

April 27 – May 3, 2014  
Rye Brook, NY

# 64<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference



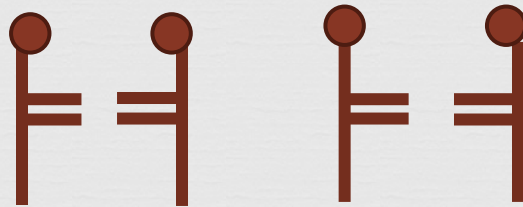
*“Communicating Our Legacies:  
Vital in a Changing World”*

**Patrick C. - Delegate  
Area 67 - South East Texas  
Panel 63**

# *Stimulating Interest in General Service*



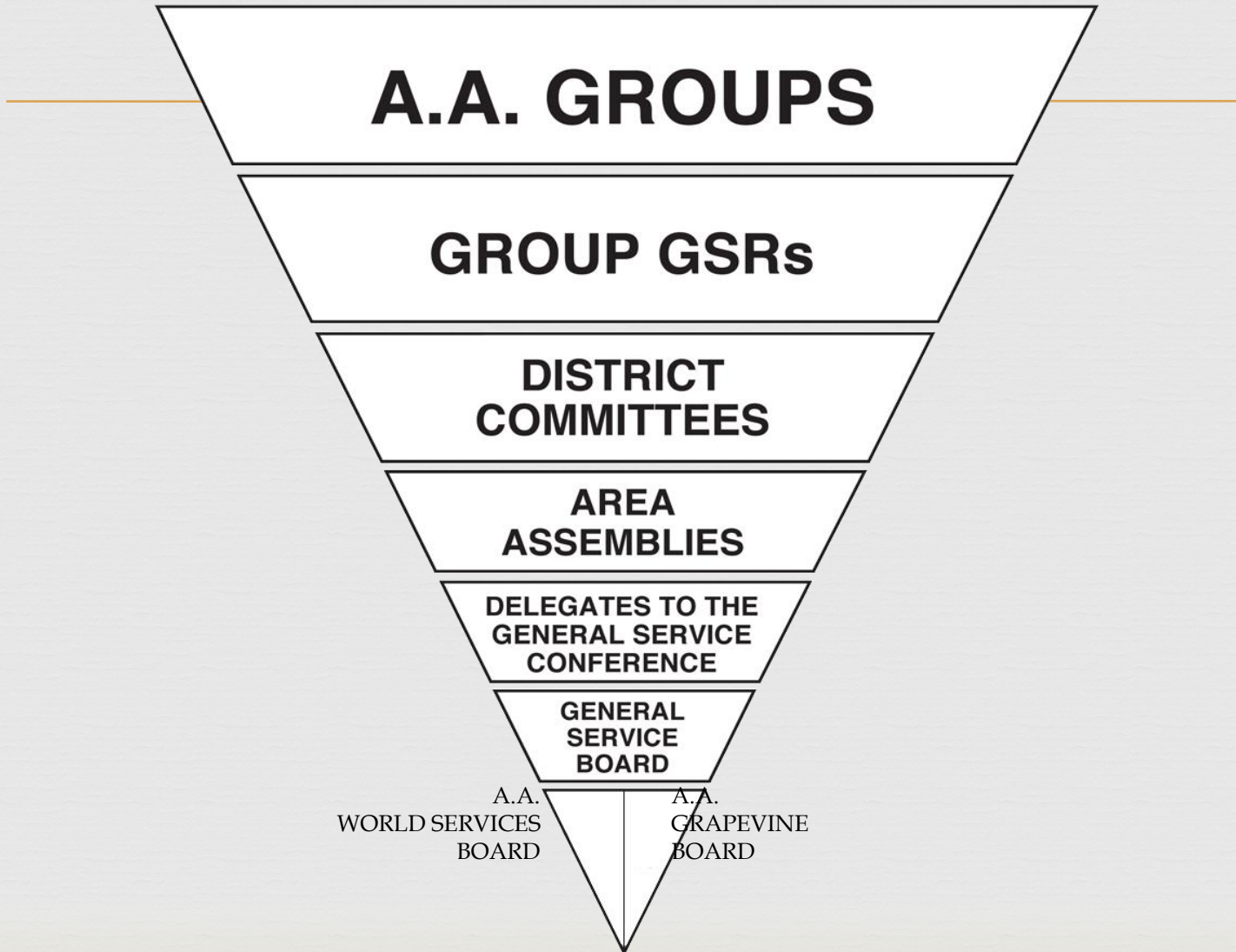
“Even the letters AA themselves symbolize one person helping another. Four men standing alone cannot stay sober themselves.



But, when they lean toward each other and take each others hands they become...”

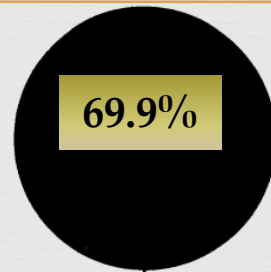


# STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE (U.S. and Canada)



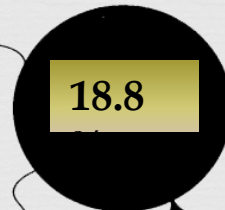
# Who Makes Up The Conference?

This year there were 133 voting members of the General Service Conference acting together as guardians of A.A.'s World Services and of the Steps and Traditions. They are composed as follows:



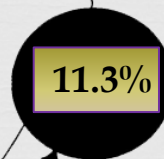
## 93 Delegates

Represent A.A. groups in fulfilling the ultimate responsibility for A.A.'s World Services. Traditionally, Delegates constitute at least two-thirds of the voting membership.



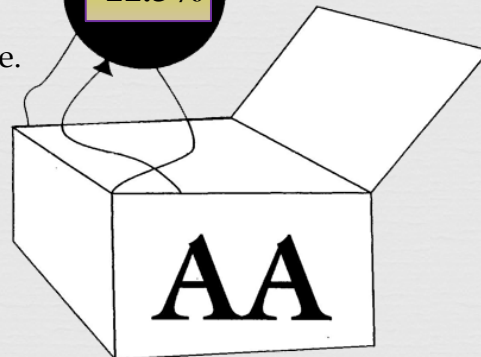
## 25 Trustees, A.A.W.S. Directors, GV Directors

Responsible for policy and implementation.



## 15 General Service Office and Grapevine Staff

Carry out policies of and report to General Service Board and Conference.



*Every Conference member has not only a vote but a voice; not only a right but a responsibility to express his or her views.*



# Delegate Experiences

**Communicating Our Legacies –  
Vital in a Changing World**





# Preparing to Go





# Leaving For New York



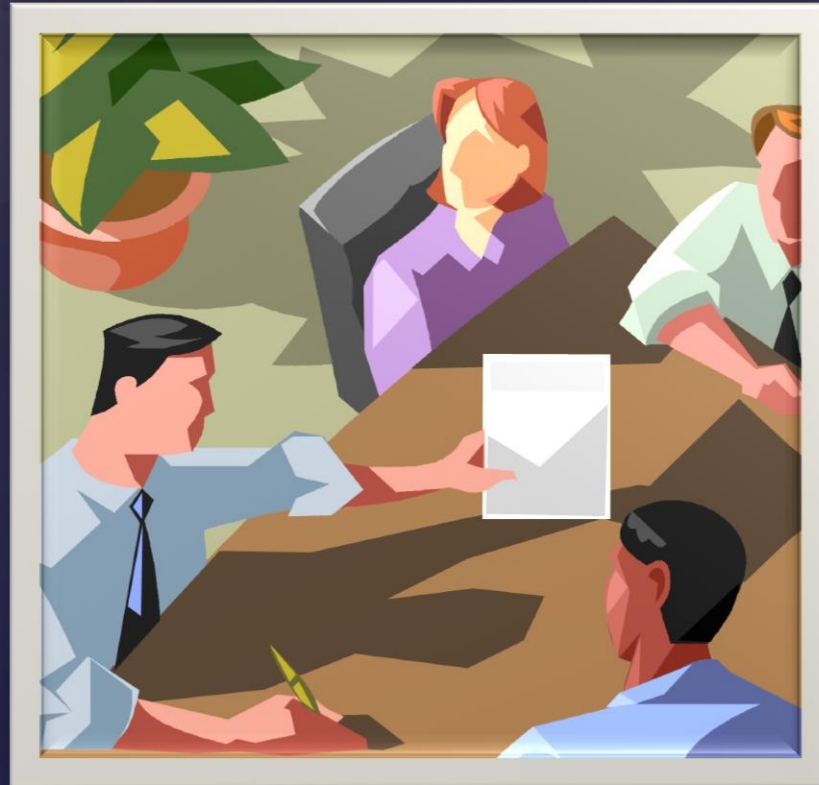
TRAY COLLECTION  
Call main service if you're happy to pick up your tray  
Or simply press 2 to order your food





*Sunday, April 27th*

*DOWN TO BUSINESS*



A recent Grapevine Quote of the Day, a member shared:

*“I have learned to keep quiet when I disagree and to give others freedom to express opinions widely different from my own – without giving in to the urge to “enlighten” them. I am grateful for all the voices of A.A.”*

# I EXPERIENCED...

- I experienced having to stand flat-footed by the traditions that I love and respect.
- I experienced the realization that something I started out believing in wholeheartedly was not ready to be passed yet and vote against it, even if it came out of my own conference committee.
- I experienced the fact that we can't always fix problems with more literature or service material.
- I experienced the realization that we need to continue to explore new ways of carrying our message.

# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

## ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION:

- The committee reviewed the 2014 Comprehensive Media Plan.
- New ways of communicating message in a changing world:
  1. Hulu pre-rolls: Hulu is an online video-streaming platform that plays television and movies. How many of you have started or seen a YouTube video and the 15 second ad starts to run, prior to you being able to see the video you want to watch? That is what a pre-roll is, the brief videos that play before a program. We are thinking of submitting brief P.S.A.'s from our existing content to have them be considered to run. There is no cost to do this, but may provide another avenue to get our message out to the alcoholic who still suffers.
  2. In-house video production for brief content: One new idea is an Anonymity video to accompany the annual letter we send to the media professionals. Our committee agreed with the idea and requested that they come up with a plan and use both Class A Trustees (Non-alcoholics) full face and Class B Trustees (Alcoholics), in shadow to really hit home how the media should film A.A. members.

# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

## ADVISORY ACTION:

- Conduct the 2014 A.A. Membership Survey on a random basis, as in 2011.

## ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION:

- The committee reviewed pre-survey 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.

# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

- ❑ **Changes in survey questionnaire:** We made decisions on how to change some of the questions that are being asked. One statistic selection was changed from “Married” to “Married or Life partner”. We did not agree to add survey questions about the awareness of the grapevine magazine or G.S.O. services. Seemed out of place in view of the historical survey content about membership characteristics and providing information about A.A. to the general public or professionals. The conference approved these changes with a few edits.
- ❑ **Methodology:** We determined that there are limitations, not easily eliminated, to the survey process, for example the 50% to 60% response rate of groups selected completing the survey. However, the actual sampling selection of groups is statistically acceptable.

# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

- ❑ **Use:** The fellowship sharing was very diverse on the value of and how or if they use the A.A. Membership Survey Pamphlet. If the survey results are looked at in comparison to the membership of a particular home group and it does not match, A.A. members said they have found it not useful. When members realize that this is a snapshot in time of a random survey of A.A. groups across the U.S. and Canada and use it as a tool for PI or CPC presentations to the general public or professionals, then A.A. members shared it is a very useful tool.
- ❑ **Improvements:** The PI committee recommended improvements to the pre-survey communications to highlight the purpose and use to better inform the fellowship. We agreed that trends across multiple surveys should be included in the results pamphlet as this would match what is stated in the survey questionnaire “reasons for the A.A. survey”.



# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

- THE PI COMMITTEE SUGGESTED A WORDING CHANGE TO THE A.A. ANONYMITY CARD. (F-20)
  - Did not result in Conference Advisory Action.

## **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.”



# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

- THE LANGUAGE PI COMMITTEE PROPOSED FOR CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS AND VOTE ON:

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]**

# FINANCE



## **FINANCE COMMITTEE - ADVISORY ACTION**

- THE FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT GSO DEVELOP A PLAN TO TRANSLATE THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE BACKGROUND MATERIAL INTO FRENCH AND SPANISH. THIS PLAN MAY INCLUDE COORDINATING THE USE OF THE VOLUNTEER NETWORK THROUGHOUT THE FELLOWSHIP, HIRING PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATORS OR ANY OTHER FACILITIES THE OFFICE DEEMS NECESSARY. THE REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE COSTS AND ANY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS DEEMED NECESSARY TO ALLOW TIMELY TRANSLATIONS TO OCCUR.**



# COMMUNICATING TO THE FELLOWSHIP ABOUT FINANCE

- **Spiritual value of contributing**
- **Services provided to the Fellowship**
- **Publishing**
- **Grapevine and need for subscriptions growth**
- **La Viña**
- **Reserve Fund ownership**
  - ❑ **\$236.52 per group, \$11.01 per member**

# GENERAL SERVICE BOARD FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS 12-31-13

	G.S.O. GENERAL FUND	THE A.A.W.S. PUBLISHING	THE A.A. GRAPEVINE	LA VIÑA	2013 COMBINED ACTUAL	2013 BUDGET
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Net Sales		\$12,604,719	\$3,019,339	\$127,270	\$15,751,328	\$15,562,535
Contributions	6,906,371				6,906,371	6,697,000
Interest	114	390	10,500		11,004	17,050
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>6,906,485</b>	<b>12,605,109</b>	<b>3,029,839</b>	<b>127,270</b>	<b>22,668,703</b>	<b>22,276,585</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Printing		2,962,241	402,183	33,544	3,397,968	3,534,902
Royalties		27,840			27,840	28,000
Shipping & Warehouse		1,505,296	623,640	30,192	2,159,128	2,332,221
Program Expenses	5,751,387	3,200,822	1,097,907	206,078	10,256,194	10,737,010
Supporting Services	3,756,195	2,276,259	590,904		6,623,358	6,370,792
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>9,507,582</b>	<b>9,972,458</b>	<b>2,714,634</b>	<b>269,814</b>	<b>22,464,488</b>	<b>23,002,925</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS) OPERATIONS</b>	<b>(2,601,097)</b>	<b>2,632,651</b>	<b>315,205</b>	<b>(142,544)</b>	<b>204,215</b>	<b>(726,340)</b>
<b>RESERVE FUND</b>						
Reserve Fund Balance at December 31 available to cover operating expenses					<u>15,301,653</u>	<u>15,301,653</u>
Operating Expenses					<u>16,879,552</u>	<u>17,107,927</u>
Number of months Operating Expenses-approximate					10.9	10.8

\*Excludes non-operating Funds: Reserve, Capital Projects, Pension, Post-Retirement Medical Benefits

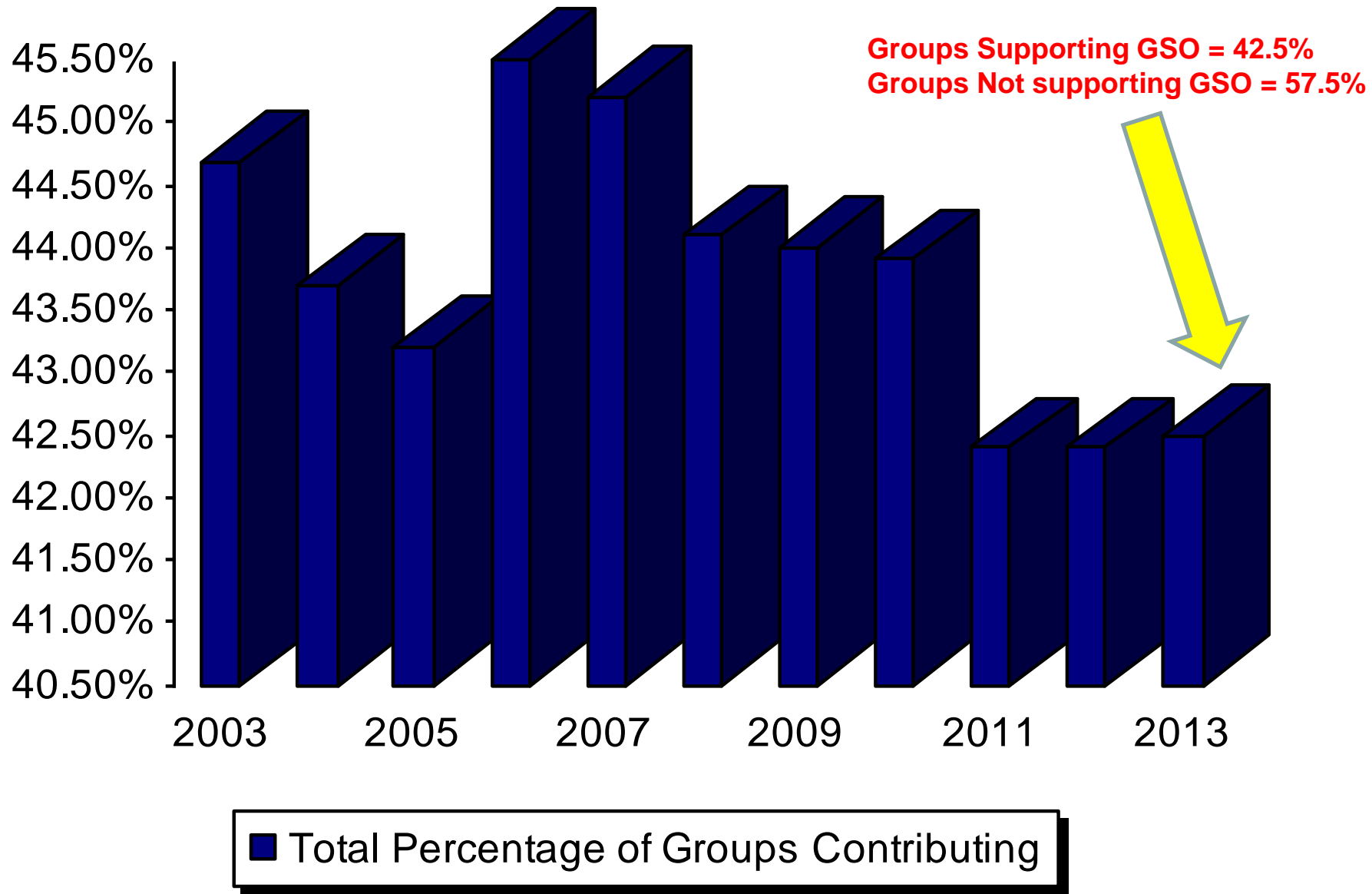
# 2012-2013 CONTRIBUTIONS SUMMARY

	2012	2013
Group Contributions	\$5,451,874	\$5,718,306
Specials <sup>1</sup>	582,011	629,542
Individuals	384,055	398,880
Foreign, WSM etc.	67,403	73,800
Memorials	51,418	63,178
Special Meetings <sup>2</sup>	16,571	12,815
Other	4,276	9,850
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,557,608</b>	<b>6,906,371</b>

<sup>1</sup>Special contribution is one that comes from any number of A.A. entities that is not an A.A. Group, for example, a Conference, a Committee, an Area, a District, an Intergroup, etc.

<sup>2</sup>A Special Meeting is a meeting that does not want to be a group but does want to contribute to the General Service Board.

# PERCENTAGE OF GROUPS CONTRIBUTING 2003—2013

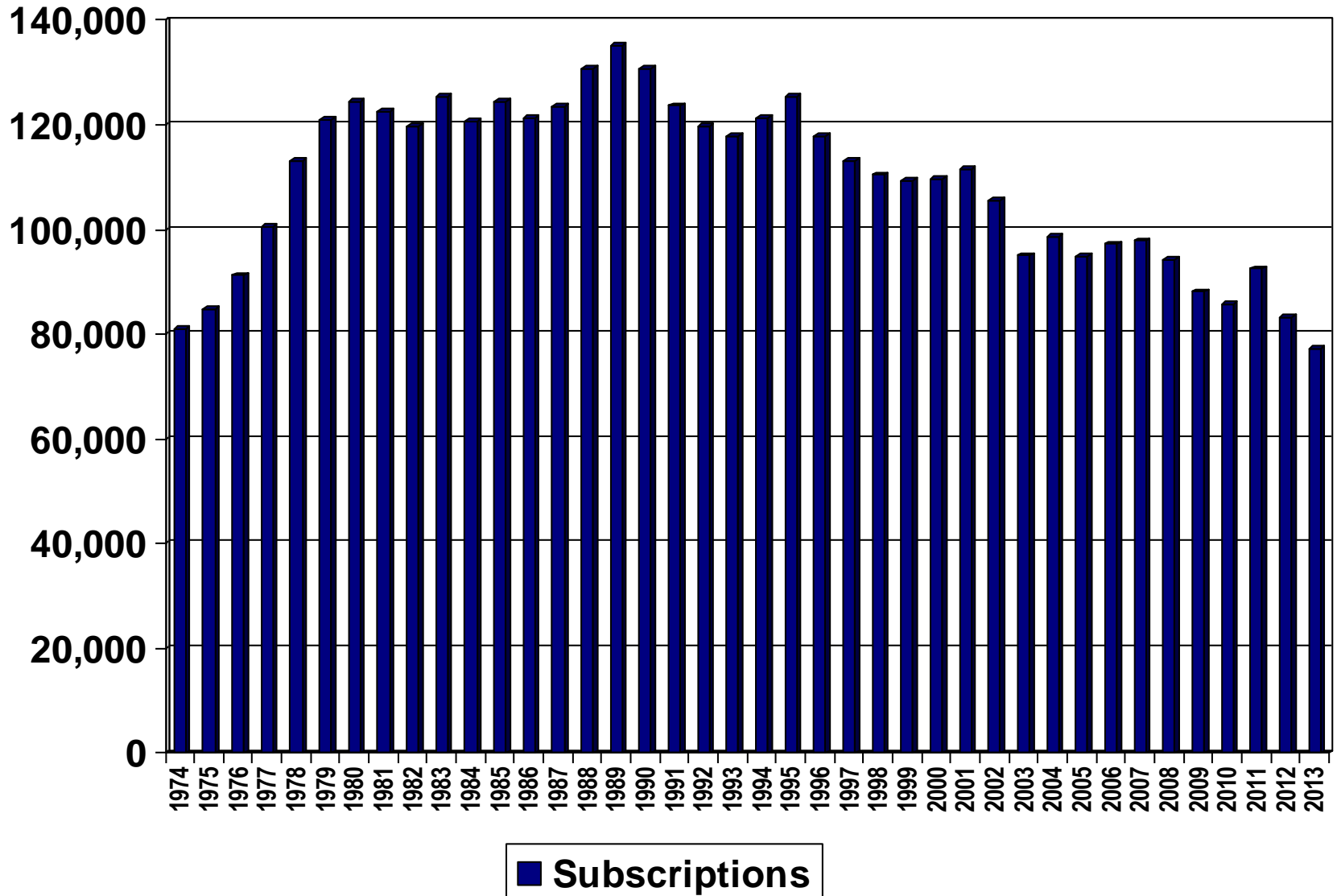




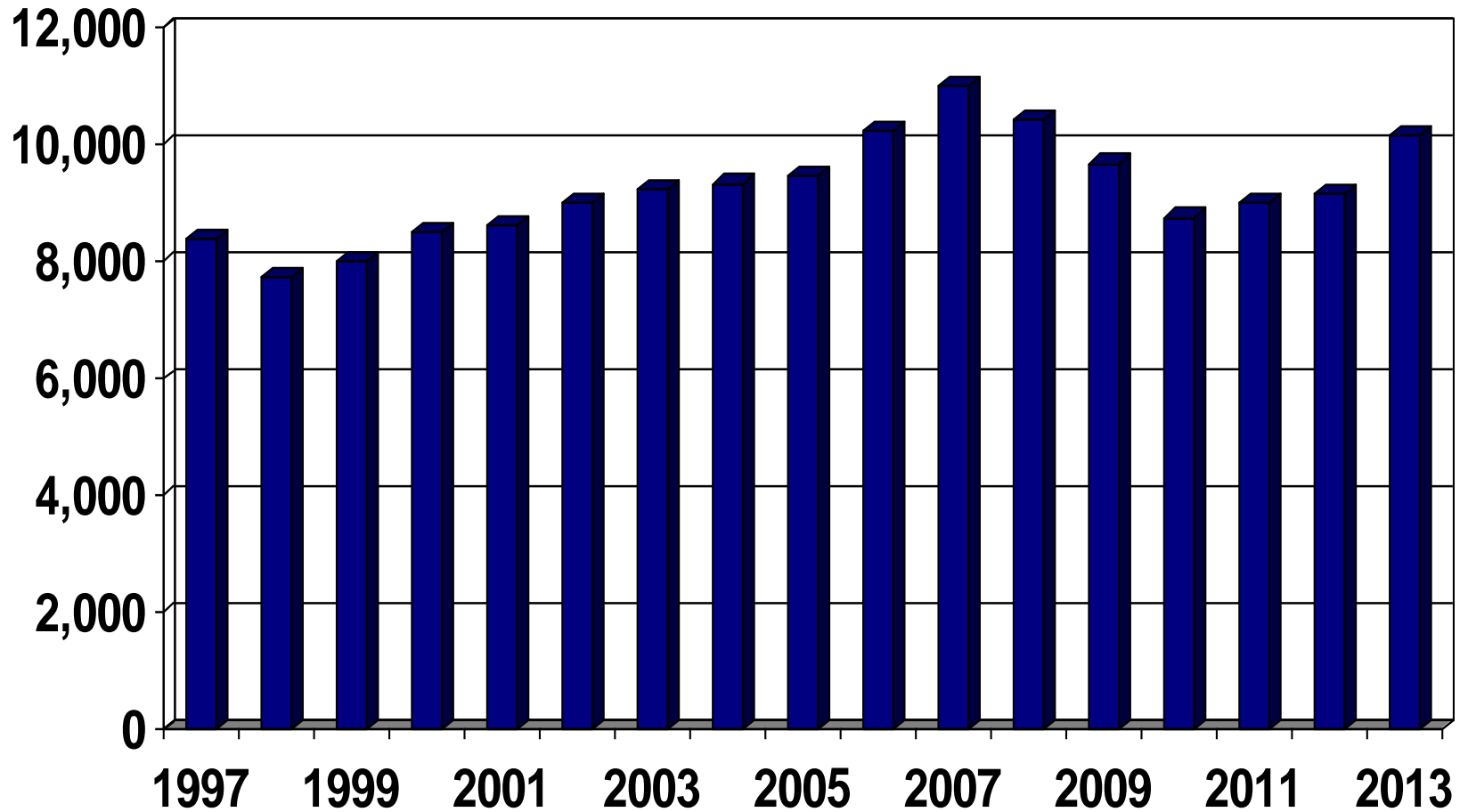
# MEMBER SERVICES & STATISTICS

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Cost of Service per member per year</b>	\$6.32	\$6.66	\$6.84
<b>Cost of Service per group per year</b>	137.01	143.67	146.96
<b>Number of members reported</b>	1,384,699	1,388,727	1,389,602
<b>Number of groups reported</b>	63,845	64,414	64,694
<b>Percentage of groups contributing</b>	42.4%	42.4%	42.5%
<b>Contributions per member per year</b>	4.52	4.72	4.97
<b>Contributions per group per year</b>	96.95	101.80	106.75
<b>Cost of services NOT covered through Contributions that must be made up by using literature profits - per member per year</b>	1.80	1.94	1.87

# AA Grapevine Circulation: 1974-2013



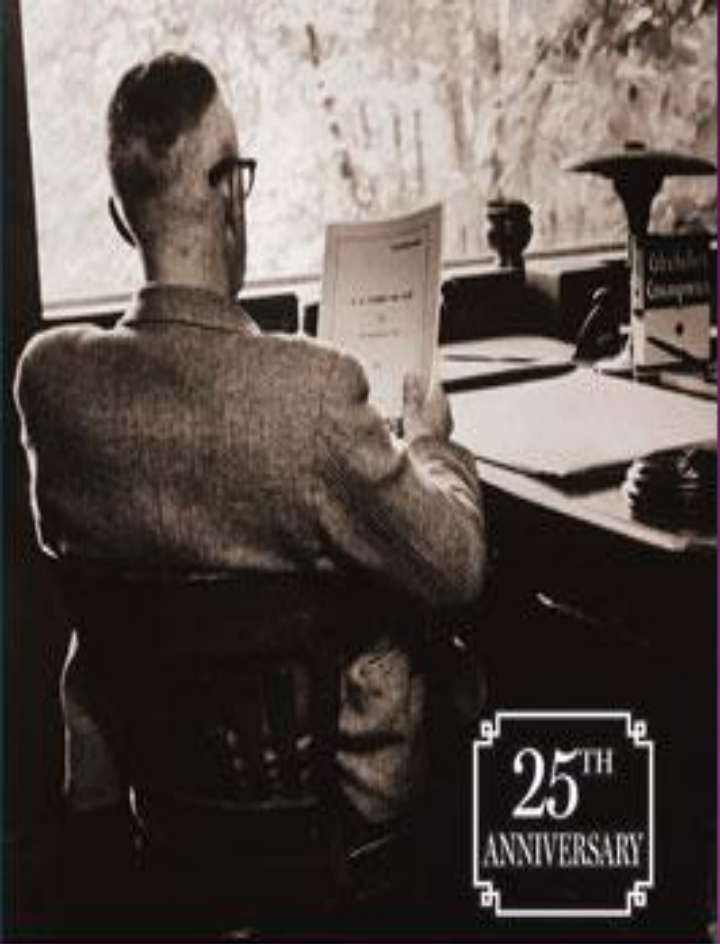
# LA VIÑA SALES AND CIRCULATION



■ La Vina Sales and Circulation

# LA VIÑA—STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Average Circulation	8,982	9,160	10,145
	2011 ACTUAL	2012 ACTUAL	2013 ACTUAL
<b>INCOME</b>			
Subscription Income	\$98,135	\$96,892	\$106,960
Back Issues	<u>8,428</u>	<u>10,378</u>	<u>9,590</u>
Magazine Income	106,563	107,270	116,550
Income from Related Items	<u>22,761</u>	<u>16,210</u>	<u>10,721</u>
Total La Viña Income	129,324	123,480	127,271
Total Direct Costs	<u>58,596</u>	<u>58,015</u>	<u>63,737</u>
Gross Profit	<u>70,728</u>	<u>65,465</u>	<u>63,534</u>
<b>COSTS AND EXPENSES</b>			
Editorial Costs	84,507	113,828	130,546
Circulation and Business	54,792	65,610	73,022
General and Administrative	<u>1,152</u>	<u>1,847</u>	<u>2,510</u>
Total Costs and Expenses	<u>140,451</u>	<u>181,285</u>	<u>206,078</u>
Shortfall between Revenue and Expenses	(69,723)	(115,820)	(142,544)
Support from General Service Board General Fund	69,723	115,820	142,544
<b>Net</b>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>



25<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

# THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

Bill W.'s  
Grapevine Writings



# GRAPEVINE



# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON GRAPEVINE

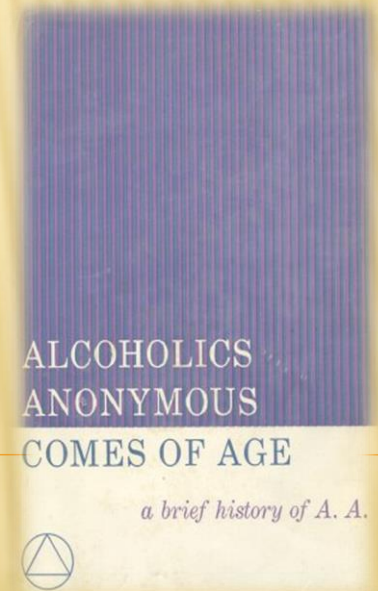
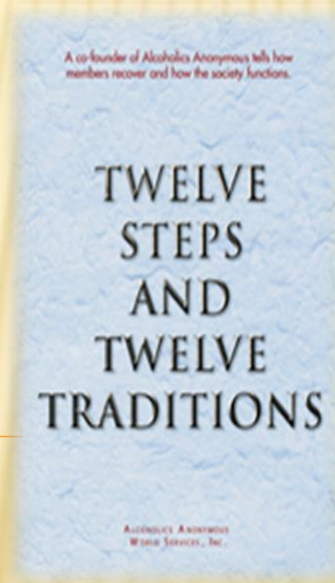
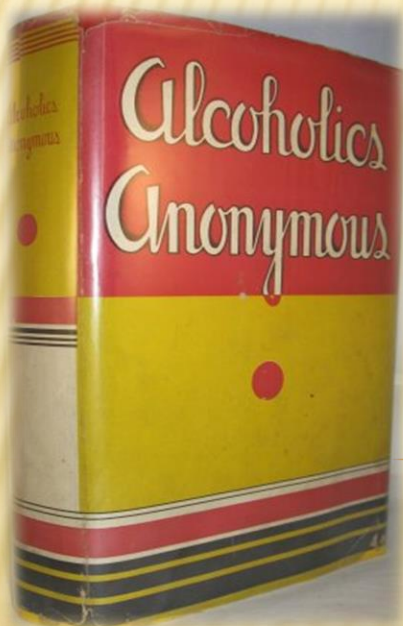
## **RECOMMENDATIONS THAT DID NOT RESULT IN CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS**

- ❑ 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.

## **GRAPEVINE COMMITTEE - ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- ❑ The Committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board’s suggestion that a new business plan is required for La Vina and requested that a new business plan be developed for La Vina and be brought back to the 2015 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine for review.

# LITERATURE COMMITTEE



# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE

## RECOMMENDATIONS THAT DID NOT RESULT IN AN ADVISORY ACTION:

- ❑ The bid to add the phrase “Non-alcoholics are welcome to attend open meetings as observers” to the Open Meeting side of the Primary Purpose Card (Blue Card) F-17, failed.

### **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.

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



# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE

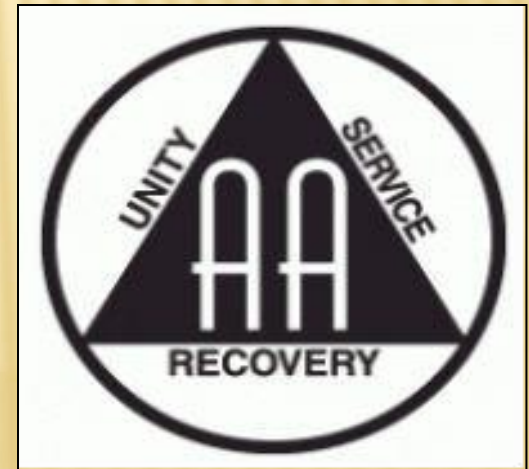
## ADVISORY ACTION:

- ❑ The pamphlet on spirituality with the title “Many Paths to Spirituality” was approved.



# CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE

- ❑ 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 discussed in current A.A. literature.
- ❑ The committee discussed a suggestion to reconsider the use of the circle and triangle as an unofficial service mark on Conference-approved literature and agreeing with past Conference Advisory Actions, took no action.



## Conference Committee on International Conventions/ Regional Forums

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The G.S.O. staff member assigned to coordinate the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia is Eva S. She and several other staff and conference members presented a fantastic and funny skit about an International Convention.

It would be so fun to do it in our Area! It dealt with inappropriate requests that come in from members about getting housing, anonymity breaks, selling items, etc.

- Housing information will come out later this summer.
- Keep a look out on the A.A. G.S.O. Website [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) for the latest information about the convention.

# The General Service Conference Inventory

Group K Member

## G. General Service Board/Corporate Boards

1. Reflecting on Concept Eleven, does the General Service Board exercise serious care in having the best possible assistance in carrying out their duties?

How can this process be improved?

2. Does the current role of the board most effectively address the needs of the Fellowship?

If not, how should their role be changed?

3. Is the selection/election process for trustees and directors effective and impartial/fair?

How would you change it?

## H. Leadership

1. How can we improve the methods of selecting effective leaders and nurturing leadership qualities in our trusted servants?
2. What more could be done to ensure broad diversity of representation in our A.A. leaders?



# The Class A Trustee Openings

- ▶ There will be two openings for Class A Trustee in 2015 and we need to think how we can reach out to potential candidates.
- ▶ Maybe a panel workshop of invited attendees or an ongoing meetings with folks in the professional fields we normally seek for such positions.
- ▶ Using the orchestrated effort of our area standing committees we could begin a program of education and outreach that can reap benefits down the road.
- ▶ We are bound to find professionals who have a heart connection to alcoholics anonymous.

# Change Comes From Within

- ▶ I want to remind everyone that our fellowship is precious and we need to work to keep it in fit spiritual condition. As I have mentioned there are several areas of concern that we need to continue to seek positive action and movement towards a healthy future. Some of the issues I have learned we need to focus on are:
  - Protecting Anonymity
  - Safety in A.A.
  - Singleness of Purpose
  - Self-support
  - Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues
  - What challenges do you think we are facing?
- ▶ It is in our collective hands to utilize the conference process to seek the changes we would like to see to mold our future. I challenge each of you and your groups to discuss these issues and determine if there are any potential agenda items that you want to put forth to be considered for the 65<sup>th</sup> GSC.



# ABOUT THE DELEGATES

Statistics on Delegates	2012	2013	2014
Average Age	57	57	<b>59</b>
Oldest	75	75	<b>78</b>
Youngest	35	36	<b>32</b>
Average Length of Sobriety	20	21	<b>21</b>
Longest Sobriety	39	37	<b>41</b>
Shortest Sobriety	10	7	<b>7</b>
Average Length of Service	16	16	<b>17</b>
Longest Service	28	37	<b>37</b>
Shortest Service	6	3	<b>7</b>

# Goodbye to the GSC

