteers available. The committee discussed ways to increase participation in C.C.S. including:
 - Offer presentations on C.C.S. at A.A. events;
 - Communicate the importance of C.C.S. to area delegates;
 - Increase awareness of C.C.S. at A.A. meetings;
 - Make C.C.S. information and forms more accessible at the home group;
 - Use G.S.O. and Grapevine publications to encourage C.C.S. participation;
 - Consider the topic of C.C.S. for presentations at Regional Forums.

Conference Committee on Finance

- The committee reviewed the suggested area contribution for delegate expense for the Conference and after a lengthy discussion felt an increase was not necessary at this time.
- The committee reviewed the Self-Support packet and suggests that the following changes, as the Self-Support Card (F-42) is being updated by the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee:
 - Add the phrase "Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide" in the "Some facts" section of the card.
 - Delete the phrase "Give until it feels good" under "Personal thoughts."
 - In addition to reporting the average costs per member, add the year of the costs that are quoted so the reader will know how current the information is.

Conference Committee on Grapevine

- The committee reviewed the 2014 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and requested that an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future, be provided to the 2015 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's suggestion that a new business plan is required for La Viña and requested that a new business plan be developed for La Viña and be brought back to the 2015 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine for review.

- The committee reviewed the report from the A.A. Grapevine Board on the feasibility of producing one book in ASL format. The committee agreed with the conclusion of the report that it is not feasible at this time to produce one book in ASL format due to cost considerations and a lack of expressed need.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2015 or later:
 1. The Twelve Traditions—Our Experience (working title)
Members share their experience with each of our Twelve A.A. Traditions, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 2. Cartoon Book II (working title)
A collection of cartoons by A.A. members, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 3. Special Needs (working title)
Stories by members who are wheelchair-bound, blind, deaf, ill or with other special needs. How A.A. reaches out to everyone. Previously published stories in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 4. Diversity in A.A. (working title)
A.A. members of color share their own stories of getting sober—from previously published stories in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
- The committee discussed the request to reconsider publishing the “Alcoholism at Large” section of the Grapevine and took no action.
- The committee reviewed suggested changes from A.A. Grapevine Board to the pamphlet “A.A. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print” (P-52) and made the following suggestions:
 - Re-edit the pamphlet for consistency and grammar.
 - Use the subtitle “Our Meetings in Print and Other Media” on the cover of the pamphlet and on page 5.

The committee requested that a revised draft be presented to the 2015 Conference Committee for review.

- The committee reviewed the Grapevine Workbook.

Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums

- The committee discussed ways to encourage interest in Regional Forums and attract first-time attendees, and some of the suggestions were:
 - Having the Forum Flyer professionally designed so that it would be attractive, perhaps could be used as a table topper;
 - Sharing ideas among areas in a region or region-to-region;
 - Encouraging those who have attended Regional Forums to share their enthusiasm about their experience – word-of-mouth sharing is really powerful;
 - Bring information about the Regional Forum to every district and area event.

Conference Committee on Literature

- The committee discussed a suggested change to the first paragraph in the section on Concept XII in the pamphlet "Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated" and took no action. The committee noted that the Report and Charter Committee was discussing a similar proposal.
- The committee discussed multiple suggestions for changes to the pamphlet "Questions & Answers on Sponsorship" and took no action, noting the current language in the pamphlet is adequate.
- The committee discussed a suggestion to reconsider the use of the circle and triangle as an unofficial A.A. service mark on Conference-approved Literature and, agreeing with past Conference Advisory Actions, took no action.
- The committee discussed a suggestion to create a pamphlet for alcoholics with mental illness and took no action. The committee agreed that this subject is adequately addressed in current A.A. literature.

Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

- The committee discussed the 2008 Conference Advisory Action regarding responsibility for site selection of the General Service Conference and took no action. The committee considered that the current hotel site-selection process by the General Service Office management is appropriate. The committee suggested that, in the spirit of clear communication, reports describing the hotel site-selection process of all future General Service Conferences be provided to the Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions for their information.

Conference Committee on Public Information

- The committee reviewed the 2014 Comprehensive Media Plan. Because this document will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, the committee asked the staff secretary to forward some suggestions to the trustees' P.I. Committee, including the following:
 - Clarification of some terminology since the plan is distributed widely to A.A. members who may be unfamiliar with media jargon.
 - Adding annual review of the plan by the Conference P.I. Committee to the cover memo under "process."
 - Emphasis on items not only being "actionable" but also, whenever possible, "measurable."
- The committee expressed strong support for the forward-looking vision of the Comprehensive Media Plan regarding seeking member-submitted content for future Public Service Announcements, similar to the model used for the Young People's Video Project.

- The committee reviewed the 2013 Annual Report from the trustees' Committee on Public Information regarding G.S.O.'s A.A. website. The committee requested that when ongoing website projects have made further progress than what was reflected in the distributed background, that relevant updates be communicated to the committee prior to the Conference.
- The committee expressed concern about possible inconsistencies between retiring certain P.S.A.s because of conflict with the current full-face policy, and posting video content on AA.org that may also be perceived to conflict with this policy. The committee asked that the A.A.W.S. Board consider offering the video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* via a digital platform accessible by local committees, rather than displaying this content on publicly accessible pages of the AA.org website.
- The committee agreed with the assessment provided in the report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on A.A. Video P.S.A.s regarding the P.S.A.s "I Thought," "A Force of Nature" and "Testimonials," including the suggestion that as new P.S.A.s are developed that these three items be retired as quickly as practical.
- The committee considered two proposed items from the report on the 2014 A.A. Membership Survey from the trustees' Committee on Public Information regarding A.A. member awareness of services offered by G.S.O., and A.A. member awareness of the A.A. Grapevine, and took no action. The committee recognized the potential usefulness of gathering such information, but did not believe these questions fit the historical purpose of the A.A. Membership Survey.
- The committee strongly supported the idea of utilizing digital survey methods for future surveys, and looks forward to hearing from the trustees' P.I. Committee regarding how such a transition might best be accomplished.
- The committee reviewed presurvey communications for area delegates and groups randomly selected to participate in the 2014 A.A. Membership Survey, and offered some suggestions to the staff secretary for how such communication might be most effective and helpful. The committee acknowledged that successful administration of the survey depends upon delegate participation in the process.
- In light of ongoing anonymity concerns, the committee suggested that delegates and other trusted servants utilize a variety of means, such as workshops, newsletters, panels, delegate reports, local A.A. websites, skits, presentations, etc., to stimulate A.A. members' discussion on how to maintain anonymity at the public level. Because the ranks of our ever-changing membership exist in an ever-changing world, the committee acknowledged that such efforts truly have no end-point, and might best be incorporated as a regular part of local A.A. discussions and events. The committee asked the staff secretary to explore both direct and indirect ways of sharing these concerns, and a list of A.A. resources on anonymity, with the A.A. Fellowship. The committee also asked the staff secretary to share the following suggestions with the 2015 International Convention coordinator for emphasis on anonymity at the International Convention via the following means:
 - Pre-Convention registration and communication materials, including AA.org.
 - Hospitality suite communication and materials.
 - Consideration of an anonymity booth or similar display.

- The committee reviewed a progress report on development of a brief video on anonymity for inclusion with the Annual Letter to the Media, and expressed support for the content and purpose of such a video. The committee requested that if such a video is created that it be brought back to the 2015 Conference Committee on Public Information prior to posting or distribution. The committee recognized that this may mean delayed mailing of the Annual Letter to the Media until after the next Conference. The committee also expressed support for the idea of using both Class A and Class B trustees in the video, with the Class B trustees' anonymity carefully protected, to serve as an example of how A.A. members can share information about A.A. in the media within the spirit of our anonymity tradition.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the P.I. Kit and Workbook, and suggested adding the following items:
 - Anonymity Online (SM F-197)
 - Anonymity Card (F-20)

Conference Committee on Report and Charter

- The committee accepted a report from the Publishing Department outlining the General Service Office process for timely and accurate preparation and publication of *The A.A. Service Manual* 2014-2015 Edition, and the 2014 General Service *Conference Final Report*. The committee noted that the "Report of the 2014 General Service Conference Inventory" in the *Final Report* may take longer to prepare than the other front matter and asked to review the page proofs of the inventory report as soon as possible prior to publication.
- In keeping with the 2009 Advisory Action that the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board annually review *The A.A. Service Manual* and forward necessary updates to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter, the committee reviewed the updates from the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. Board and the A.A. Grapevine Board and suggested some revisions. The committee requested the General Service Board reconsider one item that they had forwarded.
- The committee reviewed the list of editorial updates from the Publishing Department for *The A.A. Service Manual* and suggested some revisions.
- The committee considered a request to modify Article 3 of the Current Conference Charter and took no action. The committee agreed that the proposed modification was unnecessary, noting that the existing phrasing of Article 3 adequately addresses the process for making a change to Article 12 of the Charter, the Twelve Traditions of A.A., or the Twelve Steps of A.A.
- The committee reconsidered a 2013 Conference Advisory Action regarding editing Area Service Highlights in the General Service *Conference Final Report* and took no action. The committee agreed that the entire *Final Report* should continue to be professionally edited and published, and noted that they had discussed the Area Service Highlights in 2013. The committee requested that the memo to first-year delegates regarding Area Service Highlights emphasize that the Highlights may be edited for the *Final Report*.

- The committee considered the A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S., and Western U.S.) and requested that the General Service Office explore alternative methods of accessing and distributing the contact information contained in the A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S., and Western U.S.). The committee requested that a report be brought back to the 2015 Report and Charter Conference Committee.

Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities

- The committee thoroughly considered a proposal to revise the pamphlet "Bridging the Gap" to expand its scope to include information on related corrections service activity and took no action. The committee acknowledged the desire in some areas for a generic Conference-approved pamphlet about bridging the gap. While some areas have combined corrections and treatment bridging the gap activities, they remain separate in many others. The sense of the committee was that revising the current pamphlet to include both treatment and corrections might not adequately address the variety of bridging the gap programs that areas throughout the U.S. and Canada have developed to address their specific needs. Some of these areas have developed service material tailored specifically to explain their local programs.
- The committee requested that the General Service Board consider whether there is a need to develop a Conference-approved pamphlet addressing bridging the gap activities for corrections.
- The committee reviewed the Treatment Committee Kit and Workbook and agreed that the current contents adequately serve the needs of local committees.
- The committee reviewed the Special Needs/Accessibilities Kit and Workbook and expressed appreciation for the service material that is available to assist American Sign Language interpreters. They noted that the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are available in this format, and requested that a service piece be developed of the Twelve Concepts for World Service for signing purposes.
- The committee noted that the first line in Gloria's Story in the pamphlet "A.A. for the Alcoholic with Special Needs" that says "I was 84 years old and 11 years sober (Although I've been in A.A. since 1962...)" might be confusing to newcomers. They requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation With the Professional Community/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities consider whether this language might be clarified and bring back any suggestion for revision to the 2015 Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities.
- The committee asked that the staff member on the Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities assignment explore ways to provide electronic versions of the Workbooks and other materials in the Kits to committee chairs as an alternative to automatically mailing hard copies.

Conference Committee on Trustees

- The committee reviewed the resumes and approved, as eligible for election, all Class B trustee candidates for the Eastern Canada and Pacific regional trustees.

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RECOMMENDATIONS THAT DID NOT RESULT IN CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS

Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine

- The committee discussed a request "to reaffirm the Right of Decision of the A.A. Grapevine Board to make formatting decisions for the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña magazines." The committee acknowledged that Grapevine and La Viña are valuable Twelfth-Step tools. The committee recommended that the A.A. Grapevine Board have the ability to exercise their right of decision for all formatting decisions in producing Grapevine and La Viña noting that this recommendation removes all formatting restrictions on Grapevine and La Viña.

Conference Committee on Literature

- The committee recommended removing the following text from page five in the *Living Sober* booklet:

"Many of us have come to believe that our alcoholism is an addiction to the drug alcohol; like addicts of any sort who want to maintain recovery, we have to keep away from the first dose of the drug we have become addicted to."

NOTE: The committee agreed that the current text added to confusion regarding A.A.'s Singleness of Purpose.

- The committee recommended that "Nonalcoholics are welcome to attend open meetings as observers" be added to the end of the open meeting side of the Primary Purpose (Blue) Card (F-17) in all three languages when the inventory of the English version is depleted.

The statement will read as follows (addition in bold):

**"THIS IS AN OPEN MEETING
OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

This is an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are glad you are all here – especially newcomers. In keeping with our singleness of purpose and our Third Tradition which states that 'The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking,' we ask that all who participate confine their discussion to their problems with alcohol. **Nonalcoholics are welcome to attend open meetings as observers.**"

(The 1987 General Service Conference made this statement available as an A.A. service piece for those groups who wish to use it.)

NOTE: The committee agreed that this item is available as a service piece for groups and is not intended to limit attendance at anniversaries or other A.A. events.

(over)

Conference Committee on Public Information

- The committee recommended that the Anonymity Card (F-20) which currently reads:

A.A. ANONYMITY (ANNOUNCEMENT FOR READING AT MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

There may be some here who are not familiar with our Tradition of personal anonymity at the public level:

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films."

Thus, we respectfully ask that A.A. speakers and A.A. members not be photographed, videotaped, or identified by full name on audiotapes and in published or broadcast reports of our meetings, including those reports on new media technologies such as the Internet.

The assurance of anonymity is essential in our efforts to help other problem drinkers who may wish to share our recovery program with us. And our Tradition of anonymity reminds us that "A.A. principles come before personalities."

Be changed to read:

A.A. ANONYMITY (ANNOUNCEMENT FOR READING AT A.A. MEETINGS)

There may be some here who are not familiar with our Tradition of personal anonymity at the public level:

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films." **Anonymity breaks on the Internet, social media and all other forms of public communications are contrary to our Tradition of personal anonymity at the public level. When we break our anonymity at the public level, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others, and adversely affect A.A. as a whole.**

In keeping with this spiritual principle, A.A. speakers and A.A. members ought not be photographed, video recorded, or identified by full name on audio recordings, and in published or broadcast reports of our meetings, including online resources accessible by the public.

The assurance of anonymity is essential in our efforts to help other problem drinkers who may wish to share our recovery program with us. And our Tradition of anonymity reminds us that "A.A. principles come before personalities."

[new or changed text highlighted in bold]

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**FLOOR ACTIONS THAT DID NOT
RESULT IN CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS**

- To add a single line item to the General Fund budget for La Viña. **(Not approved)**
- The 64th General Service Conference reaffirm the right of decision of the Grapevine Board to making formatting decisions for the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña magazines noting:
 - a. That right is already exercised by publication of La Viña in color and
 - b. The 2010 Advisory Action recommended a beginning point in bringing La Viña on spiritual parity with the A.A. Grapevine. **(Not approved)**
- The Conference consider the use of the circle and triangle on Conference-approved literature as a historical reminder of A.A.'s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. **(Conference voted not to consider)**
- A.A. Grapevine discontinue publishing the "Alcoholism at Large" section of The Grapevine Magazine. **(Not approved)**
- The General Service Conference recommended that literature which focuses on "Alcoholics in Recovery with Mental Health Issues" be developed. **(Not approved)**
- Proposed Anonymity Card

The A.A. principle of anonymity at the public level is one of A.A.'s oldest protections and has helped attract countless newcomers from out of the shadows and into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Therefore, anonymity breaks on the Internet, social media, and all other forms of public communications are not only contrary to our Tradition of personal anonymity at the public level, they can scare away a problem drinker reaching out for help.

In the spirit of anonymity A.A. speakers and A.A. members ought not be photographed, video recorded, or identified by full name on audio recordings, and in published or broadcast reports of our meetings including online resources accessible to the public. The assurance of anonymity is essential in our efforts to help other problem drinkers who may wish to share our recovery program with us. And our Tradition of Anonymity reminds us that A.A. principles come before personalities. **(Conference voted not to consider)**

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