

Area 93 Delegate's report 60<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, 2010  
"Practicing A.A.'s Principals – the Pathway to Unity"  
Full Report – 'the year we turned the corner'

Tradition nine in the long form reads: "Each A.A. group needs the least possible organization. Rotating leadership is the best..." It goes on to say: "All such representatives are to be guided in the spirit of service, for true leaders in A.A. are but trusted and experienced servants of the whole. They derive no real authority from their titles; they do not govern. Universal respect is the key to their usefulness." Last year we saw the largest amount of rotation the conference has seen in a long time. 7 trustees came to term, 1 passed away, 1 could not continue and we hired a new general manager. That is ten positions out of 22, almost half. In contrast, this year two persons rotated, Madeleine P. and Bill Clark, Class A.

Even as rotating delegates may have briefed their incoming delegates about what they might expect, I witnessed a softening of hearts this year as we began a year of healing that maybe most panel 60's (1<sup>st</sup> yr delegates) either didn't understand or more accurately didn't really need themselves. I had my eye on certain areas that I know brought a certain amount of trouble last year and when their new delegates caught the 'new wave' they shed whatever preconceived notions they walked in the door with and participated from their own heart. I made allot of new friends for life and was moved by a renewed spirit that began for me back at January Board weekend.

In the midst of the conference, while talking about inventory, the concept of A.A. being self-correcting came up. And in light of the turmoil the preceding three conferences, I realized how spiritual rotation really is and how vital it is to how we operate. And as I contemplate what A.A. is going to do with me next, I can't help but retain a sense of adventure moving forward.

I too would be remiss if I did not tell you how well you have raised me here in Area 93. I am sure I wouldn't have such an optimistic outlook on life and service without you. We have something so extra special here; you should all take credit for preparing me to serve A.A. as a whole as you've allowed me to. I wrote some of you post cards to the affect that "it took a village to raise this delegate"

Now my report:

First I will help pave the road to the conference... During the month of December the 1<sup>st</sup> yr delegates are sent their committee assignments. These cover 11 standing committees and 2 secondary committees. Some delegates will have a primary committee and a secondary committee. I was on the literature committee, in my second year, serving as chair.

Then usually before the month is over a delegate's communications kit is sent out. The kit contains a preliminary agenda, a list of all conference members, a conference buddy list, procedures for the conference, some check lists and deadlines, and materials specific to your committee assignment.

Usually around this time the emails get kind of busy. Usually requests for shared experience.

Mid January is the cutoff date for agenda submissions. Somewhat characteristic of members in a society named *Alcoholic Anonymous*, some of us will wait until last minute to submit. At the end of January the General Service Board and the A.A.W.S. & Grapevine Directors meet along with the various trustees committees. This is where all of the items are finalized for the agenda. Chairpersons for all 13 of the conference committees are also invited along with the delegate chairperson to attend this meeting also held in NY.

After reports for October and January are heard, the recommendations of the committees are voted on. So by the end of the board meeting we have our agenda. These are put together by staff and assembled into our final conference agenda.

Background was posted on a secure web page called "dashboard". From that I generated our group opinion polls to be sent to all members of the area interested in participating. If you have not seen one of these polls before, be sure to ask around in your group at the beginning of February.

Each delegate will receive material specific to only their committee in the mail. I received two draft pamphlets and the booklet Living Sober along with several existing pamphlets. The conference rule of thumb is to know one's own committee materials before diving into the rest of the conference material. This is our process.

In March, two significant things happen in preparation for the conference; PRAASA (Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly) and Area 93's pre-conference workshop. It is also not uncommon to be invited to other area's workshop(s). Tapes/CDs are given to the delegate to listen to until time to leave for conference.

In April the clock ticks louder and the days grow longer as the priority has to be to take in all the background material at a pace steady enough not to become too overloaded at the last minute. After receiving hundreds of group opinion polls, I tabulate the percentages and read as many of the written opinions as possible.

And on April 15<sup>th</sup> of this year, I boarded a plane to NY for the 60<sup>th</sup> GSC of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Thursday I arrived without incident left my home at 6:00am and arrived at Rye, NY about 7pm.

**Friday** went to GSO to pick up books, talk with Valerie O and Julio E. I didn't go on the tour this year so I could spend more time with my committee secretary and our publications director. A highlight that took place in Julio's office was when I received a phone call from one of my home group members. He wanted to inform me that there was a typo in the twelve and twelve, and could I fix it? This is coming from an old timer who previously had no interest in being involved in general service. And because I was in Julio's office, this matter will be addressed at next printing. I am not going to tell you where the typo is (this is how we do it in my home group), you'll have to find it on your own.

I took a subway to pick up a gift from the pacific region delegates to Madeleine P., rotating Pacific Region Trustee, and a gift from our literature committee to our secretary. I then met up with Joel Area 08 and Elizabeth Area 17 for dinner and a show. We returned to Rye about 12:30a.

**Saturday** was a guided private tour with the pacific region and guests to the Rockefeller estate. We were split into two groups, each with their own guide. When we looked at study room inside, our guide informed us about how careful the Rockefellers were when considering each of their philanthropic endeavors. I have somewhat dismissed the denial of large funding we read about in AA comes of Age as providential; which indeed it probably was, without much thought to acknowledging the human input. However, the vision that Bill and the early pioneers eventually adopted I now believe was shaped by a family so deliberate in how they approached each of their activities, carefully weighing each item, considering what the long term affect would be; to be sure that whatever they put in motion would carry on for years and years on its own without additional infusions from their foundations. Its kind of like "give the man a fish, feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, feed him for life"

A quote that Madeleine used during her chairing a Sunday afternoon meeting was from J.D.Rockefeller Jr. that paralleled her AA service life ... "Giving is not an obligation, it's a privilege". I can certainly relate to this, because even with the hours of love and labor our conference delegates put into this, I feel blessed and privileged that I get to be the one doing it for our area.

Later, we enjoyed lunch on the Hudson and a tour of the Sleepy Hollow cemetery. We took the bus back to the hotel to start our pre-conference meetings.

Still outside of the conference structure is a **Remote communities** meeting. Discussions centered on conducting general service business and reaching prospective members with challenges that are geographical, cultural and linguistic in nature. Next year's chair and co-chair were elected and a copy of the newsletter was circulated. Suzette from Area 03, Arizona [Pacific Region] will co-chair this meeting just before the 61<sup>st</sup> GSC begins.

We had dinner on our own and then we had the first of two **delegate's only meetings**. I could sense early on that our conference was going to have a much different tone than in years past. Of course, this is your chronically optimistic delegate talking.

**Sunday** Opening Session began at 10:30am, with Roll Call and keynote address by Class A trustee, Bill Clark. We then covered conference mechanics and our conference manuals which contain everything we need to know about where, when and how. We also handled a small amount of Policy and Admission's committee business, that of admitting the alternate delegate, Donna G. SE Michigan, to take the place of the delegate from Area 32 (**Advisory Action #21**) who resigned and two allow 2 Class B trustee observers from Venezuela's general service board, Carlos H. & Angel C., to be admitted to the conference. (**Advisory Action #22**)

Regional luncheon was to follow at noon. This was intended for delegate orientation all of which we covered at this year's PRAASA, just one of the many gifts we receive by have our regional service assembly so close to conference. We did talk a bit about how the regional trustee elections would work.

After that, I attended our **joint meeting with the trustees committee** on literature. Besides all the committee members from both conference and trustees' committees, we were joined by Valerie O. and Eleanor W. from the publications department. Vic P. read a summary report of their actions from last conference to this year's conference and the conference committee members (nine delegates) were then offered a time of Q & A regarding the year's activities as it related to their report.

The **opening dinner and AA meeting** were fantastic. Wonderful food (although by the end of the week it wouldn't be as wonderful) and five speaker old fashion AA meeting with sharing from the heart; no business to speak of. After we closed the meeting I enjoyed great hallway conversations with an appointed committee member to literature, an AAWS non trustee director, one of our visitors from Venezuela and our general manager's husband. We all will be in San Antonio and plan to meet up one of the nights for late night fellowship there.

### **Monday (April 19, 2010)**

In the morning we had our first conference committee meeting and got through a full pamphlet, half a pamphlet and discussed the item regarding the publications department. We decided to add another session that took us until midnight. One of the main reasons we decided to go late Monday is that our secretary needed time to prepare two draft pamphlets for the conference body to consider. We found out later this really served us well. Other committees had scheduled additional meetings that took them away from lunch and dinner on Tuesday.

After many regions gave their two minute area highlights, we heard summary board reports from the GSB, AAWS and Grapevine.

In the **GSB report**, Ward welcomed the new trustees and staff members and remembered those who had served us in the past who had passed away this year. He reminded us that the staff rotated in July and spoke to his experience on the international front which for him included a visit to Columbia. He marveled at how other service structures function very similar to ours, but at the same time adapting their structure to their own needs. Warren S. gave a presentation on International later in the week, so I will highlight some more of this later in my report. Ward too was welcomed by Young People in AA as he attended the ICYPAA in Atlanta.

In 2009 the GSB changed the name of the "Executive Session" to the "Trustees' Sharing Session" and explains this in his written report, which will be published in the final report if you would like to read further. To sum up he notes there is a lighter more open feeling now and that it will be reported out to us.

The board also accepted a report from a subcommittee on vulnerable members in AA. It boiled down to three points. The board had no authority, legal or otherwise residing at the bottom of our structure, that groups and individual members need to ensure that members feel as safe as possible in AA, and that this should be the topic of discussion at all levels from the regional trustee up through the areas and districts to seek ways to raise awareness via sponsorship, workshops and anything else we can think of.

A nugget from **AAWS** is: we are in final stages of development of a secure online contributions system and shared a video demonstration of the mechanics. Contributions will be able to be made by credit card and e-check. A very small fee will be absorbed by our GSO, but some may want to know that an e-check will be slightly less to process. With an anticipated May "go live" date, this may very well already be in place as I am presenting this report.

In 2009 G.S.O. welcomed 1513 visitors. 1,703 new groups were listed. Trustees and staff members accepted invitations from AA in other countries to share their experience. Two visits so far in 2010 included the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention of AA in Japan as well as the 34<sup>th</sup> Central America Convention of AA in Guatemala.

I know financial information usually puts a number of you to sleep, so to sum up AAWS' net profit for the year 2009 was higher than budgeted and more than 2008 (which was a loss). This is not because contributions were up. Contributions

received of 6.2 million were 200,000 less than budgeted and about 167,000 less than 2008. So the AAWS net profit was really derived from literature sales.

Our GSO welcomed Valerie O as publications director. She has been on staff since 1990 in a number of assignment areas. At year end 2009, GSO had 78 full-time employees and 5 part-time. In 2009 we also welcomed two new staff members Mary C and Jim M., both of which were members of the conference this year and brought valuable thoughts to our discussions. In November of 2009, Michelle Mirza was appointed as our new archives director. Michelle has been with GSO in the Archives dept since 1999 and prior to this appointment was serving as acting archivist.

GSO records department is coordinating with Area registrars for the regional directories which will be printed this year.

During the **Grapevine** summary report it was indicated that the AA Grapevine will be conducting a readership survey in 2010. Outside consultation was brought in to review the Grapevine restructuring plan and they will report to the GSO before giving a full report to the fellowship as a matter of course. But it *was* indicated that the plan needed revision and they accelerated the survey that was to be conducted in 2011.

I'll skip to the bottom line... as I have indicated in previous reports, the AA Grapevine is struggling for its survival and unless it gains support from our members through purchases and subscriptions, we may not have an AA Grapevine, Inc as we have been accustom to. No matter how Dorothy H. tried to sugarcoat her report with a wonderful PowerPoint presentation, we have learned that our Grapevine must be restructured in order to fulfill its mission.

Grapevine has taken many strides to make our magazine more attractive and I think you'll agree they have done a wonderful job of it. And in its defense, in the last twenty years, has only withdrawn a net total of 475,000 from the reserve fund. There was extensive research to back this number. Both the AAWS, Inc and the AA Grapevine, Inc add moneys in the 'good times' to our common reserve fund. And because we do not allow them to accumulate funds or borrow money to fund strategic projects or update technology, Grapevine turns to the reserve fund to fund 'special projects' or when additional operating capital is needed.

The oral summary was much more pleasant than the written hard facts. And because I may have confused some of you already, I will make the written report available for all to see and of course you can find it printed in the final report distributed sometime in August.

A shocking tidbit from Grapevine, we learned after the report was that Robin B., executive editor of Grapevine will be resigning soon. A search committee will form to replace this position. I received a correspondence dated April 26, 2010 asking for candidates for this position. Please see me for these requirements.

Class A trustee and Treasurer, Terry Bedient, gave an excellent report of our **financial** position w/ a simplified power point presentation. I don't know that I have any additional bottom line here that wasn't revealed in the AAWS and Grapevine Summaries, but as with all who preach to a choir, the one dollars vs. two dollars in the basket discussion we have simplified at my home group; On Mondays when our basket goes around we'll announce that its "2 dollar Monday!" and then on Tuesday we are sure to say that its "2 dollar Tuesday!" and so on. You get the idea, until it becomes habit we can only lead by example and get a little creative in our home groups. There is a wonderful slide in the PowerPoint presentation (#16) that shows by means of an inflation calculator that \$1.00 in 1945 had the buying power of \$11.92 in 2009; and \$1.00 in 2009 had the buying power of \$.08 in 1945.

The numbers most of you seem to be interested in is the cost per member and per group for services:

In 2007 services per member per year were 6.49 per member or 146.18 per group.

In 2008 service per member per year were 7.04 per member or 157.21 per group.

In 2009, thanks in part to new management; it was 6.46 per member or 142.64 per group.

In contrast, our total contributions in 2009 were 4.50 per member (down 0.19 from 2008) the rest was made up in literature sales (nearly 30%).

In order to maintain status quo and shore up our reserve fund where it belongs (currently at 9.5 moths), in 2009 it would have taken 8.93 per member and 197.07 per group.

Full reports are available of GSB, AAWS, Grapevine and Finance (w/ PowerPoint print out) and I have brought binders with me, should you desire to see more detail, for your inspection.

We broke for dinner and resumed with more area highlights. After that we had an archives presentation by Michelle Mirza where she did reveal that the online **“Digital Archives Exhibit” will be launched in May, 2010**. This is not the same as a virtual tour which is still being explored for feasibility by the trustees.

During **“What’s on Your Mind?”** session, we learned that the conference will be at Crown Plaza (on a one year contract) in 2011. Ideas we’re brought forward about distribution and subscriptions to Grapevine and LaViña. One thought was to be sure your intergroup/central offices know they can order grapevine products and magazine to stock locally.

**Tuesday** our committee started our final session (3<sup>rd</sup>). We had one of our observers Angel C., class B trustee from Venezuela GSB, visit us during this session. It is then we talked about the Spirituality literature item and the *AA and the Armed Services* pamphlet. We finished with a gift for our conference secretary, elections of next year’s chair and alternate chairperson and photos of the committee. The feeling was one of enormous accomplishment and a lifting of a burden that we would finish our committee work in time.

Our final area highlights were presented after lunch including the Pacific Region panel 60 delegates.

Presentation topic for Tuesday afternoon was **“Unity through Inventory”**. One of the presenters brought up an interesting point regarding the GSC taking inventory. He said *“Our ‘What’s On Your Mind Sharing Sessions’ here allow any conference member to pose any question about how we have committed resources or about how we have or have not effectively carried A.A.’s message this past year. These unstructured sharing sessions go a long way toward ensuring that a structured set of inventory questions never be scripted so as to divert light from reaching dark corners. So I hope whatever inventory process we might choose to use here will never replace these sessions.”* All of the presenters offered thought provoking messages and I encourage you to look these up in the final conference report.

During another **“What’s on your Mind”** session it was revealed that part of the Grapevine survey will include questions about content. And an area in the Midwest has responded to the Grapevine’s struggles by giving gift subscriptions (by district) to doctor’s offices, treatment facilities, correctional facilities or anyone else they can think of. AAWS, in light of our Amazon Kindle experience, will be pursuing our own means to distribute our literature electronically for various devices including i-pods. Some of the logistics involved include leasing an e-delivery program rather than buying it and determining what would be desirable to members in e-format. The Big Book is in between its 59<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> language.

**Workshop** roundtable(s) at 3pm

As you remember from our pre-conference, this item had to do with our agenda selection process. Our roundtable decided to deliver the bottom line impression from this item; that the emphasis of our discussions centered on trust and communication. A thoughtful consideration that was introduced, and for the most part embraced, was the notion to create a form of sorts to guide someone through the process and best wording of a submission for agenda consideration.

Dinner and **delegate’s only meeting** number 2. We got a taste of a little good old fashion home group business meeting as our delegate chair tried to field a curve ball during our only real business – that of electing the next delegate chair. Long story short, committees weren’t done with their work so they didn’t know who was eligible yet. And of course everyone had a solution so it got a little unruly. After the dust cleared we got on with questions and answers for the panel 60 delegates. Many reflections from the new delegates were of hope, joy, excitement, and the reassurance that this was its own conference and past [war] stories really had no place here. I sensed that we were in good hands and that we were all on a course for unity and self correcting.

**Wednesday** morning started with the pacific region photo on the dais just before general session. Promptly at 9:00am we began the election for pacific region trustee. Sitting in a roped off section for this procedure we each had two minutes to present our candidates. We had a quality problem in that many if not all of our candidates were absolutely qualified and dedicated AAs. Rod B., native American from Utah Area 69, was elected on the third vote. After Monte S., Utah delegate, notified our new pacific region trustee, I called Debbie to inform her of the results.

An aside: I've contacted Rod and invited him to our elections in November. As anticipated, he has received many requests (almost instantly), but assured me that first priority was to schedule of boards and committees and then to answer area requests from the pacific region.

We then left the roped off area so that the Eastern Canada region could elect Donald C. (from Northwest Quebec) on the fifth ballot.

During Wednesday's "**What on your mind**" session we talked about our financial conditions a bit. An outside auditor has determined that our reserve fund for the short term is fine. A long term look reveals that for the first time, two years in a row, our holdings are not adequate for the long term. More will be revealed. Grapevine subscriptions fell off between 7000 and 8000 over the past 6 months. Some of this is anticipated because of the price increase. Historically between 9-12 months after a price increase, subscriptions do go up. With recent and uncertain times it's hard to know what will happen. With our help to inform, perhaps we can aid in restoring health to our magazine. And lastly, we are operating short of male members to correspond with members in institutions. Please see Ken, our alternate delegate, or myself if you are available to meet this need and want more information.

During our **regional luncheon** we selected **San Diego/Imperial Area 08** as the site of our **2014 PRAASA. March 6-9**. Also a bid was presented for Utah and Washington East made mention of bringing a bid next year, throwing their name in the ring. Of course this being Madeleine's last year and our last regional luncheon at conference, we decided to present her with a photoshopped mounted poster of memorable photos from her four years as trustee and a pocket knife to replace one she was attached to that she made mention was taken away by airport security during her travels while serving.

After lunch we heard "**GSC Agenda Selection Process**" presentations moderated by our class A trustee, Rogelio Flores. One of the presentations earned a smiley face in the column of my agenda. It was from a delegate that last year was always voting in the minority, for the minority sake (that didn't change much this year either). He really spoke to unity as he shared about Collective Participation. He tied his topic into the conference theme and revealed to me that the pendulum of AA has really swung to the other side and that all conference delegates were indeed moved by the renewed spirit of this year's proceedings. I made a point of finding him later and telling him how much I enjoyed his presentation.

Rogelio had to humbly admit that he put the general service conference on the wrong week of his calendar and would have to leave early because of an obligation to the White House to visit Spain to help establish a drug court system; sharing his professional experience. However, he vowed he would never make this mistake again.

Wednesday afternoon began our **Committee Reports and Advisory Actions**. I am reading these in chronological order, so if you are following along with the list of Advisory Actions, be forewarned. I will not read through all the committee's additional considerations, you can do that on your own, but I may highlight a point or two along the way.

### 1. **Treatment Facilities/Special Needs/Accessibilities (TF/SN/ACC)**

No recommendations

ironically, the committee considered a request to change "treatment facilities" to just "treatment" and took no action. They did ask that the corresponding trustees committee research the impact a name change would have including the many references to the assignment in various literature, etc.

They also accepted a progress report on the new Special Needs recovery pamphlet and made a few suggestions. So we are well on our way here.

### 2. **Cooperation with the Profession Community (CPC)**

No recommendations

Aside from extensive review of the CPC workbook, the committee did request that a process be considered by which professionals attending national C.P.C. exhibits can request follow up contact with local C.P.C. committees and to consider compiling a CD or DVD compilation of pamphlets and other relevant material for distribution to professionals.

### 3. **Policy and Admissions 2:31p**

Items A & B were **approved** at the open of the conference on Sunday (**Advisory Actions #21, #22**)

C. 2013 conference was **approved** for April 21-27 (**Advisory Action #23**)

D. This recommendation included two points. One was to conduct an inventory; two was to establish an inventory planning committee. During discussions I found myself in the minority only in that I felt the conference did not need to vote this year to conduct the inventory, but to let the planning committee report on its development. A thought offered by Doug R. that the conference itself is self correcting and an inventory itself may be mute. I offered a “friendly amendment” to remove the recommendation to conduct the inventory, and Phyllis reminded me that this amendment was ‘not friendly’ and we enjoyed a laugh; my amendment was seconded, but it was defeated. After the minority voiced their opinion on the original motion, a member of the majority [Madeleine P.] moved to reconsider. A 42/68 vote defeated the motion to reconsider and the original recommendation stood with a **110/12 in favor (Advisory Action #24)**. With my affinity for inventories, this would end up being a highlight that I will offer to you later in this report. (see Friday 7:56pm)

E. The committee recommended a procedure for a concept V minority appeal. Some of the comments offered were that the committee made tremendous progress, but the overall sense was that it was not ready. The motion was defeated 12/110 with the sense of the body that this requires more attention. (Our **first floor action** was introduced to develop a concept V minority appeal process [retaining work already done] keeping in mind the thoughts offered during the 2010 GSC. (this passed 108/11) see **floor action/advisory action #1**)

4. **Corrections** 7:36p – 7:57p

This committee recommended clarifying language in several pamphlets to reflect current practice. **All of their recommendations passed unanimously:** to revise *Carrying the Message into Correctional Facilities, A.A. in Correctional Facilities, A Message to Corrections Professionals*. Items A,B and C. (A. passed 123/0 B. passed 124/0 C. passed 123/0) (**Advisory Actions # 8, #9, #10**)

Additional considerations included progress reports on *It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell* & a report on signing sponsorship agreements and legally binding documents. They requested that the staff member continue to gather sharing on local solutions AA members may use to resolve perceived differences between facility rules/regulations and what AA is and is not.

The Corrections desk will still be accepting stories for *It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell* up until June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010. I have already asked Ken to forward this request to our H&I friends. (This request appeared in the March AAWS report)

5. **Public Information (PI)** 7:58p – 9:44p

A. **“My World” new PSA.** Viewed this six times during discussions. We’d talk for a bit and then someone would speak up “I swear I saw full faces”- look at the video again – no full faces. Then we talked some more “What was that pill bottle doing in the drawer?” – We’d review again to freeze frame on the open drawer to reveal airplane size booze bottles. Typical procedure for PSAs is to approve a 60 second piece. And then cuts are produced for 60, 30, 20 and 15 second spots. This item **passed 115/10** (1:18 min total discussion and vote time) (**Advisory Action #25**)

B. We **approved** the recommendation that this video be centrally distributed and tracked at a cost not to exceed \$35,000 **127/2** and adjourned for the evening. (**Advisory Action #26**) The committee acknowledged that the central tracking and distribution would be in addition to local efforts by PI committees and that the air time value by utilizing a knowledgeable company equates to millions of dollars in air play. This is not exclusive to the midnight to 4am slots either; there were reports which included prime placement for our AA PSAs.

Close Wednesday

Open Thursday

5 **Public Information (PI) (cont.)** (PI) 9:00am

- C. A statement about breaking anonymity in memorial announcements will be added to *“Understanding Anonymity”* pamphlet by a vote of **117/4 (Advisory Action #27)**
- D. We viewed only one submission for a young people’s video entitled **“Animation”** and it met with widespread support. This item passed but not with a few bumps in the road. The focus was not on the video itself in which everyone agreed was fabulous. They were the last slides in the video which refer to finding YPAA on the web. This brought us to an amendment which was crafted on the conference floor to change/clarify the last slides to a single slide which points to an AA.org search engine to find young people in AA. The IT department can then use their discretion on the available information that appears after searching for ‘young people’ including web sites and YPAA articles and information. This lengthy and loving discussion probably spawned our next floor action [#2] which was later declined, to have the GSB develop a guideline relating to YPAA. **The video with the amendment passed 121/5 (Advisory Action #28)** This includes personal stories from members and each member is assigned a simple cartoon character. Although the animation feels light, the substance of the message is far reaching. This is truly going to be an AA gem for years to come.
- E. The next item was simple and required a minimum of discussion. The flyer **“AA at a glance” will undergo two changes** to the section ‘What AA Does not do’. One to replace “drying out” with “detox” and the other to replace “sanitariums” with “rehabilitation”. **(Advisory Action #29)**

Before we embarked on the ‘full face’ item we broke for lunch. PI was the longest committee report this conference (literature was the next longest)

After lunch we heard **presentations** on International and Grapevine. The last presenter on the **Grapevine** panel was French speaking last year, but gave his presentation in English, this was very moving in and of itself, and for which we stood and gave him applause.

Warren S., staff member at our GSO for the past 13 years, gave an excellent summary of the **International** desk assignment and an overview of many places we were asked to visit during the last twelve months. Please look for this is the final conference report. A few highlights of our travels include: Frankfurt, Germany for the 15<sup>th</sup> European Service Meeting, A site selection visit to Mexico City to choose a venue for the 21<sup>st</sup> World Service Meeting, Guatemala for the 34<sup>th</sup> Convention of AA in Central America and a trip to Cameroon, West Africa for the second Zonal Service Meeting of Central and West Africa’s French-speaking countries. One item to note here is that the Trustees on International are in their third year of utilizing a sub-committee to determine the best persons to send according to needs expressed by requesting countries. I think this is excellent and it has also spread the travel around different staff persons most suited to speak to their needs.

- F. At 2:46p **we resumed with PI items**. We embarked on the recommendation to develop a draft policy on showing or not showing full faces of actors who portray AA members or potential members in conference approved visual media. After 15 minutes of discussion the question was called and we voted **111/15 to pass** the item. I voted in the minority on this and my concern was that the bigger issue here was the understanding of our anonymity traditions. There were other compelling thoughts to the minority, but the item is now an advisory action **(Advisory Action #30)**.

At 3:07 we tabled the rest of PIs report to hear from the Grapevine committee. Many Grapevine staff and the Grapevine controller left the office to be here and available for questions and would need to leave soon.

6. **Grapevine** Committee offered two recommendations.

- A. To publish LaViña on an equal basis as Grapevine. They presented a recommendation to publish LaViña as a bimonthly, perfect-bound, black-and-white, 68-page issue at an additional estimated cost of \$21,400 per year for one year beginning in 2011 followed by a year of review and assessment in 2012. The results of this review and assessment will be brought to the 2013 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine **(passed 105/23) (Advisory Action #14)**

Questions answered about this LaViña recommendation were:

Will the subscriber fee go up? = no

How much more would it have been to add color? = 30K-40K

When will the changes begin? = 2011, 6 issues beginning Jan/Feb issue

Does this affect the 2010 budget = yes (June 2010 begin date to be ready for Jan/Feb 2011 edition)

Will it be glossy paper [like the Grapevine] or the same as it is now? = the same as it is now, glossy is for color...  
LaViña will be B&W

LaViña Editor will change from 4 days to 5 days on staff & is available to visit Hispanic members in Areas by invitation (typical response to visit is more stories from localities)

- B. The second item was a **recommendation to gather sharing** from the fellowship with pointed questions that would indicate the value and effectiveness of our **AA Grapevine** as it is now. I could see our Hispanic members in my mind as we were discussing this and asked the Grapevine chair if they considered having our LaViña readers participate in this sharing too. After continued discussion, I changed my mind on this being too exclusive, and in light of the previous item's success, I let it go. (**Advisory Action #15**)

5 **Public Information (PI) (cont.)** resumed after the dinner break.

- G. The committee recommended that the conference committee on Agenda consider holding a future GSC on the theme Anonymity in a Digital Age. This motion was **defeated**; however this year's conference committee on agenda considered this background when they selected presentation topics for 2011 which were later approved.

7. **Literature.** It was such a delight to chair this committee. I knew I would be up on the dais for a long time, but that didn't diminish the overwhelming sense of gratitude I felt be there. What a sense of joy and excitement I felt as I couldn't wait to field my first volley of questions. And as I watched so many of the first year delegates experiencing the awe of roll call or that first time walking onto the conference floor, my magical moment this year was looking at the literature committee report and seeing my initials on the top as having approved the report. It was actually good that the chairs approve it too, because the first draft was slightly inaccurate and I'll explain that later when we talk about the *AA and the Armed Services Pamphlet*.

- A. *The "AA Member - Medication and other Drugs"* in its third year of being worked on spawned some loving discussion and we took a vote. 99/22 passed the 1<sup>st</sup> vote, however when the minority spoke it became apparent that this year's conference members would rather redo the entire pamphlet. In response to one of the questions offered, I answered that the work that was done on this pamphlet was in response to a 2007 advisory action and additionally we addressed concerns expressed by the 2009 GSC. A motion to reconsider passed 83/35 and this item was **defeated 54/68**. Another floor action was introduced [#9] to recommit this item to the trustees' literature committee and that passed. The sense was the conference would like to take this pamphlet in another direction, so we will again visit this next year. (**see floor action/advisory action #2**)

- B. Now the item *"Questions and Answers on Sponsorship"* was in its first presentation as a revised draft pamphlet. I expressed concerns to our committee secretary about giving the draft in its present form because our edits were in the margins and some were in type and some were hand written. But in the end it met with widespread approval and with a minor correction it was passed on the first go around **121/3 (Advisory Action #16)**. I was especially proud of this work as it was a true collaboration between the trustees and conference committees on literature.

This next item was actually one of the last items we talked about in committee (in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> hour). The sense of the committee members was that this would require the most time and they continued to request to put it off to the end of our agenda.

- C. **Develop literature which focuses on Spirituality that includes stories from atheist and agnostics who are successfully sober in AA:**

This was one of those items in our committee that brought about all the varying points of view that many of us brought here to our preconference assembly and also at this year's PRAASA.

Earlier in the week, during our joint meeting with the trustees committee on literature, I had asked a question on how they came to the decision to forward an item about defining the editorial responsibilities of our publications department to us without a real sense of the intent (which I had noted at the January Board weekend). One answer was in the form of a question: How could they really hold on to it? This note I decided to open our committee deliberations with: that sometimes there may be an item that warrants conference discussion and our job may be to simply get out of the way. The Spirituality item ended up being one of those items. All of the background and our shared experience from our respective 9 areas indicated that members were divided on this and that no real determination one way or another had surfaced. However, this has always brought about loving discussion and has proved to be an item of interest in many forms over the years. This was one of the items I paid real close attention to before the conference. Our members in the area and at PRAASA seemed to be leaning in the direction that this would be a good thing to consider. To make a long story short, we voted unanimously to forward this to the conference so that they could weigh in.

We had loving discussion for about 45 minutes and then the question was called. (For most of the conference I voted against calling the question respecting the principal of exhausting all debate before taking a vote). A couple people pointed toward the dais and laughed when I was one of 3 that voted against calling the question – “does he want to stay up there longer?” A vote was taken and the first vote yielded a **93/32**, a two thirds majority. Some of the minority sharing was from a very practical standpoint and somewhat compelling, I did note that one member wanted to know “why, if this is such an all inclusive sharing of spiritual experiences, did their need to be special mention of atheists and agnostics?” a motion to reconsider from the prevailing side did not pass (41/81) so **this is now an advisory action (Advisory Action #17)** and more will be revealed. In committee we were discussing the idea of this being a pamphlet, yet the advisory action (as per the original request) states “literature”. So it will be up to the trustees to decide what they will present in report or draft to the 2011 conference committee on literature; which works for me.

- D. This was the item requesting a tweak to the **description of a closed meeting** in the pamphlet **“Frequently asked questions about AA” (formerly 44 questions)**.

During our committee meeting, I was armed with a couple of other pamphlets that had varying descriptions given to me by a member of our Area 93 literature committee. When all was said and done we presented the description verbatim from the AA group pamphlet as to maintain some kind of across the board consistency; and it was most accurate in form. Our committee voted unanimously to forward this to the conference.

When we recommended the new text, there was no discussion... you could hear the AA crickets and we took a vote. **123/0 passed (Advisory Action #18)**.

We called the quits at 11:12pm Thursday and resumed at 8:30am on **Friday**.

Before we continued the Literature report, we heard from Rick W., **International Convention** Coordinator.

- As of Monday April 19, 2010 we had 37,163 pre-registered attendees. This year is the biggest in online registration with 89% so far compared to 70% in 2005.
- The ‘big cool off’ item in San Antonio is a RASPA, which is some sort of snow cone.
- There will be periodic announcements regarding anonymity especially when it comes to taking photos/video on personal devices and uploading them onto social networking sites, etc. Here is an opportunity where we can lead by example.
- Volunteer opportunities still exist: go to [www.aa75.org](http://www.aa75.org) for more info.
- There will be a “Party in the Dark” on Thursday night
- Alcoholics Anonymous will present to the American Medical Society (AMA) the 30 millionth copy of the Big Book.

- The anonymity protected Opening Flag Ceremony (Friday Night) will be broadcast free and unlimited on the aa.org website, no password will be required. Check Box 459 for continued updates (May edition)

## 7. Literature (cont.) 8:50am – 9:30am Friday

I guess there is a lot to be said about a good night's sleep because the following items moved along rather quickly:

- E. **“A.A. and the Armed Services”** This item was interesting to me because of the report I was to approve earlier. In committee we shared on this topic and noted the original request to develop something for veterans. This was actually the last item we addressed (during hour nine) and we decided to forward the trustees recommendation to update the pamphlet, but also coupled it with a section for veterans. When the first draft of the report I was to give was handed to me for approval it mentioned “including experiences from veterans”, but left out the concept of a ‘section’. This was a definite point that our committee agreed on, so I did send our secretary back to re-draft it before I signed off. He noted that when receiving guidance on crafting/wording the report, that when a motion has two distinct points that the conference may pull it apart. I thanked him, but made sure our intent was clear.

When this item hit the floor it was **approved unanimously** by a **127/0 vote (Advisory Action #19)**. I am glad because this culminated the sense I gathered from our own pre-conference assembly on the general direction you wanted to go with this.

- F. Our final recommendation had to do with reviewing the booklet, **Living Sober**. I received many mixed messages from home. Especially on the polls. Many members who had utilized this pamphlet responded ‘no’ it does not need review, many who had not read it said ‘yes’ it could use review. There were some mixed on both sides. So going in I was on my own. Of course in preparation I read the whole booklet. My feelings were it could use a light handed edit. This too was the feeling of the committee and when it hit the conference floor, they felt the same way. Members of the body expressed that they wanted to make sure the edits would be light and by one writer very experienced with this style of AA writing; which was our intent. This voted **passed 112/15 (Advisory Action #20)**.

In our first committee meeting, I had set up an appointment, with our committee's consent, to have our publications director, Valerie O. meet with us. I anticipated questions regarding the background regarding **defining the editorial responsibilities of our publications dept** which cited a few inconsistencies or mistakes that ‘changed our basic message’. What I didn't know was that she and Michelle (GSO Archivist) would have homework that would keep them busy for a while. But it did help us to determine that we should **take no action** on this item. Some of what was cited was erroneous, some were accurate yet the person who made the ‘blunder’ was let go and other mistakes would have happened regardless of policy because they were simply human error. As far as oversight of publishing is concerned, between the various conference and trustees committees and drafts reviewed, etc. We have all the oversight in the world. And, if something were to be of paramount concern, we can build extra oversight into any recommendation as we go along (this was done with the BB 4<sup>th</sup> Edition).

In committee, I was in the minority on **updating the GSO video**. I thought it should be done, but the rest of the committee, save one, was leaning toward leaving it alone. They convinced me this was not the year to do it, so we voted and **took no action**.

And at such a high price tag to **develop a book on early pioneer women in AA**, the committee expressed that there was not a wide enough expressed need to warrant sending this through and **took no action**.

## 8. Report and Charter

- A. It was a **unanimous** vote to consider including a description of “trustee Emeriti” to the service manual (**Advisory Action #31**)
- B. This two part item was somewhat troubling for Eleanor W. our executive publications director. Part one was a recommendation to publish Area Service Highlights in their entirety in the final report. Seems simple enough, but the implications and discussions were that we were really tying the hands of the publications department with an air of mistrust. They work tirelessly to ensure punctuation, spelling and with special attention to preserving intent.

This item met with an amendment to allow grammatical corrections yielding a 105/14 vote. The minority spoke, a motion to reconsider was taken, and the second vote squeaked this item through **89/37 (Advisory Action #32)**.

- B2. The second part was the recommendation that advisory actions and additional committee considerations be published exactly as approved by the conference in the GSC Final Conference Report. This item passed 104/20 but would later meet with a barrage of floor actions. **(Advisory Action #33 – later rescinded, see floor action/advisory action #4)**

I felt for Deborah, the chair of Report & Charter, because she concurred with her committee that their intention was not to tie the publication department's hands. In light of last year's conference they felt this really needed to be said in the form of an advisory action and recorded in the final conference report.

This brought three floor actions [#10, #14, #15] that tried to rescind or correct the original intent. This was later merged to one floor action [#17] that would be one of my most memorable conference highlights. I will get to that one later.

- C. A recommendation to **publish the AA directories** (US East, US West, and Canada) was **defeated** mostly, I believe, because the sense was to leave this at the General Manager's discretion. Phyllis did note that if this item passed, even though she had the authority not to print, that she would not go against an advisory action. Note: The directories are already on slate to be published this year.
- D. That areas may opt **out of the 30-day pending period** to complete processing of new groups – **failed**. Many argued that an area wide opt-in or out is too broad, others are utilizing this period as it was originally intended - to welcome new groups and on the rare occasion direct a mistaken outside entity to another fellowship. Low and behold another floor action [#11] to modify this recommendation to opt-out on a group by group basis. I actually liked the intent of this one, but the conference declined this floor action.

As far as additional considerations go, this committee offered a myriad of minor housekeeping to the service manual, however one item to note was the request to **publish the service manual every other year and send revision pages on the off years**. The committees decided to **take no action** and noted the importance of publishing it annually and to keep it as current as possible.

## 9. Conference committee on **Trustees**

This committee report was a breath of fresh air. Considering last year when there were disgruntled members were holding on to a conspiracy theory about how the general manager was hired and holding the conference hostage suggesting the slate of trustee should be approved one trustee at a time, member lawyers with their by-laws out, etc. considering the legal implications... it was messy.

We **approved** all the committee's recommendations almost unanimously, save one vote of 125/1. And that was only because the lone member in the minority didn't understand that a normal rotation for staff coordinator is to serve on the AAWS board in the following year. **(Advisory Actions #34, #35, #36, #37)**

The committee on Trustees also offered additional considerations to clarify language and resolve inconsistencies in the service manual as it pertains to trustees' elections.

## 10. **Agenda**

- A. It was recommended that the theme for the 2011 conference be: **"We are responsible for A.A.'s Future – Let it Begin with Us"**, it was unanimously approved **(Advisory Action #5)**.
- B. The **presentation/discussion topics** were approved, but not without some loving discussion. The vote was **109/14 (Advisory Action #6)**. Some of the thoughts offered did not apply to the topics themselves, but rather to the time management of the conference itself. This year the conference started earlier on Sunday, we did not go to the GSO on Tuesday and we went later Thursday night and started earlier on Friday. A point was made that next year we will not have a presentation on International Conventions. I looked up the history on this and it has been nearly twenty years since the conference entertained four presentation panels plus a workshop topic and even longer when the

The topics and supporting presentations are as follows:

- a) Alcoholics Anonymous in a Digital Age:
  - 1. Practicing Our Traditions in a Digital Age
  - 2. Carrying A.A.'s Message Online
  - 3. Grapevine – “A.A.’s Meeting in Print” and More . . .
  
- b) An Informed Group Conscience: The Voice of A.A.:
  - 1. Self-Support – Where Do Money and Spirituality Mix?
  - 2. Humility – Accepting the Group Conscience
  - 3. An Informed Group Conscience – Using the Three Legacies
  
- c) Diversity in A.A.:
  - 1. The Language of the Heart is Spoken Here
  - 2. The Hand of A.A. – Inclusive Never Exclusive
  - 3. Tradition Five – Our Primary Purpose
  
- d) Sponsorship:
  - 1. Importance of a Home Group
  - 2. Leading by Example – Attraction Not Promotion
  - 3. Recovery, Unity, Service

The following be the **workshop topic** for the 2011 General Service Conference: ***“How to Increase Participation in A.A. – Striving for Self-Support in All Our Affairs.” (Advisory Action #7)***

#### 11. International Conventions/Regional Forums

This committee made no recommendations; however the additional considerations included accepting reports for International Conventions and discussing ways to encourage interest in Forums.

Eva S., who is on the Forums assignment has come up with a first timer’s Forum orientation, which I thought was very interesting and although I am not a first timer, I want to crash the party just see what it’s all about.

The committee also bulleted the following points as suggestions:

- o Create local flyers to carry the message about future Forums in the region.
- o Utilize electronic communication from the areas to the Fellowship.
- o Share about the Forum Orientation for first-time Forum attendees.
- o Encourage members to bring others, such as sponsees, along to Forums.
- o Coordinate fun “road trips” to Forums – “Fill the car; bring them all!”
- o Share the Forum experience with others and with enthusiasm.
- o Attraction, attraction, attraction!

#### 12. Archives

Made no recommendations and besides working on improving the archive’s workbook, they accepted the report from the trustees committee on Feasibility of developing a self-guided tour of G.S.O.’s Archives. The report included information from the Archivist on the new Digital Archives Exhibit which will be launched on the Archives portal of the G.S.O.’s AA Web site.

#### 13. Finance had some fun with the pie chart question.

- A. The item about **replacing pie charts with text in the *Self-Support* pamphlet** spawned much discussion and quite a bit of loving editing from the floor. This ultimately sent them off to re-draft their first recommendation which ended up failing 72/50. Soon after we received three different floor actions to offer various fixes [#12, #13, #16].

An Aside: After we adjourned the conference, I spoke with some panel 60's and encouraged them to learn from all these floor actions and to take their time crafting them and to perhaps seek out other members who share the same passion so that one effective motion could be presented instead of multiple kneejerk reactions.

- B. Adding **information about Grapevine** was accepted **120/4 (Advisory Action #11)**
- C. A minor edit to insert the words "for example:" in front of text and to add "and A.A. Grapevine" was **accepted 123/1 (Advisory Action #12)**
- D. **Adding seventh tradition stories** was also accepted. **112/16 (Advisory Action #13)**

As with all additional considerations, we are given an opportunity to ask questions of the chair and the committee. One of my highlights occurred during this time when a member went to the microphone and started to comment on the rewriting of the preamble about being self-supporting and seemed to go on and on and obviously not asking the committee any questions, about a minute or so into her comments there began a grumbling on the floor that she really wasn't asking a question – and when the timer elapsed (we were down to 1 ½ minutes by this time) she quickly buttoned her comment with "did your committee consider this?" – the body exploded in laughter which exemplified the spirit of this year's conference.

At 5:20pm we started in on the floor actions. I was excited because it was not 11 or so at night and we were nearing the end of regular business. However, we did have 16 **Floor Actions** to begin with and 17 when we were done.

1. To recommit to the GSB the development of Concept V minority appeal procedure to the GSC taking into consideration expressions of the 2010 GSC. (re: Policy & Admissions Item E.) **passed 108/11 (Advisory Action #1)**
2. Was regarding developing YPAA guidelines (born out of discussions about the "Animation" video) – **declined**

I should take note here about the new procedure for hearing floor actions. The new procedure roughly is as follows:

A floor action can be brought ay any time during normal business (except during sharing sessions)

It requires a second and will be heard at the conclusion of regular business.

What was new this year is that when we arrive at floor actions, the maker of the floor action will be given 2 minutes to present their motion and then the chair of the session will offer to the body a motion to decline. If the motion to decline is seconded, we vote right away on the motion to decline. If two thirds vote in favor to decline the motion is dropped. (*this mean a minority of one third plus one vote is enough to discuss and vote on the floor action*)

3. May be a first! (Regarding PI item: F. regarding full faces) Submitted by Class A trustee Bill Clark, the motion was a temporary fix to the perceived dilemma of full faces in AA visual media. This motion was heard but **defeated 2/124**. He proposed to add a disclaimer to all conference approved audio and visual media regarding protection of anonymity. The discussion revealed that his idea was too broad and not very practical.
4. **Declined**, also regarding PI item: F. regarding full faces
5. **Declined**, regarding withdrawing "Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous" from distribution. Somewhat of a minority appeal to the advisory action of last year's conference without a standing policy on full faces.
6. Was a rewording of the Grapevine Item A to clarify intent of committee in what to do in the second year of the LaViña trial period of 68 pages and perfect binding. **Defeated 1/123**, it was revealed during discussion that the

7. Was a motion to absorb the French Canadian magazine LaVigne into the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. The maker said he submitted this in haste and **withdrew the floor action**. At the beginning of the week the make of this motion gave a presentation on "Love and Tolerance is our Code" and spoke to acting hastily vowing to try his best to keep his cool. This was tremendous to watch him choose to eat crow while it was still warm and exhibit an open and honest 10<sup>th</sup> step with all of us. Again a sign that this conference was one of healing.
8. Was a conference delegate's idea to combine the AAWS and Grapevine catalogues into one piece. The motion was heard, but **defeated 25/96**.
9. This was a motion to keep the recovery piece "**The AA Member – Medications and Other Drugs**" in motion and send it back to the trustees to work on; this item **passed (Advisory Action#2)**. During discussions someone questioned the wording of the item, citing that it sounded as though the pamphlet itself would do the reporting back to the 2011 GSC. Ward Ewing in his infinite wisdom declared that "...if the pamphlet was doing the reporting back it would have to be in the past tense." My note to self was "Ward is the Man!" I guess you have to appreciate Ward's sense of humor.

Of course at this point there was a point of order regarding how Ward was handling this item. His response was that we would go ahead and vote anyway retaining some of the iffy wording. It seemed a little defiant, but I envisioned a regular board meeting going long and this being a class A's way of nipping things in the bud before consuming time wordsmithing. However, a plea from a somewhat confused panel 60 was not overlooked by me, because I felt the same way about the very same pamphlet last year. The wording last year went through inaccurately and I imagined the pamphlet would go to hell in a hand basket if the wording wasn't changed. I stood alone and I felt it.

I approached this member and was asked to give a cool down period before offering my thoughts, but was well received when I shared my experience with her noting that the board is in the room paying close attention to the intent of advisory actions equally, if not more so, than the wording. And on rare occasions they can review the recordings or call conference committees if there is any doubt.

Around 6:30pm we took a dinner break (on our own). Several members of the pacific region commandeered Madeleine and the mini-van that she rented and drove to a nearby deli to eat off site. I was pretty tired of the hotel food by then. We ended up meeting up with Robin, Ginger and Nancy from the Grapevine and shared a table. It was a nice reprieve.

7:56pm regarding Policy and Admissions Item: D (**Advisory Action #24**):

After dinner we returned to select 8 of the 11 panel 60 delegates to be included in the Composition of the Conference Inventory Planning Committee (CIPC). This was done by region and via the hat.

The composition of the Conference Inventory Planning Committee will have a proportional representation similar to the General Service Conference including delegates, trustees, a non trustee director, a G.S.O. staff member and a Grapevine staff member.

Selection of eligible delegates shall include those not elected as chair of a Conference committee who are willing and able to serve. The Conference Inventory Planning Committee will consist of 17 individuals with representation as follows:

#### 11 Panel 60 Delegates

Alternate Conference delegate chair

Alternate Chair - Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

Alternate Chair - Conference Committee on Agenda

One delegate from each region for a total of 8 to be chosen by lot by the chair of the General Service Board, the G.S.O. Conference coordinator and the Conference delegate chair.

## Trustees, Directors and Staff

One Class B regional trustee  
One Class B general service trustee who will serve as chair of the committee  
One Class A trustee  
One Non-trustee director  
One G.S.O. staff person  
One Grapevine staff person

The trustees, non trustee director and G.S.O./Grapevine staff will be appointed by the chair of the General Service Board.

A G.S.O. staff member, appointed by the G.S.O. general manager, will serve as the nonvoting secretary to the Conference Inventory Planning Committee and coordinate committee meeting schedules and correspondence

Earlier in the week, I had a conversation with a close delegate friend of mine that was disappointed that they had not been selected as chair of their conference committee and I offered a few words to the affect of "wait and see what happens". Even in my case where I was alternate chair, I ended up serving as chair. Any way the point of this is that this person ended up being selected to serve on this inventory committee, which will meet year round via conference calls, to put together a plan for an inventory of the general service conference. This excited me to no end, because as I read the background on this, I could visualize all sorts of possibilities and wouldn't be a treat to serve on this committee.

I am also excited to report that Joel C. from Area 08 will be serving on this committee representing our pacific region. And because Angela H., Area 18 Idaho, serves on the Policy and Admissions committee and is now alternate chair of her committee, she too will be one of the 11 delegates serving us in this way.

We sat down to return to the conference. We were then surprised by an off Broadway production which included various humorous scenarios relating to the International Convention in San Antonio. The play starred the GSO staff and was absolutely adorable. The spirit was funny and light and many of us were laughing all the way through it. After thunderous applause we resumed our floor actions beginning with number...

10. This was one of three (10,14,15) Floor Actions, soon to be four, that dealt with the advisory action [Report & Charter Item: B pt2] passed earlier in which the intent was not clear and feelings expressed about our publications departments past errs were reflected in the recommendation.

It was a two part floor action. One was to rescind the advisory action and the other was to place it with alternate text (to clarify intent) This passed with a narrow 85/38. After many minority opinions and more feelings came out a motion to reconsider passed and this item resumed more loving discussion.

Then, comes a landmark conference motion; In the midst of mildly heated debate, second guessing our chairman and wordsmithing this item, came a **motion to suspend all rules**. It was seconded. The maker of the floor action [#10] and the maker of the other floor actions [#14 and #15] related to Report & Charter and the entire Report and Charter committee left the room to craft a new floor motion [#17] which was heard and seconded and put to the end of business.

With an ample amount of commotion, broke a lone request to officially vote on the new motion (to make it official). We all voted, and it passed, that we suspend all rules.

The current motion [floor action#10] was then **tabled**.

When this ad-hoc committee of floor motions and committee members returned, we then voted to reinstate the rules and continued with the next [grouping of] floor actions.

11. Re: Report & Charter Item: D opting out of the 30 day pending period to complete processing group by group was **declined**.

Phyllis saw this one coming a mile away and had the makers of three separate floor actions dealing with the pie chart get together and caucus to agree to one motion that spoke to all three makers. At this point we skipped to floor action #16.

16. To **recommit the Pie Chart Item to the appropriate Trustees committee and report back to the 2011 conference.** The makers of floor actions #12 and #13 spoke in support of this motion and withdrew their own floor actions.

One quote of Phyllis' will go down in the annals of AA wordsmithing; while the current motion was being reread we were instructed to "replace remove with replace". It was late and we were slightly giddy. We would end up quoting her for the rest of the free time and all day Saturday and even now in subsequent emails. It just stuck as something funny.

Long story short this item **passed (Advisory Action#3)** and we will be looking at the pamphlet on **Self-Support Where Money and Spirituality Mix** pie chart(s) and/or text again next year.

17. Finally the collaborative floor action was brought to a vote regarding the publications department and **passed 127/3 (Advisory Action #4)** the advisory action now reads:

"That *Advisory Actions* and *Additional Committee Considerations* be published exactly as approved by the Conference in the General Service Conference *Final Report*." Be rescinded and replaced with:

"That the Publications Department work cooperatively with the Conference Committee on Report and Charter on the Final Report of the General Service Conference to ensure that all Advisory Actions and Additional Committee Considerations are consistent in format, grammatically correct, and accurately reflect the actions of the General Service Conference."

At this point we pulled #10 off the table and the makers of this motion and the other two related motions **withdrew**.

We concluded our regular business and floor actions at 10:10pm

Robin B. (Grapevine Executive Editor) then gave a very short farewell to this body as she did not expect to be on long enough to see another conference. Her expressions were simple and delightful. She definitely took the 'high road'.

For the first time in several years we resumed the tradition of delegate goodbyes, then gave away the 60<sup>th</sup> GSC Banner and closed with the Serenity Prayer in Spanish, French and English still during the eleven o'clock hour.

Saturday was our closing brunch and the traditional goodbyes to rotating trustees. This year "rotating on" were Madeleine P. and Bill Clark. They gave encouraging talks and were both incredible forces in A.A. and will be missed.

After brunch the delegates went by bus to Stepping Stones, (more here <http://www.steppingstones.org>) the home of Bill and Lois Wilson. Beautifully preserved as Lois left it, we enjoyed time together immersed in AA history.

I am honored to serve you and I wish to thank you for my life and my sobriety.

Jeff J – delegate  
CCAA Area 93  
panel 59 | 2009-2010