

Table of Contents

The Appetizer: two expressions about the conference

The Salad: Board Reports and Publications Points of Information

Points of interest to the Pacific Region: Wednesday's proceedings

The Meat & Potatoes: Conference committee reports/recommendations

Delegate's call to stay responsible: I had to remember exactly how I felt.

The Short List: Items that will remain in motion through 2010 (at a glance)

Q & A: brief responses to frequently asked questions

Glossary of Terms: Frequently used acronyms and terminology

Delegate's Report (In chronological order)

If you wish to print just the report select "print" from the menu and then on the "print range" menu select pages "19 - 34"

The Appetizer

Two expressions about the conference:

Our bylaws, adopted in 1957, are the work of the late Bernard B. Smith, noted international lawyer, long a nonalcoholic trustee, chair of the board from 1951 to 1956. "Bern" Smith composed the bylaws out of his great love and respect for our Fellowship. They contain both the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. They are good reading for all A.A.s and friends of A.A. and may be found in the A.A. service manual.

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered the question "Why we need a Conference" superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting:

"We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.

"We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services. "We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is."

Bill W.'s June 1951 Article in The Grapevine: "To Serve Is to Live"

Our first General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous gathered at New York City in April, 1951. It was composed of thirty-seven U.S. and Canadian delegates plus AA's General Service Headquarters staff and Trustees. The single purpose of our Conference was: to serve AA throughout the world.

This unexciting statement now carries a deep meaning for all who were there. We came to believe that AA's future had been made secure. We became certain that AA could live for so long as God might need us.

Why did each witness of the Conference feel so deeply about it? I think for two reasons: the Group Conscience of all Alcoholics Anonymous was heard to speak for the first time. And we realized, as never before, how perilous "faith without works" might really become. So it was, that AA's Group Conscience heard its first high call to service.

Making this plainer, let's look for a moment at a single AA member. Faith alone does not save him. He has to act, do something. He must carry his message to others, practice AA principles in all his affairs. Else he slips, he withers and he dies. Look now at an AA Group. Can pure faith, mere belief in right principle and sound tradition, make the Group a going concern? Not in the least. Each AA Group, as such, must also function, do something. It must serve its appointed purposes or it, too, withers and falls apart.

Now our Conference delegates were able to apply this principle to AA as a whole. The delegates could see far beyond the single AA and his particular Group. In a flash, they took in the stark fact that AA as a whole must continue to function or else it might well suffer that common penalty of faith without works. Which is: disintegration. Gone was the comfortable illusion that should each AA Group tend strictly its own affairs God would then reward our shortsightedness by guarding AA as a whole entirely by himself--including our Headquarters, AA's public relations and the welfare of the "Million who still don't know." The delegates saw that this would spell faith without work and without responsibility. That could never be. Of course much work would always have to be done, much responsibility would have to be taken by many. To AA as a whole, every member would need to give a little.

Of age now, our fellowship would have to begin looking after its own vital Services; these couldn't be thoughtlessly left in the sole custody of our isolated, unknown and unsupported Board of Trustees. The work of our Foundation and AA's "GHQ" would have to become widely understood and directly backed up by AA itself. Nothing was plainer, thought the delegates. When therefore, you next see your local Conference member, you may find him talking something like this:

"Thanks for sending me to New York. I've just spent three days at AA's World Headquarters. Our Trustees, General Office and Grapevine people turned the place inside out so we delegates might vision its past, present and future. What we saw and felt was startling.

Very suddenly we got the feeling of AA as a whole. We looked out upon a fellowship of surpassing unity, one on which the sun never sets, a world communion four thousand times larger than a single AA Group.

We then realized that this wonder had been made possible by the devoted service of a few; those Headquarters workers whose decade and more of labor had enabled us in distant fields to garner that great harvest of 120,000 fellow sufferers into the safety of our fold, and into the affectionate respect of the whole world. Our unseen servants at the Foundation had done all this because Dr. Bob and Bill had asked them to.

But now they were saying to us delegates, "Soon you must lend a hand. These are AA's Arms of Service, these are our Traditions. Come and help us administer them; times have changed, we oldsters are perishable. This is your Legacy of Service. Please accept it now and guard it well."

On its next pages, Grapevine will report our Conference in some detail. So I paragraph here only a little of what I know the delegates carried home in their hearts.

The Conference scene that Sunday afternoon we last met will always be a precious memory in the annals of AA. For in that historic assemblage we could all hear the Voice of Alcoholics Anonymous. These were the words: "To serve AA is to live. We gladly accept our Third Legacy and may we guard it well and use it wisely. God grant that the Legacy of Service remain ever safe in our keeping.

In that fine hour the torch of Service did pass from the hands of us who are older to yours, which are younger; it passed to every oncoming generation of those Children of the Night whose darkness, God willing, shall be banished within the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous all through the bright years which Destiny surely holds in store for us.

BILL W

The Salad – Monday
Board reports & publications points of information.

Leonard Blumenthal (class A trustee non-alcoholic, chairman of the board) gave his last General Service Conference Board report. The main purpose of the **General Service Board (GSB)** is to implement advisory actions throughout the year. He described the process of hiring the new General Manager and the guidelines they used were followed "to the T". He thanks Greg M. for his ten years of service and extraordinary dedication all special workers in extending the hand of A.A. around the world. He noted that the last of the special forums ended with a visit to Moose Factory, Ontario, Canada. This event was in February because there is a limited time of year when Moose Factory is accessible by 'ice roads'.

This coming year we are bringing in a new board chair, two new class A trustees, two new regional trustees, two new general service trustees and two new non trustee directors on both the AAWS and Grapevine corporate boards. Plans are in place for extensive orientation and sharing sessions. Also, like the conference, they have a buddy system for their first days and months in their new service positions.

A.A. was invited this past year to speak to the "United Nations Committee on Narcotics and Drugs". While this world movement used to be primarily focused on stopping drug trafficking and crime, it has worked in to "demand reduction" with emphasis on education, treatment, etc. While Leonard knew there was some shock value in expressing this invitation to the conference, he made clear that we were invited because the committee noted a consistent problem that in treating drug addiction; patients who continue to drink would relapse back into their addiction. Looking for the answer to treating this [drinking] problem was the reason A.A. was invited. One of the questions that was asked of Leonard was "How do we get A.A. in our country?" Leonard's answer, after looking it up in his directory, was "You already do." They were amazed. This awareness was now brought to International proportions and a great move forward for A.A.s or potential A.A.s worldwide.

Noted too in the same meeting were some statistics, 35 million deaths a year related to alcoholism, while 350,000 are drug related. We are 100 more times likely to die an alcohol related death. Then too, Leonard was invited to attend the Geneva "World Health Organization" expert roundtable to speak to the "International Strategy in Combating Alcoholism."

John K., Northeast Regional Trustee, gave an overview of **A.A. World Services (AAWS)** which can be found in the final conference report. I do want to share some points of interest from his report. In 2008 GSO welcomed 1,315 visitors and net total of 1,458 new groups were listed.

Book Sales: For the year 2008 1,111,906 units compared to 1,715,780 units in 2007.

Translation: in 2008 literature was translated in to in Kirghiz (Kyrgyzstan), Serbian, Indonesian, Greek, Maltese, Vietnamese, Russian, Croatian and Macedonian. I have a complete list upon request.

Digital Formats: All audio and video products with the exception of the ASL Big Book and twelve and twelve have been successfully converted to CD and DVD format.

International: A.A. was asked to visit Croatia and Greece for conventions of growing fellowships, A.A.s 20th Anniversary in Lithuania, Vienna, Hungary also celebrating 20 years, Finland's 60th anniversary, Geneva, and India's full week of Public Information and CPC activities celebrating 50 years of A.A.

The AAWS and Grapevine/La Viña financial positions are highlighted in the Early Bird Edition of Box 459 and all full board reports are here on the display table. I will pass on to you in this brief summary: Our hardest hit was in the last quarter of 2008 when contribution revenues were down by 240,000 less than budgeted. The hope is that this is short term, but 2008 was the first time in ten years where we came in less than budgeted *and* less than the prior year as well. To skip to the financial bottom line of AAWS, as I understand it, the approximate amount budgeted for 2009 is equal to amount budgeted for 2008, while anticipated income is greater because of the literature price increase, the operating expenses and a requirement to shore up the reserve will absorb this. In 2008 services for members cost 7.04 per member or 157.21 for a group, while actual income was 4.50 per member and 110.00 per group. A couple of things we can walk away with regarding money is: 1) the data gathered to estimate costs is in part reliant on input received through the Fellowship New Vision (FNV) software and 2) awareness by our groups and districts to the idea of self support. Not asking the groups to put in more (although that helps), but rather bring awareness of our need to groups that are not yet participating.

Madeleine P. (Pacific Region Trustee) gave us the ***Grapevine*** bottom line. Our magazine in print was not immune to the financial downfall in 2008. While undergoing a major overhaul, Grapevine fell short of budget and had to deal with rising production costs. Sound familiar? The facts and figures are in the full report. But rest assured the board members and Grapevine staff are pursuing Bill's original mission to be "A mirror of A.A. in Action". Close attention is being paid to reflect our current membership, expand and broaden the audience across all platforms, foster the Fellowship's sense of ownership of A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and to optimize its resources and operations. The yearlong process of making Grapevine color and staple free are just the beginning.

Other steps to meet our goals will be: Calling for more stories for Grapevine and La Viña, sustaining circulation that increases communication with central offices and Grapevine/La Viña reps, reviewing office procedures, reorganizing the editorial department and bringing La Viña and the Web together under the supervision of a managing editor and developing editorial content on the web.

In her summary, Madeleine said Grapevine is "running on fumes" and challenged our CPC and PI chairs to place grapevines wherever their imaginations would take them. She stressed *involvement* by submitting stories in English and Spanish, sharing with others and bringing overall awareness to our magazine.

Of course a sharing session wouldn't be complete without a challenge. Last year I think it was Debbie (Area 93 panel 57 delegate) who issued a challenge out to all the areas to gather 100 more subscriptions during the year, well this year her conference buddy Hari, issued the same challenge. So we're on. 100 new subscriptions from Area 93, that's an even 5 per English

speaking district. Spanish members too, let's get 5 per district. It's completely doable, so let's go for it!

We then received a financial PowerPoint presentation from our Trustees' Finance & Budgetary Committee chair, Terry Bedient (Class A). His report & PowerPoint slides are in the display book also.

After more area highlights, we finished with a presentation on Humility and Sacrifice and a "What's on your mind" session. It was there I learned that we did not have an artist for the 59th GSC, but rather we will have a tribute to recently departed Al Herr, long time illustrator for our final conference reports, by a compilation of his works to be included in this year's report.

Publications/POI:

It was revealed that the publications department is finishing up negotiations with Amazon's Kindle Reader to produce the 4th edition Big Book for this new media. The delegates initially were not all warm and fuzzy about this point of information. The Kindle reader was a hot topic in and out for the next few days, however when Madeleine P. brought hers out during a break she was mobbed by interested conference delegates. (Other public domain versions of the Big Book are already accessible by this medium)

Kindle reader project negotiations breakdown: 60% Amazon, 40% AA. Main items to iron out were pricing and the ability to pull the book off the site at any time. Pricing will be at whatever we sell it at and we can rescind at any juncture. After the July 01, 2009 price increase, kindle reader versions of the Big Book 4th Ed. Will yield \$3.20 per sale. There is no overhead beyond the initial expenses and this "profit" is higher than we make on hard copy after printing, packing and shipping.

Our initial expenses: Our publications director's time, his assistant's time, 3 hrs of attorney fees and a technician's time to transfer into the appropriate format.

Our GSO was asked by members for this format and Amazon contacted us too, because they were receiving requests for the 4th edition Big Book.

Another point of information is that by the end of May our A.A. web site will be able to accept contributions online by credit card and eventually electronic check. And that the new Box 459 subscription form has an email designation for electronic delivery. I brought forms [in English] with me today.

Points of interest to the Pacific Region

Wednesday's proceedings.

At the Pacific Region luncheon/meeting we selected sites for the 2012 Regional Forum and the 2013 PRAASA.

San Diego, CA , Boise, ID and Fairbanks, Alaska submitted bids for the Forum; 2012 Pacific Regional Forum will be held in Fairbanks, Alaska mid September. Last time Alaska hosted the Forum was 1988 (the oldest). Room rates were estimated at 90 per night.

PRAASA 2013 had two bids. Boise, ID and Reno, NV. Both for Mar 1-3. Boise, Idaho won the bid with room rates quoted at 90 per night and last time they hosted was in 1998 (the oldest).

Regional luncheon, caucus of region for Trustee at Large U.S.:

After second vote where under 1/5th vote(s) are pulled off the tally, the two remaining candidates from Pacific Region were Bill M. CA, Northern Coastal and Rod B., Utah. After fourth vote, Rod B. (Native American) was elected to go to the nomination with ten votes to five.

Floor Proceedings for three trustees positions:

At the conference Rod B. (pacific region candidate) made it all the way to hat [after a fifth vote] but Don M. from Southeast Region was selected as Trustee at Large US.

Southeast Regional Trustee elected was El N., South Carolina. She came out of the hat after a fifth vote run off with Cesar D. from Puerto Rico.

Although the Louisiana's submission didn't make it through, I really enjoyed that delegates presentation of their candidate. He talked about her involvement in the various young people's groups like ICYPAA and SCYPAA and "who's your Pa?"

East Central Regional Trustee elected was Pam R., Michigan (Southeast) after four ballots were cast.

A brief description of how a regional trustee is voted in: After each of the areas in a region submit one candidate for the position, a section of the conference floor is roped off and members from that region along with an equal number of members from the two nominating committees are seated. The members from the nominating committees, not belonging to that region, are drawn from a hat. All members of the conference receive the resumes for the candidates, but only the region and equal number I mentioned above have a vote. The rest of the conference delegates are there as witnesses, nothing more.

Also of interest, if only to me, was during the proceedings the chair describes the third legacy procedure, but doesn't mention what to do if there is a tie for second place. Of course, this never came up, but if it did, I guess we would look it up. In our area we announce this during elections.

The Meat and Potatoes
Conference committee reports/recommendations Wed, Thurs & Friday

Agenda committee recommended:

Conference theme for 2010 is "Practicing A.A.'s Principles – the Pathway to Unity"

Supporting presentation topics and workshop topic were accepted.

The workshop will be a little different this coming year in that background material will be sent to all the delegates on "Discuss the General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process", being the actual 2009 conference committee material they received regarding this process.

Report & Charter committee:

It seemed as though the conference wanted to pay close attention to the recommendations produced by this committee and so they did. I did not note the times, but you could sense early on that our entire conference time budgeted was going to be thrown out the window.

One item that did interest me was clarifying the language regarding submitting the same name for nomination of regional trustee and U.S. trustee at large in the same year. The language was debated at length and the motion ended up being tabled.

Note: this committee caucused separately twice during conference and we had to move on with regular business and revisit items on two separate occasions.

When the same item returned to us, it was in the form of an additional committee consideration for the conference committee on trustees to look at in 2010.

There was an original recommendation to limit the publications departments ability to make editorial changes to the service manual as well that passed, and because the minority opinions offered at the microphone was so overwhelming, a motion to reconsider was immediately followed by a motion to table and it too came back as an additional consideration.

Corrections committee:

Did exactly the opposite with an item, at first they had no recommendations and after answering many questions from the floor about there additional committee considerations, caucused and returned *with* two recommendations that passed quickly as I recall. One was to replace the image a of man smoking a hand rolled cigarette in the pamphlet "It sure beat sitting in a Cell" with an image of the current edition of the Big Book. The other was to undertake a revision of the entire pamphlet.

Also, as an additional consideration, the committee discussed issues that may be involved in A.A. members complying with the rules of correctional facilities, such as signing 'sponsorship agreements' or legally binding documents and requested sharing from the fellowship be gathered and brought back next year.

Note: I would like to have our liaison to So Cal H&I intergroup take 2010 agenda items on Corrections to H&I for input where applicable.

Note: It would take hours to describe everything that happened and if you don't see a particular item in my report that you are interested in or feel is important, please ask. (I've been dying to say this: "I do have all the answers")

Literature Committee:

The conference spent nearly six hours talking about these recommendations. My notes on the pamphlet "The A.A. Member-Medications and Other Drugs", our first item up, include the words "Passion, Passion, Passion" The pamphlet alone took three hours. Needs were expressed by both sides that the pamphlet needed to continue to move forward, but it ultimately did not pass because everyone could not agree on the complete language and one of the stories. We may have spent over an hour just accepting and rewording an amendment that appears in the first paragraph of the introduction. The chairperson suggested we not try and edit this entire pamphlet from the floor. Our first floor action was introduced to take this pamphlet back to committee. The motion to send back to committee was passed.

Floor actions can be brought at anytime during the general session but will not be heard during sharing sessions; and if heard and seconded, will be tagged on to the end of the agenda after all committee reports/recommendations are heard.

The "A.A. for the Native North American" pamphlet too received a lot of attention. 1st vote was 75 for, 46 against – not a two thirds majority. Then the minority voice spoke (which in this case 75 people could have brought). The real passion from the group started to emerge and wonderful expressions of need and experience with local native outreach efforts were shared. A vote to reconsider the motion passed and the second vote revealed a telling 112 for 8 against vote – The new pamphlet will be produced and they are all new stories save one.

The third item I will ask our own area literature committee to help me with. It was passed to revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship". I think this will be a way to gather input from our area. The complete recommendation gives direction on this.

The proposal for a new Special Needs recovery pamphlet did pass and I am sure we will receive correspondence from our Trustees committee on Literature on how submissions will be accepted for review.

I would like to skip forward in time here to tell you that the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities recommended that their scope be expanded to include service to Special Needs committees and that the name be changed to "Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities" this *did* pass. So two things were accomplished. Accessibilities has conference oversight and the name "Accessibilities" was accepted at our national level.

Back to Literature, to add a sentence to "A Newcomer Asks" that encourages newcomers to obtain and study the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous passed.

I think this following item is interesting because of the amount of time it took at last year's conference. The title of the pamphlet "44 Questions" was recommended by

our committee to be changed to "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A." and passed very quickly.

The request for a video on the GSR was presented (the recommendation adopted by a suggestion from the Trustees Committee on Literature) to be included in the compilation of "Your A.A. General Service Office...." video. Some of our decision-making regarding this recommendation was that we were told it would cost upwards of 60K to produce a video just for this *and* we considered that previous conferences wanted all videos to be updated where appropriate. Ultimately this did not pass in part because the cost was 64K and we continue to hear that we are coming up short with financial support from the groups.

On the pamphlet regarding conference-approved literature that focuses on the topics of spirituality, and agnostics or atheists/non believers in A.A., the committee recommended that input be gathered in the form of a questionnaire. That summary results be returned to committee for consideration. We talked a good long time on this one. Voted twice and could not pass. Those in opposition were divided in their comments, some didn't want the pamphlet at all while others did not think the questionnaire was the right way to approach this.

A floor motion was presented (at a later time, when the wording was selected) to reconsider this topic. I particularly like the wording of the motion. It was agreed that the subject had come up enough times and the need expressed that it was recommitted to our committee. I will retain the wording of the floor action motion because it broadened the way our committee could move this proposed pamphlet along.

Public Information (PI):

The pamphlet "A Message to Teenagers" revisions were approved which included text and graphic from the current "Too Young?" pamphlet.

We all previewed the color wall poster for young people and voted to put it in to circulation. Production costs will be recouped by the sale of the poster.

The committee did not however recommend a generic poster be produced at this time, because there was no widely expressed need. So if we feel strongly enough about this item and would like to see one produced, I would advise you to put an agenda item forward to our Area 93 chair and see if our area would like to submit this as an agenda item for the 2010 GSC.

On the decision to produce another Public Service Announcement (PSA), and in the light of the decision not to produce one last year, the discussion to pass this recommendation seemed to focus primarily around fiscal responsibility. Brought to the microphone was a reminder that the GSO has continued to defer a New York mandated lease improvement and is currently in a salary freeze. This produced a 73 for 47 against result. After many pleas of passion and a motion to reconsider it was decided that the spiritual benefit outweighed the practical liability and we could trust our trusted servants at AAWS to make the necessary arrangements to produce this new national PI tool. My conference buddy Silvain was quite entertaining and quite passionate as he presented a 7 year spreadsheet of our spending over the years.

Also imbedded in this recommendation appeared [the recent cubby hole mailing requesting input about whether or not to] hide full faces of actors portraying alcoholics. They also included a suggested to utilize older alcoholics and members with special needs/accessibility issues.

This was the second time during conference when members were very concerned about self-support. We need to be looking for ways to increase awareness to this topic because we are asking for these services by meeting the needs express by A.A. as a whole. The passion exhibited on this topic to carry the message was so high that I wish I could have bottled it and brought it home. We have got to continue to provide for A.A.'s future and the only way to do that is to be active in the present. This includes the all mighty (\$2) dollar in the basket.

New Radio PSAs passed with little discussion.

Now some of you might be wondering why the PI committee recommended utilizing older alcoholics in the previous item, well I suspect it is because of this item regarding the Young People's Video submissions. We all looked at four videos (3 English 1 French) that we're submitted for approval and the cheers were all that needed to be expressed. Plenty of discussion ensued regarding these videos, but in the end they were approved by a 100% unanimous vote. The committee also listed, under additional considerations, that the project continue and that Spanish language videos be sought out and these videos be streamed on our web site.

AAWS and the publications dept gathered a sense that we would like these to be able to include subtitles in each video of English, French and Spanish language where applicable.

CPC Committee:

A new video directed at professionals in the employment/human relations field to be streamed on our A.A. website - passed.

An additional consideration to create a survey style follow up letter to be completed by the professional after a C.P.C. contact to assess the effectiveness of the C.P.C. effort – really caught my attention, I thought it to be a great idea.

An updated workbook to include references to La Vina and the Canadian/French magazine produced by our Canadian areas entitled "La Vigne" where Grapevine references appear.

This additional consideration was heard by the conference and it was noted that there are already other non-conference approved materials in the kit including CPC guidelines and the workbook itself. The trustees committee on CPC will consider this and other items under the heading.

Treatment Facilities Committee:

The revised video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* was accepted by the conference, but not without exhaustive discussion. The first vote failed 81 to 45. The most pointed arguments from the minority came from two Class A (non-alcoholic) trustees. Bill Clark, who has extensive experience in the field of Treatment and Rogelio Flores spoke to the urgent need to update this video and get it in to the hands of

professionals. It is really dated and tweaking it to perfection does not outweigh the effectiveness that it would have if we get it out right now. After a second vote, a narrow 85 to 36 pushed this through. My opinion is the sense of urgency to get this out outweighed the argument that some members had with faces of actors and the AA meeting scene setting. Members who spoke to this exhibited great passion for the suffering prospect who would be watching this video.

Policy/Admissions Committee:

The Conference opened with this committee's first two recommendations, that we accept Frank Z., alt. delegate from Area 12 Delaware in place of recently deceased Joe S. (panel 58), and that Claudio S. from the General Service Board of Brazil, Mario C. from the General Service Board of Colombia and Plinio P., Manager, G.S.O. Colombia, be admitted to the 59th General Service Conference as observers.

The rest of this committee's report was heard during regular conference proceedings. The date for the 2012 GSC is April 22-28, 2012 was accepted.

And last, an item to recommend that the General Service Board develop a procedure for the submission of concept 5 minority appeals. This item wasn't terribly clear and was talked about a lot by members of the board. More was to be revealed later, but it felt like there was an elephant in the livingroom.

The recommendation passed, but a second recommendation to take minority appeals directly to the conference without review failed.

Overwhelmingly the recommendation to that the General Service Board develop a plan for the General Service Conference to conduct an inventory of itself – passed with a 112 to 4 vote.

Archives Committee:

Additional consideration: to request the Trustees Archives Committee create a report on the feasibility of developing a format (e.g. PowerPoint presentation) for a self guided virtual tour.

Trustees Committee:

This item was very sad for two reasons. The first because of a telephone call the Madeleine received and brought her back to us in tears, our beloved Bill Moore (Area 06, N.CA Coastal), who many of you know as our last PRAASA program chair, passed away in a motorcycle accident. He was also up for consideration as U.S. trustee at large earlier in the week and was in touch with us as recently as Wednesday, the second, because we spent almost 2 hours approving the slate of trustees for the General Service Board.

Members of the conference voiced mistrust. We were asked to approve a slate of 12 Class B trustees and 7 Class A trustees. Reason being is that Eastern Canada's vacancy was at the request of the region to remain until the next rotation and the other was because of general service trustee, John S.'s untimely passing. Board members assured us that this would be addressed but, some of us had their service manuals out with excerpts from our by-laws discussing procedures. Also it was everyone's concern that Class A trustee, Jeanne Woodford has been unavailable

to attend meetings because of unforeseen family and career conflicts. She too was not at the conference. A member of the board told us she questions her own availability and this too would be addressed. A lot of the arguments had to do with preserving the ratio of alcoholics to non alcoholics on the slate. Although, historically this has never been an issue, not even once, members did not trust the process and this was sad. Loving discussion went on for a long time and when the question was called, even though we were exhausted, we voted to continue talking. At a second call of the question, the slate passed as presented.

Directors for AAWS and Grapevine passed in short order. Names should be in the early bird box 459 and certainly in the final report. See me with any questions.

Finance Committee:

As you remember we gathered our group conscience for the Trustees committee of Finance and Budgetary on practical and spiritual benefits/liabilities on fully funding our GSO, this committee received only 33 area responses. The conference committee on finance determined that we can not achieve our ideal to support our services with less than half the groups participating and recommended we gather input through clearer means and pointed to two specific questions. 1) if we continue to use the literature profits to partially fund services, should there be a limit? 2) if there is a limit how do we continue to pay for services if there is a shortfall in contributions?

This motion failed the first time, but after many minority expressions and a quick call of the question it passed 80-37. I actually voted no on this because it comes so quickly on the heels of the previous request and I thought the wording was confusing, although at that point in the conference a lot of us were tired and confusion surfaced for more than just me. I do agree we need to keep talking about this and now we will.

And, put in the form of a conference recommendation (which puts to permanent record) they recommended that discussion of additional ways to communicate with the Fellowship about self-support be included on the agenda for the 60th GSC.

The committee agreed they saw no need for a conference approved 7th tradition poster and did not make a recommendation on this.

Grapevine Committee:

The committee discussed the removal of the Alcoholism at Large section and took no action, but they did request that the disclaimer be enlarged and moved to a more prominent location in both the Grapevine and La Viña magazines.

International and Regional Forums Committee:

It was passed to take an anonymity protected photo of the flag ceremony at the 2010 international convention.

It was also passed to broadcast an encrypted anonymity protected Internet broadcast of the opening flag ceremony at the 2010 international convention, like that of 2005. They *requested* that this be made more widely available this time.

Floor Actions:

8 floor actions were presented, two were declined, 4 failed and the two that were recommitted to committee were both literature.

1. Recommend that the revised 59th conference pamphlet "The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs" be returned to the Trustees Literature Committee for additional discussion and report back to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature.
2. Move that we develop conference-approved literature that focuses on spirituality and includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Note: A motion to decline: When a floor action is brought back to the conference floor, the chair will read the motion and then offer discussion. If you are first to the microphone you may present a motion to decline. If this is seconded the conference body stops and votes. If this is passed, the motion dies and we move on to the next item of business. If anyone begins discussion on a motion, a motion to decline will not be heard.

As we moved to adjourn the conference, we heard the serenity prayer in French, Spanish and English – It was awesome.

I think it was Dorothy H., general service trustee on the board, who said it best... (and I'm paraphrasing) She said that the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has spoken and we [the members of the General Service Board] are listening. Although some of the debates were heated and went on forever, the group conscience did emerge and our trusted servants were [in the room and] paying attention.

Delegate's Call to Stay Responsible

I need to remember exactly how I am feeling. Saturday, May 2, 2009

After I went to the theater today for a matinee (after four hours of sleep last night), and as I sat watching the play, I was feeling a deep sense of concern for the well being of AA. We are 100% responsible for this fellowship, do not take that lightly.

This year's conference revealed to me that if we don't raise up trusted servants with a passion for this fellowship within our groups, districts and area, then we could be contributing to a bigger concern regarding the wellbeing our whole fellowship. I would be so bold as to say, that if you haven't worked the steps from 1 through 12, you ought not go much further with your [general] service.

The conference required me to really exhibit trust, love, faith and patience at each juncture. Our Pacific region is blessed with delegates who care and exhibit passion. Who take into their deepest innermost selves the charge to be 'guardians of our entire fellowship' (look up any reference by Bill to support this).

This is not, I repeat NOT, a light anecdotal self pat on the back. If we don't guard our fellowship with passion and love and service, if we are not spiritually fit to take a path which could at times try our very faith in AA as a whole, then we ought to make it our responsibility to study the steps, then study the traditions and align your mind and heart to our movement of one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic.

I didn't say study the concepts on purpose, although it has been to my benefit to do so. My interest in the concepts and a zeal for the well being of AA didn't come overnight. It came after I read *AA Comes of Age* and in understanding our experience though this fellowship's infancy and how we became entirely self supporting and self steering. The concepts themselves actually jumped off the page during the conference. They came alive when experiencing all of the aspects of what the conference does to reach its recommendations.

This particular record of my feelings may never be seen or read by anyone else, but I've got to remember this intense feeling that I am charged with; to look out for our area's well being and our trusted servants which will migrate down the inverted triangle to serve our area, our conference, the general service board and its corporations and to exhibit leadership by example, experience, strength and hope.

At closing brunch today, I heard from two trusted servants who we're completely in to divisive behavior. One was just blatant about suggesting this is an 'us and them' fellowship and we are on our own. The second was much more diplomatic in his approach. However both we're in a minority and not on principle of what is best for our fellowship, but rather being in the minority as martyrs for minority sake only.

I truly trust our process. And, in the end with grueling hours of loving discussion, the group's conscience *did* emerge at this year's conference and we did not settle for good instead of the best.

A number of items failed on the floor, a number of items were sent back to committee. A number of items that did pass did so with great care and careful consideration. Sure there were procedural concerns, sure at times we had heated debate, but at the conclusion of each item we were able to sit next to someone who may not have voted the same way on an item and felt just at home as if we'd been in the same home group for years with no feelings of disunity.

We ourselves should always remember not to take ourselves too seriously, but in the same breath I implore this area not ever to consider half measures to be "good enough".

The short list (according to Jeff)

Items that will remain in motion through 2010 (at a glance)

Treatment Facilities:

Additional consideration: suggested staff continue to gather shared area experience regarding carrying the message to out-patient treatment settings....

Policy Admissions:

Recommendation: The General Service Board develop a procedure for the submission of concept 5 minority appeals.....

Recommendation: that the General Service Board develop a plan for the General Service Conference to conduct an inventory of itself.....

Archives Committee:

Additional consideration: to request the Trustees Archives Committee create a report on the feasibility of developing a format (e.g. PowerPoint presentation) for a self guided tour.....

Finance:

Recommendation: that the Trustees Finance Committee gather input from the fellowship on 1) if we continue to use the literature profits to partially fund services, should there be a limit? 2) if there is a limit how do we continue to pay for services if there is a shortfall in contributions?.....

Recommendation: that a discussion of additional ways to communicate with the Fellowship about self-support be included on the conference finance committee agenda for the 60th GSC....

Literature:

Recommendation: (Floor Action) that the revised 59th conference pamphlet "*The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs*" be returned to the Trustees Literature Committee for additional discussion and report back to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature.

Recommendation: (Floor Action) Move that we develop conference-approved literature that focuses on spirituality and includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Recommendation: that "Question and Answers on Sponsorship" be reviewed toward eliminating outmoded ethnic, cultural and vocational references.....

Recommendation: that Special Needs recovery pamphlet stories be solicited from members....

Corrections:

Recommendation: revision of the pamphlet: "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell" taking into consideration More stories of recovery.....

Public Information:

Recommendation: new Public Service Announcement for 2010...

Additional consideration: Requesting A.A. Video for Young People Project continue, and that video submissions be encouraged from young people in the Fellowship, especially from the Spanish-speaking members.

Additional consideration: Requesting develop text on the importance of not breaking the anonymity of living members in memorial announcements..... to be included in "Understanding Anonymity" pamphlet.....

Q&A for delegate 59th GSC

Q: If you could describe how you feel after the General Service Conference in one word what would it be?

A: *Weathered.*

Note: a few more one word descriptions would be: Honored, Inundated, Older

Q: Did you come away with any revolutionary proposals?

A: *Slow and steady is the way A.A. goes. Revolutionary, well not really, we do however live in the 21 Century and we are keeping with the times. However, I am impressed with how we've gone completely digital and are really embracing what Young People's groups are bringing to the table from all over the U.S. and Canada*

Q: What was the dirt?

A: *The dirt I hope will wash out, so that it doesn't become a permanent stain. Disunity was presented, but unity prevailed and the group conscience shone brightly.*

Q: What was the most memorable thing?

A: *For me, there were many. I did enjoy sitting down with a longtime publications editor, Eleanor W., and hearing of trials the staff faced after the fellowship asked for a certain compilation book some years back.*

Q: What was the high point?

A: *Living through this experience and growing personally.*

Q: What was the low point?

A: *Some of what I listened to in order to grow.*

Q: What gave you the most sense of accomplishment?

A: *Working diligently on a pamphlet. Sending our publications director, Chris C., back three times to the office to re-tool it for presentation. And then having the conference say "we will not settle for good instead of the best, bring it back next year." Pretty Cool!*

Q: Who did you meet?

A: *Most of our General Service Board trustees, Staff and directors of AAWS and Grapevine, delegates from US/Canada/ Dist of Columbia/Puerto Rico & visitors from Brazil and Columbia.*

Q: Why did we send you?

A: This fellowship has one steering committee meeting a year. It is the general service conference. After we meet, make recommendations and engage in loving discussion, the voice of A.A. as a whole emerges. Our General Service Board and their various committees will then continue to work throughout the year. You sent me for two reasons. One, to have your voices heard and two, to be able to know that our fellowship's future is secure for members who have yet to come to us for help. We know these aren't the front lines. You are on the front lines every time you make a twelfth step call. We are securing that at each juncture the tools you need are at the ready and as sharp as we can keep them. We take the pulse of A.A., fill requests by our membership and then come home and tell you about it.

Glossary of Terms

GSO – General Service Office

Pacific Region – A group of 15 western Areas (in nine states, includes Alaska and Hawaii)

Class A Trustee – A non-alcoholic ‘friend of A.A.’ who serves on the General Service Board, typically 6 years.

Trustee at Large – One for U.S. and One for Canada serves on the Board, usually involved in international, available to step in for regional trustees if needed (to fill vacancy in case of emergency, sickness or even death) 4 year term.

GSB - General Service Board (aka "the trustees", "the board of trustees", "the board")

GSC – General Service Conference

AAWS – Alcoholics Anonymous World Services

General Service Trustee - There are 4 general service trustees, 2 from the A.A. World Services Board and 2 from the Grapevine, who serve on these boards and are available at any time for the solution of problems on which G.S.O. or Grapevine staff members need help; usually local, but not restricted as such. 4 year term.

Regional Trustee – Elected by each region to serve on the general service board (GSB) four years

Conference Delegate – members of the general service conference voting membership (this includes area delegates, trustees, non trustee directors and staff)

POI – point of information

59th Annual General Service Conference
Delegates Report – Central California Assembly
Sunday May 17, 2009

I've listened to three delegates before me give their annual reports and each time becoming increasingly aware of how AA works. Now it's my turn. With over 65 hours of work and only 1 ½ hours to report, I will try to both give you the information that each of you needs to hear and what I saw and felt. I have whittled down the financial information by cutting to the bottom line in a couple of places. However, I do have summary reports and full reports for those of you who would really like these particulars.

I have been transformed by my experience. I feel like an owner of A.A. and in fact we *all* are. Even just this week when I logged on to our web site, I really felt like it was *our* site. Not some corporate entity that I just accept whatever content I see, but a real sense that I am responsible to either like or dislike what I see and say something about it. It is the same way with every piece of ground we covered during the conference. It is no longer some distant meeting that I only hear about, it is our one steering meeting a year where we have to get our movement aligned with the times and check our efficacy to today's newcomer and those on the front lines doing the real work of one alcoholic talking to another.

I had prepared to open with a reading from Bill W.'s June 1951 article to the Grapevine, but I have changed my mind. Instead I want to share with you a letter that I wrote to myself. A letter about how I was feeling the day the conference ended. I would encourage you to utilize the digital archives at www.aagrapevine.org/da/ and lookup June 1951 to read for yourself. It can also be found in our *Language of the Heart* book. Here's my letter:

I need to remember exactly how I am feeling. Saturday, May 2, 2009

After I went to the theater today for a matinee (after four hours of sleep last night), and as I sat watching the play, I was feeling a deep sense of concern for the well being of AA. We are 100% responsible for this fellowship, do not take that lightly.

This year's conference revealed to me that if we don't raise up trusted servants with a passion for this fellowship within our groups, districts and area, then we could be contributing to a bigger concern regarding the wellbeing our whole fellowship. I would be so bold as to say, that if you haven't worked the steps from 1 through 12, you ought not go much further with your [general] service.

The conference required me to really exhibit trust, love, faith and patience at each juncture. Our Pacific region is blessed with delegates who care and exhibit passion. Who take into their deepest innermost selves the charge to be 'guardians of our entire fellowship' (look up any reference by Bill to support this).

This is not, I repeat NOT, a light anecdotal self pat on the back. If we don't guard our fellowship with passion and love and service, if we are not spiritually fit to take a path which could at times try our very faith in AA as a whole, then we ought to make it our responsibility to study the steps, then study the traditions and align your mind and heart to our movement of one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic.

I didn't say study the concepts on purpose, although it has been to my benefit to do so. My interest in the concepts and a zeal for the well being of AA didn't come overnight. It came after I read *AA Comes of Age* and in understanding our experience though this fellowship's infancy and how we became entirely self supporting and self steering. The concepts themselves actually jumped off the page during the conference. They came alive when experiencing all of the aspects of what the conference does to reach its recommendations.

This particular record of my feelings may never be seen or read by anyone else, but I've got to remember this intense feeling that I am charged with; to look out for our area's well being and our trusted servants which will migrate down the inverted triangle to serve our area, our conference, the general service board and its corporations and to exhibit leadership by example, experience, strength and hope.

At closing brunch today, I heard from two trusted servants who we're completely in to divisive behavior. One was just blatant about suggesting this is an 'us and them' fellowship and *we* are on our own. The second was much more diplomatic in his approach. However both we're in a minority and not on principle of what is best for our fellowship, but rather being in the minority as martyrs for minority sake only.

I truly trust our process. And, in the end with grueling hours of loving discussion, the group's conscience *did* emerge at this year's conference and we did not settle for good instead of the best.

A number of items failed on the floor, a number of items were sent back to committee. A number of items that did pass did so with great care and careful consideration. Sure there were procedural concerns, sure at times we had heated debate, but at the conclusion of each item we were able to sit next to someone who may not have voted the same way on an item and felt just at home as if we'd been in the same home group for years with no feelings of disunity.

We ourselves should always remember not to take ourselves too seriously, but in the same breath I implore this area not ever to consider half measures to be "good enough".

And now my report:

I arrived in New York Thursday night without incident. **Friday** morning I took a subway to the GSO with some Pacific Region delegates and attended the 11:00am A.A. meeting. After the meeting, I went up to the GSO offices and visited with staff. The general manager's office looks out over the Hudson. Now while *that's* not very significant, I did learn that Rick W. saw the plane that was to ditch there and he was remembered as saying "that plane is in kind of low". On the way back we walked through Central Park and stopped at the site of Town's Hospital.

Saturday morning the Pacific Region and a few guests joined together for what would be our only real recreation. We took the Circle-Line Sightseeing boat cruise around Manhattan and, what I would end up coveting, the forming of a bond with the delegates from our Pacific Region.

Saturday night before the conference we had a 'delegates only' meeting. This was really the first glimpse of what the week was going to be like. Because this meeting meets

outside of the conference, we were advised not to talk about agenda items. I was beginning to feel welcome, but I felt about 3 inches tall to start.

Sunday morning before the conference began, I had breakfast with Hari B., delegate from New Brunswick/Prince Edward Isle. He tapped me on the shoulder, like was done to him at his first conference and helped me feel at ease. I then joined the remote communities (unofficial) meeting and learned a few things about geography, culture and linguistics in the everyday challenge of one drunk talking to another. It was there I learned we have three pamphlets in Inuktitut; Eskimo language. I grabbed a copy of the remote community's newsletter and the pamphlets and they are here on display.

At the opening of the conference, tables were arranged in a banquet style setting. Leonard Blumenthal (Class A Trustee) gave a short introduction. We had our opening reading and then he handed it over to Phyllis H.

I was watching Phyllis (past Pacific Region Trustee), new general manager and vice-chair of this year's conference, standing under this year's banner taking roll call. I was so proud that she was there. It was during roll call that I had my first "Ah Ha" moment... it was then I realized that *I* was actually *in* the room!

Dorothy W. (rotating Trustee at Large U.S.) gave the keynote address. In reviewing this year's theme, one line from her talk was a quote from Bill W.; a 1962 Grapevine which read: "I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion that we can ever know."

Later that afternoon, we had our only combined conference and Trustees literature committee meeting. It was lead by Leon R., delegate from Northwest Texas Area 66. The chairperson on the Trustees committee was general service trustee, Dorothy H. Later on in the week I would learn what an asset she is to our Board of Trustees. During this meeting Chris C., publications director, was present and I was able to personally deliver district 1's letter and an explanation of the striking similarity in color scheme between the *"The A.A. Member – Medications and other Drugs"* & *"Problems other than Alcohol"* He told me it was within his scope to change it and he would address it with either a color change or a darkening of the hue at the next printing.

Sunday finished up with the opening dinner and a five speaker A.A. meeting. It was a simple A.A. meeting, speakers shared from the heart and it was kept "right sized"

We did have one unannounced guest who shared with us that night. Margret B., general service trustee U.S. (later changed to 'Trustee at Large U.S.')

 from 1973-1977 and past delegate Western, Mass from 70-71. She was at the conference in 1970, she shared some of Bill W.'s last words and was present to hear Bernard Smith's (Class A) talk about "Why we have a Conference" which can be found in your service manual in Chapter One.

Monday morning we started our committee work, because we knew we had allot to do, we agreed to meet a half our early. This meeting we would spend the entire time on one agenda item, *"The A.A. Members - Medications and Other Drugs"*. We agreed that we would come back after regular session and resume at 10:00pm.

Later, on the conference floor, I had my second "Ah Ha" moment. I walked into the room for the first time and saw the tables arranged in the all too familiar conference setup and it just blew my mind. We were advised during our regional luncheon today, not spend too much time in awe because we had work to do. After a few area highlights, we heard Board reports from our three corporations.

Leonard Blumenthal gave his last General Service Conference Board report. The main purpose of the **General Service Board** is to implement advisory actions throughout the year. He described the process of hiring the new General Manager and the guidelines they used were followed "to the T". He thanks Greg M. for his ten years of service and extraordinary dedication to all our 'special workers' in extending the hand of A.A. around the world. He noted that the last of the special forums ended with a visit to Moose Factory, Ontario, Canada. This event was in February because there is a limited time of year when Moose Factory is accessible by 'ice roads'.

A.A. was invited this past year to speak to the "United Nations Committee on Narcotics and Drugs". While this world movement used to be primarily focused on stopping drug trafficking and crime, it has worked in to "demand reduction" with emphasis on education, treatment, etc. While Leonard knew there was some shock value in expressing this invitation to the conference, he made clear that we were invited because the committee noted a consistent problem. In treating drug addiction, patients who continue to drink would relapse back into their addiction. Looking for the answer to treating this [drinking] problem was the reason A.A. was invited.

One of the questions that was asked of Leonard was "How do we get A.A. in our country?" Leonard's answer, after looking it up in his directory, was "You already do." They were amazed. This awareness was now brought to International proportions and a great move forward for A.A.s or potential A.A.s worldwide.

In the same meeting they visited these statistics: 35 million deaths a year related to alcoholism, while 350,000 are drug related. We are 100 more times likely to die an alcohol related death. Then later in the year, Leonard was invited to attend the Geneva "World Health Organization" expert roundtable to speak to the "International Strategy in Combating Alcoholism."

John K., Northeast Regional Trustee, gave an overview of **AAWS** which can be found in the Final Conference Report. I do want to share some points of interest from his report. In 2008 GSO welcomed 1,315 visitors and net total of 1,458 new groups were listed.

Book Sales: For the year 2008 1,111,906 units compared to 1,715,780 units in 2007.

Translation: in 2008 literature was translated in to in Kirghiz (Kyrgyzstan), Serbian, Indonesian, Greek, Maltese, Vietnamese, Russian, Croatian and Macedonian. I have a complete list upon request.

Digital Formats: All audio and video products with the exception of the ASL Big Book and twelve and twelve have been successfully converted to CD and DVD formats.

International: A.A. was asked to visit Croatia and Greece for conventions of growing fellowships, A.A.s 20th Anniversary in Lithuania, Vienna, Hungary also celebrating 20 years, Finland's 60th anniversary, Geneva, and India's full week of Public Information and CPC activities celebrating 50 years of A.A.

The AAWS and Grapevine/La Viña financial positions are highlighted in the Early Bird Edition of Box 459 and all full board reports are here on the display table. I will pass on to you my brief summary: Our hardest hit was in the last quarter of 2008 when contribution revenues were down by 240,000 less than budgeted. The hope is that this is short term, but 2008 was the first time in ten years where we came in less than budgeted *and* less than the prior year as well.

To skip to the financial bottom line of AAWS, as I understand it, the approximate amount budgeted for 2009 is equal to amount budgeted for 2008, while anticipated income is greater because of literature price increases, the operating expenses and a requirement to shore up the reserve will absorb this. In 2008 services for members cost 7.04 per member or 157.21 for a group, while actual income was 4.50 per member and 110.00 per group. A couple of things we can walk away with regarding money is: 1) the data gathered to estimate costs is in part reliant on input received through the Fellowship New Vision (FNV) software and 2) awareness by our groups and districts to the idea of self support. Not asking the groups to put in more (although that helps), but rather bring awareness of our need to groups that are not yet participating.

Madeleine P. (Pacific Region Trustee) gave us the ***Grapevine*** bottom line. Our magazine in print was not immune to the financial downfall in 2008. While undergoing a major overhaul, Grapevine fell short of budget and had to deal with rising production costs. Sound familiar? The facts and figures are in the full report. But rest assured the board members and Grapevine staff are pursuing Bill's original mission to be "A mirror of A.A. in Action". Close attention is being paid to reflect our current membership, expand and broaden the audience across all platforms, foster the Fellowship's sense of ownership of A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and to optimize its resources and operations. The yearlong process of making Grapevine color and staple free are just the beginning.

Other steps to meet our goals will be: Calling for more stories for Grapevine and La Viña, sustaining circulation that increases communication with central offices and Grapevine/La Viña reps, reviewing office procedures, reorganizing the editorial department and bringing La Viña and the Web together under the supervision of a managing editor and developing editorial content on the web.

In her summary, Madeleine said Grapevine is "running on fumes" and challenged our CPC and PI chairs to place grapevines wherever their imaginations would take them. She stressed *involvement* by submitting stories in English and Spanish, sharing with others and bringing overall awareness to our magazine.

Of course a sharing session wouldn't be complete without a challenge. Last year I think it was Debbie who issued a challenge to all the areas to gather 100 more subscriptions during the year, well this year her conference buddy Hari, issued the same challenge. So we're on. 100 new subscriptions from Area 93, that's an even 5 per English speaking district. Spanish members too, let's get 5 per district. It's completely doable, so let's go for it!

We then received a financial PowerPoint presentation from our Trustees' Finance & Budgetary Committee chair, Terry Bedient (Class A). His report & PowerPoint slides are in the book on display here also.

After more area highlights, we finished with a presentation on Humility and Sacrifice and a "What's on your mind" session. It was there I learned that we did not have an artist

for the 59th GSC, but rather we will have a tribute to recently departed Al Herr, long time illustrator for our final conference reports, by a compilation of his works to be included in this year's report.

Our committee then picked up where we left off and we ended our first full day at 12:30am.

Tuesday morning our committee again met a half hour early. We actually finished our business before noon and felt good about our recommendations. Then we held elections. Chair and Alternate chair are selected by secret ballot. The highest number of votes is chair and second highest is alternate. After a second ballot, I was elected as alternate chair of the Conference Committee on Literature. Again the sense of being a part of the process was at times overwhelming. I was brimming over with gratitude. Allot of my input in our committee was influenced by our group opinion polls, our pre-conference assembly and PRAASA. My thanks to you all!

After lunch we heard the last of the panel 59 area highlights. Rogelio Flores (Class A) led the presentation on Enthusiasm and Gratitude, after which we held another "What's on Your Mind" which really ended up being very informative.

I learned about a publication the French Canadian regions are producing, "La Vigne", which is very much the equivalent of our Grapevine magazine, but in French. I brought back a copy for all to see. Although this is not a conference approved magazine, this drew allot of interest from conference members. Speaking of Grapevine, Paul C. general service trustee, also shared his thought that the delegates could remind members of the price increase for Grapevine/LA Viña on July 1 and to bring a laptop that's online to our report-backs to aid members to get a subscription before the price goes up.

Also, it was revealed that our publications department is finishing up negotiations with Amazon's Kindle Reader to produce the 4th edition Big Book for this new media. The delegates initially were not all warm and fuzzy about this point of information. The Kindle reader was a hot topic in and out for the next few days, however when Madeleine brought hers out during a break she was mobbed by interested conference delegates. (Other public domain versions of the Big Book are already accessible by this medium)

Questions answered about Kindle Reader: project negotiations yielded a profit breakdown of 60% Amazon / 40% AA. Main items that were ironed out were pricing and the ability to pull our book off their site at any time. The price will be whatever we are selling it for and we can rescind at any juncture. After the July 01, 2009 price increase, Kindle Reader versions of the Big Book 4th edition will yield \$3.20 per sale. There is no overhead beyond the initial expenses and this 'profit' is higher than we make on hard copy after printing, packing and shipping. Our initial expenses: Chris C.'s time, his assistant's time, 3 hrs of attorney fees and a technician's time to transfer it into the appropriate format. Our GSO received requests from members for this format and Amazon also contacted us because they were receiving allot of requests for the 4th edition Big Book.

Another point of information is that by the end of May our A.A. web site will be able to accept contributions online by credit card and eventually electronic check. And the new Box 459 subscription form has an email designation for electronic delivery. I brought forms [in English] with me today.

Then we took a trip to the GSO/Grapevine Offices and I was witness to the day to day workings of our central hub. Of course I brought my camera and some of the pictures are included on my display. When we returned we had our delegates only dinner. Some committees had work to finish up after dinner. Our committee was done so I was able to go to my room and write my notes, iron a couple of shirts and pass out. It was *only* Tuesday.

Wednesday started out with our Workshop: "Language of the Heart – Keeping it Simple" The questions to stimulate conversation seemed to be inventory based. A brief summary will appear in the final report.

After another "What's on your Mind" session, we broke for our last regional lunch and took care of our Pacific region business. We selected sites for the 2012 Regional Forum and the 2013 PRAASA and caucused to submit one name from our region for Trustee at large U.S.

San Diego, CA, Boise, ID and Fairbanks, Alaska submitted bids for the Forum; 2012 *Pacific Regional Forum* will be held in Fairbanks, Alaska mid September. Last time Alaska hosted the Forum was 1988 (the oldest). Room rates were estimated at 90 per night.

PRAASA 2013 had two bids. Boise, ID and Reno, NV. Both for Mar 1-3. Boise, Idaho won the bid with room rates also quoted at 90 per night and last time they hosted was in 1998 (the oldest).

Trustee at Large U.S.: After second vote, where less than 1/5th vote(s) are pulled off the tally, the two remaining candidates from Pacific Region were Bill M. CA, Northern Coastal and Rod B., Utah. After a fourth vote, Rod B. (Native American) was elected by our region to go to the nomination with ten votes to five.

After lunch we moved right into elections.

Floor Proceedings for three trustees' positions:

Rod B. (Pacific region candidate) made it all the way to hat [after a fifth vote] but Don M. from Southeast Region was elected as Trustee at Large US.

Southeast Regional Trustee elected was El N., South Carolina. She came out of the hat after a fifth vote run off with Cesar D. from Puerto Rico.

Although Louisiana's submission didn't make it through, I really enjoyed their delegate's presentation of their candidate. He talked about her involvement in the various young people's groups like ICYPAA and SCYPAA and "who's your Pa?"

East Central Regional Trustee elected was Pam R., Michigan (Southeast) after four ballots were cast.

A brief description of how a regional trustee is voted in: After each of the region's areas submit one candidate for the position, a section of the conference floor is roped off and members from that region along with an equal number of members from the two nominating committees. These members, not belonging to that region, are selected from a hat. All members of the conference receive the resumes for the candidates, but only the region and equal number I mentioned above have a vote. The rest of the conference are there as witnesses, nothing more.

We had a couple of presentations on the Grapevine and had dinner, before starting the first committee reports.

Amber E., Grapevine managing editor, presented these thoughts: six years ago, in her home group, she participated in a survey. One of the comments she had was that the Grapevine magazine should be redesigned. Ironically she is now leading the team to do just that. They are welcoming feedback during this first phase of design. Please do not be shy.

Also the Grapevine has received 1000 submissions from the new "Grapevine is..." one word contest. Some of the responses were given to us on buttons which are on my display board. Madeleine was handing out the buttons that said "Sober-licious".

New look of magazine includes: color inside and outside, staple free, all new fonts, images are simpler. Noted too, was that 70% of subscription are to members over 50 year old, 40% over 60 years old. So we are hoping to attract a younger segment of our membership with the redesign. They are really looking for feedback, so there is an opportunity for all of us, but especially our Area 93 Grapevine committee, to really scrutinize our magazine and offer your thoughts!

After dinner we got right to it. This is when Wednesday blurred in to Thursday blurred in to Friday. Wednesday night we covered Agenda and part of Report and Charter and Corrections. Take a deep breath, here we go...

Agenda committee recommended:

Conference theme for 2010 is "Practicing A.A.'s Principles – the Pathway to Unity"

Supporting presentation topics and workshop topic were accepted.

The 2010 workshop "Discuss the General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process" will be a little different this coming year. Background material will be sent to all the delegates which will include the actual 2009 conference committee material they received regarding this.

Report & Charter committee:

It seemed as though the conference wanted to pay close attention to the recommendations produced by this committee and so they did. I did not note the times, but you could sense early on that our entire conference time budgeted was going to be thrown out the window.

One item that did interest me was clarifying the language regarding submitting the same name for nomination of regional trustee and U.S. trustee at large in the same year. The language was debated at length and the motion ended up being tabled.

Note: this committee caucused separately twice during conference and we had to move on with regular business and revisit these items on two separate occasions.

When the this item returned to us, it was in the form of an additional committee consideration for the conference committee on trustees to look at in 2010.

There was an original recommendation to limit the publications departments' ability to make editorial changes to the service manual as well that initially passed, but because

the minority opinions offered at the microphone was so overwhelming, a motion to reconsider was immediately followed by a motion to table, and it too, came back as an additional consideration.

Corrections committee:

Did exactly the opposite with an item, at first they had no recommendations and after answering many questions from the floor about their additional committee considerations, they caucused and returned *with* two recommendations that passed quickly as I recall. One was to replace the image of a man smoking a hand rolled cigarette in the pamphlet "It sure beats sitting in a Cell" with an image of the current edition of the Big Book. The other was to undertake a revision of the entire pamphlet.

Also, as an additional consideration, the committee discussed issues that may be involved in A.A. members complying with the rules of correctional facilities, such as signing 'sponsorship agreements' or legally binding documents and requested sharing from the fellowship be gathered and brought back next year.

Note: I would like to have our liaison to So Cal H&I intergroup take 2010 agenda items on Corrections to H&I for input where applicable.

Note: It would take hours to describe everything that happened and if you don't see a particular item in my report that you are interested in or feel is important, please ask. (I hesitate to say this: "I do have all the answers")

Thursday we brought back some tabled items (included above) and moved in to my committee. We agreed at some point during the day to go until 11:15pm. There was a vote taken to table the evening presentations, but we all agreed that the presenters put allot of time and effort in to this and we wanted to hear what they had to offer.

Literature Committee:

The conference spent nearly six hours talking about these recommendations. My notes on the pamphlet "The A.A. Member-Medications and Other Drugs", our first item up, include the words "Passion, Passion, Passion" The pamphlet alone took three hours. Needs were expressed by both sides that the pamphlet needed to continue to move forward, but it ultimately did not pass because everyone could not agree on the complete language and one of the stories. We spent over an hour just accepting and rewording an amendment that appears in the first paragraph of the introduction. The chairperson suggested we not try and edit this entire pamphlet from the floor. Our first floor action was introduced to take this pamphlet back to committee. The motion to send back to committee was passed.

Floor actions can be brought at anytime during the general session but will not be heard during sharing sessions; and if presented in writing and seconded, will be tagged on to the end of the agenda after all committee reports/recommendations are heard.

The "A.A. for the Native North American" pamphlet too received a lot of attention. 1st vote was 75 for, 46 against – not a two thirds majority. Then the minority voice spoke (which in this case 75 people could have brought). Real passion from the group started to emerge and wonderful expressions of need and experience with local outreach efforts were shared. A vote to reconsider the motion passed and the second vote revealed a

telling 112 for / 8 against vote – The new pamphlet will be produced and they are all new stories save one.

The third item I will ask our own area literature committee to help me with. It was passed to revise the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship". I think this will be a way to gather input from our area through our own committee process. The complete recommendation gives direction on this.

The recommendation for a new Special Needs recovery pamphlet did pass and I am sure we will receive correspondence from our Trustees committee on Literature on how submissions will be accepted for review.

I would like to skip forward in time here to tell you that the Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities recommended that their scope be expanded to include service to Special Needs committees and that the name be changed to "Conference Committee on Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities" this *did* pass. So, two things were accomplished. Accessibilities will now have conference oversight and the name "Accessibilities" was accepted at the national level.

Back to Literature, to add a sentence to "A Newcomer Asks" that encourages newcomers to obtain and study the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous; passed.

I think this following item is interesting because of the amount of time it took at last year's conference. The title of the pamphlet "44 Questions" was recommended by our committee to be changed to "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A." and passed very quickly.

The request for a video on the GSR was presented to be included in the compilation of "Your A.A. General Service Office...." video (the recommendation was adopted by a suggestion from the Trustees Committee on Literature). Some of our decision-making regarding this recommendation was that we were told it would cost upwards of 60,000 to produce a video just for the GSR *and* we considered that previous conferences asked that all videos should be updated where appropriate. Ultimately this did not pass in part because the cost would be 64,000 and we continue to hear that we are coming up short with financial support from our groups.

On the pamphlet regarding conference-approved literature that focuses on the topics of spirituality, and agnostics or atheists/non believers in A.A., our committee presented a recommendation that input be gathered in the form of a questionnaire. And summary results be returned to committee for consideration. We talked a good long time on this one. Voted twice and could not pass. Those in opposition were divided in their comments; some didn't want the pamphlet at all while others did not think the questionnaire was the right way to approach this.

A floor motion was presented (at a later time, when the wording was selected) to reconsider this topic. I particularly like the wording of the new motion. It was agreed that the subject had come up enough times and the need expressed that it was recommitted to our committee. I will retain the wording of the floor action motion because it broadened the way our committee could move this proposed pamphlet along.

Public Information (PI):

The pamphlet "A Message to Teenagers" revisions were approved which included text and graphic from the current "Too Young?" pamphlet.

I think it was after this item, we decided to call it a night. Thursday's closing reading was particularly interesting to me; however this report is already long enough. So you can read it for yourself as I have included it a compilation booklet here on display.

Friday (the day we broke the record!) *PI (continued)*:

We all previewed the color wall poster for young people and voted to put it in to circulation. Production costs will be recouped by the sale of the poster.

The committee did not however recommend a generic poster be produced at this time, because there was no widely expressed need. So if we feel strongly enough about this item in our area and would like to see one produced, I would advise you to put an agenda item forward to our Area 93 chair, Sharon, and see if our area would like to submit this as an agenda item for the 2010 GSC.

On the decision to produce another Public Service Announcement (PSA), and in the light of the decision not to produce one last year, the discussion to pass this recommendation seemed to focus primarily around fiscal responsibility. Brought to the microphone was a reminder that the GSO has continued to defer a New York mandated lease improvement and is currently in a salary freeze. This produced a 73 for 47 against result. After many pleas of passion and a motion to reconsider it was decided that the spiritual benefit outweighed the practical liability and we could trust our trusted servants at AAWS to make the necessary arrangements to produce this new national PI tool. My conference buddy Sylvain was quite entertaining and quite passionate as he presented a 7 year spreadsheet of our spending over the years.

Also imbedded in this recommendation appeared [the recent cubby hole mailing requesting input about whether or not] 'to hide full faces of actors portraying alcoholics'. They also included a suggestion to utilize older alcoholics and members with special needs/accessibility issues.

This was the second time during conference when members were very concerned about self-support. *We* need to be looking for ways to increase awareness to our 7th tradition because we are asking for these services by meeting needs expressed by A.A. as a whole. The passion exhibited on this topic *and* 'to carry the message' was so high that I wish I could have bottled it and brought it home. We have got to continue to provide for A.A.'s future and the only way to do that is to be active in the present. This includes the all mighty (\$2) dollar in the basket and participation at the various service levels.

New Radio PSAs passed with little discussion.

Now some of you might be wondering why the PI committee recommended utilizing older alcoholics in the previous item, well I suspect it is because of this next item regarding the Young People's Video submissions. The entire conference looked at four videos (3 English & 1 French) that we're submitted for approval and the cheers were all that needed to be expressed. Plenty of discussion ensued regarding these videos, but in the end they were approved by a 100% unanimous vote. The committee also listed, under additional considerations, that the project continues and that Spanish language videos are sought out and to stream the videos on our A.A. web site.

AAWS and the publications dept gathered a sense that we would like the videos to include subtitles in English, French and Spanish language where applicable.

CPC Committee:

A new video directed at professionals in the employment/human relations field to be streamed on our A.A. website - passed.

An additional consideration to create a survey style follow up letter to be completed by the professional after a C.P.C. contact to assess the effectiveness of the C.P.C. effort – really caught my attention, I thought it to be a great idea!

Additional consideration: for the updated CPC workbook to include references to La Viña and La Vigne where Grapevine references appear. This consideration was questioned by the conference and it was noted that there are already other non-conference approved materials in the kit including CPC guidelines and the workbook itself. The trustees committee on CPC will consider this and other items under the heading.

Treatment Facilities Committee:

The revised video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous* was accepted by the conference, but not without exhaustive discussion. The first vote failed 81 to 45. The most poignant arguments from the minority came from two Class A trustees. Bill Clark, who has extensive experience in the field of Treatment and Rogelio Flores, spoke to the urgent need to update this video and get it in to the hands of professionals. It is really dated and tweaking it to perfection does not outweigh the effectiveness that it would have if we get it out right now. After a second vote, a narrow 85 to 36 pushed this through. My opinion is the sense of urgency to get this out outweighed the argument that some members had with faces of actors and the AA meeting scene setting. Members who spoke to this motion exhibited great passion for the prospect who would be watching this video.

Policy/Admissions Committee:

The Conference itself opened with this committee's first two recommendations, that we accept Frank Z., alt. delegate from Area 12 Delaware in place of recently deceased Joe S. (panel 58), and that Claudio S. from the General Service Board of Brazil, Mario C. from the General Service Board of Colombia and Plinio P., Manager, G.S.O. Colombia, be admitted to the 59th General Service Conference as observers. The rest of this committee's report was heard during regular conference proceedings.

The date for the 2012 General Service Conference be April 22-28, 2012 was accepted.

And last, a recommendation that the General Service Board develop a procedure for the submission of 'concept 5' minority appeals. This item wasn't terribly clear and was talked about a lot by members of the board. More was to be revealed later, but it felt like there was an elephant in the living room that no one was talking about. The recommendation passed, but a second recommendation to take minority appeals directly to the conference without review failed.

Overwhelmingly, the recommendation that the General Service Board develop a plan for the General Service Conference to conduct an inventory of itself – passed with a 112 to 4 vote.

Archives Committee:

Additional consideration: to request the Trustees Archives Committee create a report on the feasibility of developing a format (e.g. PowerPoint presentation) for a self guided virtual tour.

Somewhere in here we went to dinner. We were on our own as the conference proceedings were, in theory, supposed to be over. But we still had four committee reports to go, three recommendations that were to be returned from being tabled or reworded (noted above) and 8 floor actions.

Trustees Committee:

This item was very sad for two reasons. The first because of a telephone call that Madeleine received during this discussion that brought her back to us in tears, our beloved Bill M. (Area 06, N.CA Coastal), who many of you know as our last PRAASA program chair, passed away in a motorcycle accident. He was up for consideration as U.S. trustee at large earlier in the week and was in touch with us as recently as Wednesday, the second reason this was sad was because we spent almost 2 hours approving the slate of trustees for the General Service Board. Members of the conference voiced mistrust. I was beside myself.

We were asked to approve a slate of 12 Class B trustees and 7 Class A trustees. Reason being is that Eastern Canada's vacancy was at the request of the region to remain until the next rotation and the other was because of general service trustee, John S.'s untimely passing. Board members assured us that this would be addressed but, some of us had their service manuals out with excerpts from our by-laws discussing procedures. I think we all shared a concern that Class A trustee, Jeanne Woodford has been unavailable to attend meetings because of unforeseen family and career conflicts. She was not at the conference. A member of the board told us she questions her own availability and that this too would be addressed. A lot of the arguments had to do with preserving the ratio of alcoholics to non alcoholics on the slate. Although, historically this has never been an issue, not even once, members did not trust the process and this was sad. Loving discussion went on for a long time and when the question was called, even though we were exhausted, we voted to continue talking. At a second call of the question, the slate passed as presented.

Directors for AAWS and Grapevine passed in short order. Names are in the early bird box 459 and in the display booklet I have provided. See me with any questions.

Finance Committee:

As you remember we gathered our group conscience for the Trustees committee of Finance and Budgetary on practical and spiritual benefits/liabilities on fully funding our GSO, this committee received only 33 area responses. The conference committee on finance determined that we cannot achieve our ideal to support our services with less than half the groups participating and recommended we gather input through clearer means and pointed to two specific questions. 1) if we continue to use the literature profits to partially fund services, should there be a limit? 2) if there is a limit how do we continue to pay for services if there is a shortfall in contributions?

This motion failed the first time, but after many minority expressions, and a quick call of the question, it passed 80-37. I actually voted no on this because it comes so quickly on the heels of the previous request and I thought the wording was confusing, although at that point in the conference a lot of us were tired and confusion surfaced for more than just me. I do agree we need to keep talking about this and now we will.

And, put in the form of a conference recommendation (which puts to permanent record) they recommended that discussion of additional ways to communicate with the Fellowship about self-support be included on the agenda for the 60th GSC.

The committee agreed they saw no need for a conference approved 7th tradition poster and did not make a recommendation on this.

Grapevine Committee:

The committee discussed the removal of the Alcoholism at Large section and took no action, but they did request that the disclaimer be enlarged and moved to a more prominent location in both the Grapevine and La Viña magazines.

International and Regional Forums Committee:

It was passed to take an anonymity protected photo of the flag ceremony at the 2010 international convention.

It was also passed to broadcast an encrypted anonymity protected Internet broadcast of the opening flag ceremony at the 2010 international convention, like that of 2005. They *requested* that this be made more widely available this time.

Floor Actions:

8 floor actions were presented, two were declined, 4 failed and the two that were recommitted to committee were both literature.

1. Recommend that the revised 59th conference pamphlet "The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs" be returned to the Trustees Literature Committee for additional discussion and report back to the 2010 Conference Committee on Literature.
2. Move that we develop conference-approved literature that focuses on spirituality and includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Note: A motion to decline: When a floor action is brought back to the conference floor, the chair will read the motion and then offer discussion. If you are first to the microphone you may present a motion to decline. If this is seconded the conference body stops and votes. If this is passed, the motion dies and we move on to the next item of business. If anyone begins discussion on a motion, a motion to decline will not be heard.

As we moved to adjourn the conference, we heard the serenity prayer in French, Spanish and English – It was awesome. After this, I had to sit down and fill in some of the remaining blanks in my conference evaluation form. It was after 3:00am by the time I went to bed. We broke last year's record for the longest conference and I did not sense anyone was particularly excited about doing that.

I think it was Dorothy H., general service trustee on the board, who said it best... (and I'm paraphrasing) She said "that the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous has spoken and we [the members of the General Service Board] are listening". Although some of the debates were heated and went on forever, the group conscience *did* emerge and our trusted servants were [in the room and] paying attention.

Saturday morning brunch was indeed bittersweet. This is where we say goodbye to those who are rotating off the board.

We said goodbye to **Howard L.** (Southeast regional trustee) and **Bob M.** (East Central regional trustee)

Paul C., general service trustee, began by thanking his family and admonishing us to focus on drunks and not the conference apparatus. He wished us well and hopes that "as soon as we arrive home a drunk will puke on our shoes".

Herb Goodman (Class A) trustee said as a hard core businessman, he continues to marvel at the inverted triangle of AA. He spoke of the wonderful democracy he witnessed as everyone spoke and the group conscience emerged.

Dorothy W. (Trustee at Large U.S.), met her husband during a conference while she was a panel 44 delegate. She expressed the miracle that her daughter was now here at this conference (Lorna O'Conner, N.Dakota panel 59) She expressed that she did not feel qualified to serve in this capacity with just a high school diploma. She did say she was asked because of the calming affect she has. When she was considering standing she phoned Larry Nelson. He said "Are you willing", "yes I am willing" she said, he said "then put your name in and let God do the rest" (Larry said something very similar to me soon after I was elected delegate. I talked with him about my work schedule and he said "let me know after a couple of years how God worked out your scheduling")

Dorothy parted by saying "if any of you are wondering why you are here, God didn't put you here to question. He put you here to be useful members of Alcoholics Anonymous." Then she said she would go home so a drunk will puke on her shoes.

Ray M., general service trustee (and panel 44 delegate) started as non-trustee director and moved into trustee on the general service board. He served eight years. Regarding this year's conference he said "We did what we needed to do to get what we got. We didn't want to settle for second best, we wanted the best – that's why we were in session until 2:15. He noted that last year he was on "pins and needles" but that this year he had "no regrets". He asked his wife to stand and vowed to "recommit" to his family. We laughed because out of 15 floor actions last year, many were recommitted to committee. He said our job from here on out in to "Inform, Educate and Motivate"

Leonard Blumenthal (Class A Trustee) He has given us 9 years of service. He has been in the company of 50 trustees and 500 delegates. He thanked his wife for "putting up with this". In 1966 he attended his first AA meeting. In 2000 he joined the board and in 2005 he was asked to chair the board. He has spent between 800-900 nights away from home and said "these were some of the most memorable days and nights of his life". His world travels; to see desperation and the desire to get this program. In reflecting on a statistic of 35 million deaths a year related to alcohol, he noted how long some of us spent before we got here and how much of a wake we leave behind. Think about the wreckage left by these dying soles. He presented an idea of his; that if we all just talked

to our personal physicians about A.A. and he/she then passed on this hope, how far reaching our movement could be. 35 million deaths and we are a membership of just over 2 million. "Don't let anonymity move into invisibility."

This report is my first. I will now begin to travel to different parts of our area and give reports of various lengths. I will try to tailor things down based on time allowed, but should you or your groups ever want a full report or did not have time to have a question answered. I will make this written report available. And please, don't hesitate to barrage me with questions.

Also, please mark your calendars for A.A.'s 75th Anniversary and 13th International Convention on July 1-4, 2010 in San Antonio, Texas. Our April/May edition of Box 459 has a nice article on the front page. When scheduling in July of 2010, please be mindful of this date by not scheduling local events immediately before, during or just after these dates, so as many that can attend will. Keep checking www.aa.org , click on the San Antonio link for updated information.

In Closing, I would like to thank you all for participating in the process of our third legacy. Everyone here has contributed to this year's conference process. I was just lucky enough to be the one to get on an airplane and see it firsthand. You all have blessed me with my sobriety and such a rich experience that I will never forget as long as I live.

Love and Service,
Jeff J.
Panel 59 delegate
Area 93, Central California

Note from Alaska delegate, Torvald H., Area 02

Pacific Region Delegates,

My thoughts and Prayers are with all Delegates, as the 59th General Service Conference reports are carried throughout their respective Areas. I can honestly say my report will be one of hope for AAs future. I do believe the Advisory Actions of the 59th GSC support that hope, however I also must add that the process in which we got there was quite the experience. In thinking back I don't recall anyone saying it would always be easy, but as promised the benefits have been immense. In borrowing a phrase from a past Trustee, General Service has allowed me to meet some of the finest folks in Alcoholics Anonymous. I count all of you among those; I thank you for your service to AA and my life.

Love/Service Torvald