

AREA 67 QUARTERLY ASSEMBLY
Hilton Hotel
12400 Greenspoint Drive
Houston, Texas 77060
Area Assembly Meeting
Sunday January 11, 2009

- I. **Open – Tandy B.** – opened the meeting with the Serenity Prayer and recognized past delegates – Mike D., Marvin W., Paul M., and Gus H.
- II. **Preamble – Deborah D** – read the preamble to the SETA Policies and Procedures Manual
- III. **Recognition of new GSRs and DCMs** – Tandy B
- IV. **Recognition of SW Regional Trustee: Conley B.** – Tandy B
- V. **Roll Call – John O’.** – (Please see attached)
- VI. **Minutes – Cynthia B.** – **Approved as read**
- VII. **Treasurer’s Report – ZBM.** - **Approved with correction** by Eddie, GSR for Circle and Triangle Study Group, We are located in District 51, not District 52. Motion – Randee B, Second – Gus H. Treasurers report approved (Please see attached)
- VIII. **Delegate’s Report – Betsy G.**

Good morning. Thank you to the Debra R., David H., all the members of the Convention Committee, and all the volunteers who have helped bring this convention to fruition. I have had a great time, and it has been a real treat to get to spend time with so many sober people. The speakers have been wonderful. I have served on several Convention Committees in the past and I know these things do not come together without a whole lot of hard work on the part of a lot of people. I want to extend a special thanks to our Regional Trustee, Conley, for visiting with us this weekend. Conley, after looking at your schedule as it was reported in the November board minutes, I have a new appreciation for how much you do for our fellowship. Area 67 and the SW Region are blessed for knowing you.

Some anticipated changes have begun at the General Service Office. We now have a new General Manager, Phyllis H., past Pacific Regional Trustee from Olympia, WA. Phyllis is the first woman to hold that position. And, at the end of this year’s Conference, The Very Reverend Ward B. Ewing, a current Class A Trustee, will assume the office of Chairman of the General Service Board. The Reverend Ewing is from New York City.

There have been some price increases announced. Beginning July 1, 2009, the cost of AA Grapevine books will increase by \$2.00, with the exception of “The Best of Bill” which will remain the same. In addition, the cost of the big book is projected to increase by \$1 to \$2. These price increases are due to increased costs related to the current financial conditions we are experiencing, including mileage costs and increases in equipment rentals. Our net loss for the first 3 quarters of the year was \$316,100, compared to a budgeted loss for the period of \$143,700. As one of the cost-cutting actions taken as the result of the financial atmosphere, remodeling of the Archives area of the office has been placed on hold for the time being.

Also effective July 1, 2009, AA Grapevine subscriptions will go up to \$27.00 annually. Grapevine subscriptions were 1,016 lower than Budget and 202 lower than 2007. La Viña subscriptions decreased 860 copies from last year. This resulted in a loss for the AA Grapevine of \$95,110, and a loss for La Viña of \$56,352.

There will be seven trustees rotating off the Board at the end of this year’s Conference, including the Chairman of the Board. That means that one-third of the Board will be new members. We will be watching to see if the new mixture brings about a change in the operations of the Board.

After our Area Committee meeting in October, our past delegate, Gus, submitted his proposed agenda item relating to the methods used by the Trustee’s Conference Committee to select the agenda items for the Conference. We are hoping to see it on the Final Agenda. On that same note, as the result of a floor action on the last day of last year’s Conference, the Trustee’s Conference Committee has agreed to provide the Conference members with a list of all proposed agenda items which were **not** forwarded to the Conference, in addition to the list we are used to seeing.

The Preliminary Agenda Items have been emailed out to the members of the Area Committee. The only items on it are the items which were forwarded from the Trustees Committees during the year and after the November board meeting. The Final Agenda Items will be sent to me after the Board meets at the beginning of February. As has been our practice for the last several years, I would like to schedule a conference agenda items workshop during the April Assembly. Bonita and I have begun working on the workshop, and many of you will be called upon in the next month or two to help us with the workshop.

I have received my Conference Committee assignment, and I have been assigned to the Conference Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community. Of the 8 members of the committee, two are from Canada, one from Manitoba and one from Quebec. I was Chair of our Area CPC Committee in 1999, and have served on the area committee for many years. Needless to say, I was pleased with the assignment. Another plus to my assignment to that committee is that my assigned Delegate Buddy is the Alt. Chair of that committee.

I have asked the Chairperson for time on the agenda to bring an item of new business for discussion. As some of you may know, the last Conference approved two streaming videos for the AA.Org web site which are geared towards professionals, and they are now in place. I have drafted a proposed agenda item to be considered by this year's Conference relating to those two videos, as well as an additional one which will be considered by this year's conference. My concerns are related to our spiritual tradition of anonymity and how the use of full faces in the video, even though there is a disclaimer, may dilute our tradition in the public eye.

Alcoholics Anonymous now has a face on the world wide web. The one minute version of the PSA "A Force of Nature" was posted on YouTube.Com at the end of last year in English, Spanish, and French. As of Friday morning, the English version had 18 hits and the Spanish version had 12 hits.

The Site Selection Committee has chosen Detroit for the 2020 International Convention. The 2010 Convention will be held July 4th weekend in San Antonio, and we should be getting additional information on registration and volunteers later this year. The 2015 Convention will be in Atlanta.

Finally, the Area has been busy lately discussing a question posed to the fellowship by last year's Conference relating to fully funding the General Service Office solely through the contributions of AA Members, without relying on profits from the sale of literature. I hope that each of the Districts has had a chance to discuss this matter, that groups have gotten involved, and that you have come prepared to report back on how you feel on this matter. There will be a workshop at the end of the Agenda this morning on this issue.

I want to close by saying how honored I feel that you have allowed me to continue in service to this fine Area. I will continue to do the best I can to help carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. I believe the spirit of unity is alive and well in Area 67, and that a dedicated group of trusted servants have been selected to carry on the business of AA. I truly appreciate the opportunity to serve this fantastic fellowship. Bonita and I stand ready as you need us. If we can be of service to you in any way, please don't hesitate to ask.

IX. Alternate Delegate's Report – Bonita W.

Standing up here this morning in front of the assembly it is beginning to sink in that through the years, as I continue to go down the ladder of our structure, I have been in training with the possibility that one day I may be asked to attend the General Service Conference as Betsy will be doing in April – it is an overwhelming and humbling feeling to serve our fellowship in any capacity and I thank you again for the opportunity.

Our gratitude dinner will be in November hosted by District 33. If last year's gratitude dinner is an indication of the food we have to look forward to then we are in for a real treat! District 33 will be looking for a location in the Brenham area so everyone can plan their car pools now. I will be attending SWRDA March 13th – 15th in Oklahoma City. At one time our gratitude dinner speaker was chosen from the SWRDA attendees – we did discuss if we want to pick up that practice again or not at the DCM/Delegate sharing session - we should know the speaker by our April Assembly. Start announcing the gratitude dinner now in your groups and districts, make plans to car pool! Unfortunately when the dinner is held outside the Houston area the attendance is lower, let's do all we can to change that.

I received a PDF file of the report and transcript of the Southwest Regional AA Service Assembly (SWRAASA) that was held in St. Louis on October 10-12, 2008. If you would like to receive this file through electronic mail please send me an email using our SETA Website. The report is 164 pages long so I will not be making copies but your districts may want to have some copies printed and made available for your GSR's.

As we continue to grow we will be faced with challenges that might require we think outside of the box; with new technology we are almost forced to do so. I am sure we will keep in mind that in surveys and experience the best method of carrying A.A.'s message is and has been one drunk talking to another - which brings us to the theme of our Assemblies for the year "Our commitment to Carry A.A.'s Message – Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action" – I am sure Tandy and Deborah are already hard at work coming up with workshops that support this topic. The message that "we are not a glum lot" will be heard loud and clear from Southeast Texas Area!

If I can assist you in anyway please don't hesitate to contact me,
Thank you for the honor to serve...

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- X. 2009 SETA Convention Report – Debra R** – Welcome everyone! I hope you are having a good time; any complaints can go to David H. Just kidding this has been a true teamwork event and I am very glad to have served as the Chair. I asked God for 1200 and at last count sat night there were 1233 registered (my ego tells me I should have asked for 1500) oh well never do get well. I will be bringing a final report to the April Assembly.
- XI. 2010 SETA Convention Report – MaryAnn M** – No report at this time.
- XII. Roll Call for Voting – John O'D** (Please see attached)
- XIII. Rules for discussion prior to voting- Tandy B.** go to the microphone, a 2 minute limit, can not speak twice before everyone else has a turn

NEW BUSINESS

- XIV. Election CPC Chair-Dave P.** recently from Fort Smith, Arkansas was elected by acclamation motion by Gus H.

Election PIC Chair-Jim B. from district 81 with a recommendation from PI committee

Still open are:

Brazos Valley Intergroup Liaison- Charlie DCM 33 has a name in mind will submit later

Spanish Intergroup Liaison

Spanish Office Intergroup Liaison

XV. Finance Committee report- Don B.- The Budget committee meeting will be Saturday, March?? from 1:pm to 6:pm at the Post Oak Club- exact date to be announced

XVI. 2009 Quarterly Assembly Budget increase request-Deborah D- Due to growth in committees that meet at SETA, we need more space. We have asked the Sheraton Hotel for 3 more rooms for both Saturday and Sunday. Two of the rooms will hold up to 20 persons each and the other up to 15 persons. The Sheraton will charge \$50 per day per assembly for a total of \$300 for the year. **Per Deborah this comes out of the Saturday Area Committee as a motion and second. Motion approved. None opposed.**

XVII. Hotel search for 2010 – Deborah D –At the April Assembly we will vote on a contract to continue meeting at the Sheraton hotel in 2010. The contract is for the same terms as 2009.

XVIII. Proposal for a Conference Agenda item-Betsy G- She was concerned that two General Service approved CPC videos show full faces during a depiction of an AA meeting. There is a disclaimer at the beginning and end of each video saying that actors are used in place of alcoholics. Betsy feels this dilutes the AA message for the following reasons:

1. The professional will see an actor, and then forget the disclaimer when he perceives a familiar face, his neighbor. He will conclude his neighbor is an AA. This may color his feelings toward that neighbor.
2. This in complete opposition to our prior emphasis at the local level on complete anonymity.
3. It negates our workbook's emphasis on humility shown through anonymity.
4. Is anonymity less important now than in the past?
5. The aa.org website should be the place where the purest AA message is found.

Betsy's proposed agenda item for the 59th General Service Conference reads: ***We recommend that our current practice of using full-faced characters in the streaming videos on the AA.Org web site be reviewed from the perspective of whether or not it diminishes the understanding and appreciation of our spiritual principal of anonymity, that anonymity always be in the forefront of our relationship with press, radio and film, and that full faces never be depicted in any video, whether it be as a PSA or as a service piece.***

Betsy would like to take this proposal to the Conference with the support of Area 67. It was recommended by Gus and seconded by Mark to support her proposal. Discussion ensued.

Catherine: was there discussion by a committee prior to posting these streaming videos? What was their discussion and reasoning? Did they consider these issues? These were actors, not AA members. Sufficient anonymity was maintained in this context

Brian: Agrees with Catherine. Should we come up with new material to present to the professional community?

Lisa: Surely a PR firm was consulted prior to the making of this video. The reasoning in item 1 concerning the professional and the neighbor doesn't seem a realistic situation.

Mark: fully supports proposal. What if one of the actors subsequently becomes an AA? Or does a questionable advertisement?

Andy: Simple solution. Edit and run continuous subtitles-these are just actors.

Gus: We need to get back to the proposal. We're just asking the Conference to review this practice.

Anell: Agrees that Conference re-look at this. Doesn't want an actor depicting her.

ZBM: We should help support the motion. Defends the right for an AA member to try to get a motion on the agenda.

Bonita: Call the question.

It was voted to call the question. The proposal was re-read, a vote was taken. All but two voted to support the proposal. The minority did not give an opinion. **We will support the proposal.**

XIX. Suggestions for April assembly-Tandy- Roundtable agenda discussions, 2010 budget proposal

XX. Announcements-Debra D-

1. submit reports to Cynthia B by hard copy or email,
2. the host district for April is to be determined-either District 51 or 90, July and October assemblies currently have hosts,
3. we are taking requests to host in 2010
4. District 33 Unity Conference-Feb 27-Mar 1, Navasota, TX
5. Feb 7-Open Door Group-6th anniversary-1st Baptist Church, New Waverly, 2-5pm
6. 64th annual Texas State AA Convention-June 12-14, Austin, TX
7. Area 67 Correctional Facilities Conference- Sept 4,5,6-Crowne Plaza

XXI. Workshop-fully funding GSO-Betsy G- (Randee B and Bonita W recording)

Betsy asked a series of questions: Does the group know what the agenda item means? Can AA rely on profits from sales? Should AA disconnect from profits or work toward this? If we decide to rely on contributions, what services are we willing to cut?

Michael Q from S.Gessner District 51-Don't want to cut services but work toward self-support. Educate the % of groups that don't contribute and educate them.

Linda D from Bayou Group District 81-We do educate the groups already but lots still don't contribute. This will put GSO in jeopardy.

Joe La Porte Group District 70There is an apathy in groups. If it isn't broken, don't fix it. Relying on groups only will be a mistake.

Kevin Katy Big Book District 40-Don't fix it. Reduce book prices in increments to see if groups step up. How is selling books outside contributions?

Ruthie St. Francis District 90-Leave as is. Area should contribute more.

Samantha Champions District 32-Educate the groups. Some groups don't even know who GSO is. Fully self support can be a sticky situation.

ZBM West Isle Group District 81-It's not about the money. It's about the spiritual vs. the physical. AA Fellowship is the spiritual part. AA owns the literature, that's the physical.

Dave Cathedral District 10-70% budget comes from group contributions. Copyright on 1st and 2nd edition has expired. Deer in headlights from group.

Randy B Pearland Monday Night District 81-Primary purpose carry the message – so be it. Revenue from lit sales is self-supporting

Eddie Circle and Triangle District 51-Questioned money raise of big book \$1-\$2 Why? Economy is bad and we should expect less contributions

Jana 1502 Conroe-Rely on profits. Work toward self-supporting

Johnny District 70 DCM-Don't fix it

David K Men's Monday Night Supper District 40-Self-support work toward. What GSO doing to cut expenses?

Tom District 81 DCM-Work toward self-support

Mark A District 52 - (didn't understand everything) It's interesting how many small big books they can hand out and get down to a competitive level. Hand out more pamphlets. Be self-supporting. Need a PowerPoint presentation to understand the issues.

Lonnie Bellaire 12&12 District 51-Keep things the same

Written reports:

Melissa R. DCM District 31-In District 31, (5) GSRs reported back on their Group's position on whether we should accept the 70/30 split of group contributions and literature sales that it has consistently taken to support GSO. Two Groups said that they felt GSO should be self-supporting as stated in Tradition 7, and that they were willing to do without the GSO services that may be sacrificed. Three of the five said that they would be satisfied to continue as it has been, recognizing the value of the services that GSO renders to the groups.

Hilltop Group District 40-Willing to contribute the \$155.00 to live up to the commitment to be fully self-supporting. What expenses would be cut back if there aren't enough contributions from the groups? GSO cannot run at a deficit and we also have to maintain our primary purpose.

Ginger B GSR for Saturday Solutions Group District 40-Had a group conscience concerning the benefits and liabilities of fully funding GSO services through voluntary contributions of AA members and groups. After much discussion, we have voted to continue doing business of funding GSO the way it is currently set up. We feel that the 70% from group contributions and 30% from the sale of AA literature is working well. Group members felt that profits from literature are still considered self-supporting. If however, GSO is having financial difficulties, we welcome their efforts to contact AA groups for help. If that were to happen, we would be open for further discussion on this matter.

Lauryn M West Houston Bear Creek District 40-There is a great deal of apathy in my group toward this issue. To boil it down my group feels: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." We feel that it would be difficult to exclude book profits from the budget and continue to have the level of service currently offered by AAWS. To rely solely on groups (or individual) contributions would be a mistake because historically about half of AA groups contribute their fair share and most individuals will remind AA that "There are no dues or fees for AA membership."

XXII. Close – Tandy B-Motion by Randee, 2nd-DeWayne. Motion passed. Closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia B.

Area Secretary

Treasurer Report

(Omitted for web posting - printed copies available at Assembly)

