

THIS DAY

www.nnjaa.org

News & Notes from NNJ General Service Area 44 and Northern New Jersey Intergroup



Before I get into reporting on our preparations for the 61st General Service Conference, let me share how grateful I am for your allowing me to serve as your Panel 61 Delegate.

While I knew it was possible that one day I might be asked to serve the Area at the Conference, I certainly never really expected it! I trust that my journey through service has let me to be here through responsibility, humility and a true desire to give back to the Fellowship that saved my life.

I have just received the Final Conference Agenda which includes topics that will affect AA as a whole. Your Alternate Delegate and I met with the past delegates on February 23rd to set the agenda for April's Mini-Conference. At the Mini-Conference you will tell me how the Area feels about each of those topics, and I will take those feelings with me to the Conference in New York. There are several items which will be discussed that are "hot button topics" this year; things that many in the Fellowship have strong feelings about. Rumor and opinion are already occupying the circles around the coffee pots in

quite a few A.A. meetings. To help us make the right decisions I will be traveling throughout Northern New Jersey for the Pre-Conference Reports. With the help of our wonderful Alternate Delegate, Linda KK, I will try to bring the facts on each of these topics to the groups with both the Pros and Cons to help your Home Group make an informed decision.

This year's conference theme is "We Are Responsible for AA's Future - Let It Begin With Us" - I hope you take that as I do, as a challenge. It reminds me that I have a responsibility to AA and that I must take action to assure our future. All AA members are encouraged to come to the Pre-Conference Reports and be part of that action. Our Home Group GSRs will bring the group's voice to the Mini-

Conference, as you are part of AA, you should participate in the Group Conscience meetings of your Home Group. By being well informed you can help us make better decisions. Whether you are an old-timer or a newcomer, you are an equal member of AA - and even if you are new, remember that the newcomers of today are the old-timers of tomorrow!

Now on to some recent news. AA World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S.) book sales for the first 9 months of 2010 were 1,303,084 units which were 537,775 (29%) less than the same period on 2009. For the same period Big Book sales were 672,524 books as compared to 1,040,063 in 2009. This is primarily due to the large purchases prior to the price increase in July of 2009. As a result

net literature sales were \$9,326,100, 1.6% less than budgeted and 14% less than the same period in 2009. Contributions were \$4,511,400 which was 2.3% more than budgeted and 3.2% higher than in 2009. Total operating expenses were \$9,649,200 which was \$591,000 less than budgeted and \$317,100 less than the same period in 2009. The Prudent Reserve stands at 9.5 months expenses, quite a bit below the target of 12 months.

AAWS continues to work on a project concerning e-publishing and online sales functions. This may require cash from the Reserve Fund depending on actual costs, 2011 profits and the timing of the project, but it seems that it really is necessary. As society accepts more and more e-publishing media (Kindle, iPad, smart-phones, etc), AA does not want to fall behind. *The Grapevine* has already created a digital version of our "Meeting in Print" which is available for \$19.97/year and also hopes to have PDF versions of many other popular titles soon.

We live in a time of constant change due to technology, and I am grateful for the efforts of AAWS and the Grapevine to keep up and to make sure the hand of A.A. is there whenever, wherever... and however someone reaches out for help! **Wayne R., Panel 61 Delegate**

Delegate Preconference Report Schedule - 2011

- Section 1: was 7pm **Tuesday March 8th**, Abundant Life Reformed Church, 475 Lafayette Avenue, Wyckoff. Hosted by Districts 4/6
- Section 2: 2:00pm **Sunday March 20th**, St. Mary's Church, 17 Monsignor Owens Place, Nutley. Hosted by District 13
- Section 3: 7:30pm **Tuesday March 15th**, Stanhope Methodist Church, 3 Route 183, Netcong. Hosted by District 9 & 16
- Section 4: 6:30pm **Monday March 21st**, Hunterdon Medical Center (Auditorium), 2100 Westcott Dr, Flemington. Hosted by District 15/21
- Section 5: 1pm **Saturday March 19th**, Cook College Extension Center, College Farm Road, New Brunswick. Hosted by District 22
- Section 6: 7:00pm **Wednesday March 16th**, Hope Lutheran Church, 211 Elton-Adelphia Road, Freehold. Hosted by District 25
- Districts 30: (Spanish Speaking) 2:00pm **Sunday March 27th**, 256 Mulberry & 42 Street (2nd Floor), Newark. Hosted by District 30



When I landed at AA sometime in February of 1997 somewhere on the west coast of Florida slinking through the pouring rain into a meeting I hadn't planned on attending, it didn't occur to me that on a sunny Saturday in early October, nearly 14 years later I would be standing for the opportunity to serve you as your chair - and that you would trust me to do so. I can't tell you how moved and humbled I felt that day to be a small part of a big thing.

I've been thinking about our upcoming conference theme, "We are Responsible for A.A.'s Future - Let it

Begin With Us". I think that the success of AA today as well as its future does in fact begin with each individual AA. After all we are but a collection of broken misfits who by a loving grace have found a different and better way to live; perhaps due to the power of our collective experience, strength and hope. But it wasn't the collective power of AA that reached out to me at my first meeting - it was one man reaching out one hand to one sick dude...and to me he was AA. And somewhere along the way, as I began to recover, I also began to feel compassion, empathy and love for other AAs; and as I was nudged into AA service, I began to feel an abiding sense of responsibility for AA's survival and for its continued effectiveness. One of our greatest gifts is that AA gives every member the opportunity to partic-

ipate in AA service and give back as much as he or she can.

Many of you may not be aware of the kind of work Area 44 does. Please visit us at www.nnjaa.org and you'll soon see that we have one primary purpose in our Area and that is to do vital 12th step work through our committees and conduct the business that makes this 12th step work possible.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve you and Area 44. My hope is to continue to carry our message with gratitude, a sense of humor and enthusiasm. And by the way, I'd like to thank all who attended our first Area Assembly of the year this past January. It was a wonderful assembly with great participation as over 300 folks attended!

Please feel free to reach me at [\[chair@nnjaa.org\]\(mailto:chair@nnjaa.org\) or drop me a line at our Area Office at NNJGS Area 44, 2325 Plainfield Ave, Suite 2J, South Plainfield, NJ 07080. This is your Area and I would love to hear from you!](mailto:area-</p>
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In AA Love and Service, Jay E., Your Area 44 Chairperson

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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE MAY 13th
NEWSLETTER@NNJAA.ORG



New Chair of "YOUR" Newsletter

Hello, my name is John E., and I am the new area chairperson for *This Day*. Let me begin by thanking Bob P. for the excellent job he did on the newsletter for the past two years. I volunteered for this job because having been a member of the committee for over 10 years I figured it was about time that I stepped up.

While spelling and grammar are not my strong suit, I will let the editor do his job and the editor will let the computer's "spell check" and "grammar check" do its job.

I have an extensive resume of articles for *This Day*. I wrote regular submissions while DCM of District 20 and Area Treatment Chair. I felt it was my obligation to let the fellowship know what the area's Treatment Committee was working on four times a year. As DCM I tried to establish a trend by writing regular submissions about what District 20 was planning. As more DCMs began to submit, the newsletter added a regular column titled "District Doings." Hopefully we can continue this trend.

This Day has a small active committee. Myself, the editor, a past newsletter

chair and two other interested AAs show up on the 3rd Thursday of every month for our monthly meetings. In addition we have an email list of volunteers. This is a list of AAs who have volunteered to help the committee by proofreading or suggesting ideas for the improvement of the newsletter. They don't attend our monthly meetings but we share the minutes of the meeting with them so that they know what we are planning and we encourage their feedback. If you would like to help out with the newsletter but can't make the monthly meeting, let us know (newsletter@nnjaa.org). As a proofreader you will get to read the newsletter before it even goes to press!

Please remember that *This Day* is YOUR newsletter. It reports on the service done by the officers, standing and special committees in Area 44, (similar to Box 4-5-9), and voices the opinions and comments of the fellowship in Northern New Jersey (similar to The AA Grapevine).

Finally, don't forget we also need pictures for each issue. The pictures should not contain any faces and should be of a seasonal (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter), theme. For those of you who are inclined we could also use "interactive" games i.e. crossword puzzles, word searches, etc. I am looking forward to 8 wonderful issues over the next 2 years with your help.

***Yours in service, John E.,
This Day Newsletter Chair***

A Message
from your
Area Treasurer



Ready and Willing to Serve

Hello, I'd like to introduce myself to you as your new Area 44 Treasurer! I am sitting here with piles of paperwork around me. Files with area insurance bills are on the cabinet and the telephone and PSE&G bills are on the shelf over the desk. Directions to the GSR Mid-Winter Luncheon are on the floor. On my desk is a rough draft of the latest treasurer's report and three "To-Do" lists with some of the items scratched off; not all of them, but enough to make me feel somewhat accomplished. It's Saturday night, and I am sitting in the midst of mild chaos, feeling good and very grateful to be sober and of service to A.A.!

I have been feeling this way since October 16th. That was the day you entrusted me to serve you as Area 44 Treasurer. What an honor! I am still overwhelmed with gratitude that the fellowship and God decided it was my time to serve and in what capacity. My service sponsor was really clear - I was willing and able to serve and needed to say "yes" when my name was called. And that willingness brought me here!

One month and 12 days into this commitment and I am just beginning to get a grasp of what needs to get done and when. I have the list of confirmed

Pre-Conference Reports from Wayne R., your Delegate, and cannot wait to visit all the districts and meet all of you! We do such a tremendous job in Area 44 in our 12th Step work. As part of the service structure set up by Bill and Dr. Bob, we carry our message of hope all over Northern New Jersey and beyond. We work together with our Intergroup to keep the hand of AA outreached to those in need. It is an amazing thing to witness and be a part of!

With the other Area Officers and Finance Committee, I want to thank all the groups, districts, and individuals who have been supporting 12th step work though your 7th tradition contributions. And a special mention to all those who buy literature through the Area 44 Literature Committee - thank you! The surplus funds generated through those sales go directly into paying for the 12th Step committee work we do so well. If you currently do not get your literature through the Area, please consider doing so. It means all the difference in, for example, how many new literature racks the Public Information Committee can place in libraries, or the number of doctors, lawyers, clergy etc. that C.P.C. can reach out to each year.

Each time the basket gets passed around at an A.A. meeting, questions are being asked of those in a position to give. "Am I going to any length?" "What was the cost of my last drink?" "Am I showing the newcomer what the 7th Tradition means?"

***Yours in love and service,
Chuck F., Area 44 Treasurer***

Area History and Archives Committee



At the beginning of 1937, the "fellowship" of ex-problem drinkers was still a part of the Oxford Group. Bill had begun having "clandestine" meetings for "drunks only" outside of the regular OG meetings. It was in these meetings that the practice of sharing experience, strength and hope, as it is known today, began to evolve. On February 13th the "Alcoholic Squadron" of the New York Oxford Group held a meeting in New Jersey at Hank P.'s Teaneck home. It was the first time the group of drunks met here in New Jersey to conduct an "alcoholic style" group meeting. The purpose of the meeting on this occasion was to introduce William R. of Hackettstown to the fledgling fellowship. His personal story, (A Business Man's Recovery) was included in the 1st Edition of the Big Book.

Lois W., in her memoirs recalled: "We often visited Hank, his wife Kathleen, and their two boys in their home in Teaneck, which soon became the meeting place for local alcoholics and their families. Our unknown bunch of drunks was growing in New Jersey, too."

***Yours in service, Brenda D.,
Area Archives Chair***



The Teaneck New Jersey home of Hank and Kathleen P.



Carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers" is the backbone of Alcoholics Anonymous, and we of the Literature Committee carry it one book at a time.

I would like to say thanks to Mike G., our past Literature Chair for his leadership for the past two years and to all of the outgoing Literature Representatives for the districts and groups throughout Area 44. To all of the new Literature Representatives I would like to welcome you to Area 44's Literature Committee. As a district or group Literature Representative you

become a member of the Area 44's Literature Committee, and are welcome to attend the Literature Committee meetings which are held at the area office on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:30pm. We also see literature from 6:30pm to 7:30pm on the night of the meetings. This is open to any and all AAs to purchase literature.

The Literature Committee's goal for 2011 is to have literature available for sale at all area gatherings, such as assemblies, mini conferences and the convention and as well as any days of sharing which we are invited to attend. (See calendar right for where we sell throughout the year.)

Yours in service, Bobby B., Literature Chair

Perpetual Calendar of Literature Sales Availability

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

1st MONDAY of the month – at The Intergroup Delegates Meeting, 177 Broadway, Clark; 7:30-9:00pm

2nd SUNDAY of odd months at the Area Committee Meeting 2325 Plainfield Ave, South Plainfield; Noon-4pm

3rd MONDAY of the month - at The Literature Meeting, 2325 Plainfield Ave. South Plainfield; 7-9pm

3rd SATURDAY in January, April, June, and October – at The Area Assemblies (location changes); 9am-3pm

ANY DAY OF ANY MONTH - at District Picnics or Days of Sharing to which we are invited.

ALSO the 2nd SUNDAY in March, June, September, & December at Bookers in Cranford at 6:00am

Last FRIDAY, SATURDAY, and SUNDAY in September – at the Area's Annual Convention held at the Doubletree Hotel, Somerset



Currently the Grapevine Committee has been working on getting a simplified flyer out to the groups to explain the different ways to subscribe to the grapevine. We recently printed flyers off the AAGRAPEVINE.org web site explaining the different subscription offers to give out to groups.

As always there is the print subscription 1 year 12 issues for \$26.97. Remember you can also purchase new issues \$2.50 each and old issues at \$1.00 at any area event they are great to give to newcomers.

In addition, there are new ways to sub-

scribe to grapevine. The Digital Grapevine Subscription allows you to see The Grapevine on your computer, iPad, or Kindle, a 1 year subscription is 12 issues is \$19.97. The digital subscriptions allow you to view the entire magazine and even print it out. It is even possible to convert your print subscription to the digital one, just call 1-800-631-6025. The Grapevine Audio Magazine can be used with MP3. A year subscription is \$19.97 (12 issues) or one month for \$4.00.

Please remember that Grapevine has changed its distribution location. The new subscription address is P.O. Box 16867 North Hollywood, CA 916615-6867 phone 1-800-631-6025.

Yours in service, Jeff W., Grapevine Chair



The Corrections Committee would like to thank the following groups and districts for their Pink Can and Jail Box contributions:

- Bagel Bush
 - Belleville Thursday Night
 - District 4/6
 - District 23
 - District 26
 - District 28
 - Cranford - Tuesday Night
 - Easy Does It Group
 - Jernee Begins Group
 - Mount Carmel Sober Spirits
 - Montclair There Is A Solution
 - Perth Amboy Monday
 - Positive Thinkers
 - Rahway Monday Night
 - Rockaway Serenity Porch
 - Sea Girt
 - Union Hill Drop In Center
 - Verona Monday 12:15
- Please excuse me if I have left anyone out. Thank you to all who participate.**



Hello all my fellow 44-ers. Phew! We have hit the ground running to a tune of 13 attendees at our February 9th meeting. Thanks for all your support.

"Why treatment?" For me, because I don't want to end up in one. It's not part of my story; but it could be. Treatment is rewarding work because I can keep it green at meetings on the outside, while I can THOROUGHLY see my next debacle should I fall prey to my nastiest insanity. Also, who got their first contact or meeting list sippin' cooladas? Whether or not you've been to a detox, rehab, IDRC, halfway house, or not; WE can only keep it by giving it away. Big Book pg14:

"Particularly was it imperative to work with others as he had worked with me." So! For the sake of the befogged, "I Am Responsible....."

Yours in service, Brian E., Treatment Chair

Finance Committee

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those groups and individual members who have made donations during this past year. Your contributions make possible all the great 12th. Step work being done by our service committees in Area 44.

During the past year the finance committee has worked to revise our contribution envelope so that it can now be used for both GROUP and INDIVIDUAL contributions. We have added information to the envelope that indicates that Area 44 can accept individual member contributions of up to \$3000.00, per individual member, per year.

As I write this I am reminded that since I celebrate the miracle of my sobriety again this month I need to send in my own individual member contributions. I make donations to GSO, Area 44, Intergroup, my district and home group in the amount of \$1 per year of sobriety. Each of these donations total less than what I used to spend in one night on alcohol and the feeling I get knowing I am doing the next right thing for me by expressing my gratitude for my sobriety is priceless.

If you have interest in the finances of Area 44 you are welcome to attend our committee meeting the 4th Monday of each month at 7:30PM or if you have a question please contact me at finance@nnjaa.org.

In Service, John McC., Area 44 Finance Committee Chair



Night Watch answers the phones when the intergroup office is closed. What a great way to give back. I would like to thank all of the groups that answered the phones, and also provided 12-step work. None of this would be possible without the help of the committee members past and present and of course the intergroup office staff members.

The committee meets the 3rd Wednesday of every odd month at the Intergroup Office, 2400 Morris Avenue in Union. Come on down.

A recent experience from a caller who was a veteran who needed to talk to someone with similar military experience who also suffered from our disease. It took a day or two but a connection was made. One person with his

hand out and the another ready to grab it. It's moments like this and others like it that we would like to share with the rest of AA.

If you want to be part of something on the front lines, jump in with both feet just like your recovery. Top ten great things about Night Watch.

- 10 we give back what has been so freely given
- 9 educate your home group
- 8 we're are not a glum lot
- 7 meet people from all over NJ
- 6 Unity **SERVICE** & Recovery
- 5 lead by example
- 4 Great way to teach sponsees about service
- 3 maybe it was part of your story
- 2 a lot of bang for the buck
- 1 someone is always there...

Be that someone. Thank you see you at the next meeting

Your Intergroup Night Watch Chair, Aaron K.

The Role of the GSR in the General Service Conference

From April 30th thru May 7th, 2011, the 61st General Service Conference will be held in New York City. At the Conference, the Delegates from 93 Areas of the United States and Canada will discuss, debate and vote on the 66 issues on this year's Final Conference agenda.

In preparation for the Conference, a number of activities and events will take place over the next few months. You may have heard of the Preliminary Conference agenda, the Final Conference agenda, the Mini-Conference, a Pre-conference report, the need for a Group conscience meeting and a meeting of the Delegate and Past Delegates to decide the Mini-conference agenda. As a GSR, especially a new GSR or Alternate GSR, this can be somewhat confusing. You may also be asking yourself: What is my role in all of this?

The short answer...it is suggested that you:

1. Attend a Pre-Conference report
2. Conduct a Group Conscience meeting with your Home Group to discuss the Mini-conference agenda and obtain the Group's conscience on each of the issues
3. Attend the Mini-Conference (the April Area Assembly) and vote your Group's conscience

To understand this answer, it is useful to review the timeline of the events which take place in the next few months:

Date	Activity or Event
2/13/11	The Delegates receive the Final Conference Agenda from GSO, typically with 50 to 80 items
2/23/11	Our Delegate, Alternate Delegate and Past Delegates meet to decide which items from the Final Conference Agenda are of interest to our Area and should be included on the Mini-conference Agenda, typically 8 to 12 items.
3/07/11	The Mailing Committee's March mailing containing the Mini-conference agenda items are mailed to the DCMs and each group in Area 44.
3/08/11-3/27/11	Pre-conference reports for your District's GSRs and DCMs are held by Section (see the Pre-Conference reports Schedule on this page). At this session, you'll receive the background materials for each topic on the Mini-conference agenda, which will be reviewed by the Delegate and the Alternate Delegate.
3/13/11	The March Area Committee Meeting (ACM) is held on the 2nd Sunday of March. At this meeting, your DCM will be able to obtain copies of the Mini-conference (Spring) issue of our newsletter, <i>This Day</i> , which contains a description as well as the Pros and Cons of each topic. The Spring Issue is also posted on the Newsletter page of the Area 44 Website (www.nnjaa.org).
3/08/11-4/08/11	GSRs conduct a Group Conscience meeting to review the Mini-Conference agenda items and the supporting material with their Home Groups to obtain the Group's conscience on each issue.
4/09/11	The Mini-conference assembly is held. This year's Assembly is being hosted by Districts 10 and 16. At the Assembly, a presentation will be made on each topic, followed by round table discussions and a vote. The GSRs bring their Group's conscience to the discussion and the vote. NOTE: With the Right of Decision (Concept 3), you may hear something during the discussion that changes your mind and causes you to vote differently than your Group's conscience would dictate. You have that right, but should you vote differently than your group's conscience, you should then be prepared to inform the Group and explain why you changed your vote.
4/30/11-5/07/11	The 61st General Service Conference (GSC) is held in New York City. Our Delegate attends the Conference, bringing the Area's collective conscience and using the Area's conscience during the discussion and the subsequent vote. The Delegate is also empowered with the Right of Decision to change their vote based on the discussion.
06/11/11	Attend the June Assembly, hosted by District 34 this year, and listen to the Delegate's Post-conference report. If you cannot attend the Assembly, listen to the announcements of the dates for other Post-conference reports or ask your Section or District to schedule one.

As a GSR you have one additional responsibility. Following the GSC, the results of the voting on each issue are prepared and documented in a Final Conference report which will be made available throughout the Area at various events. The results will also be presented at the June Assembly in a Post-conference report made by our Delegate so it is important to attend this Assembly as well. If you can't make it to the Assembly, there are usually additional Post-conference reports scheduled. You should also let your Group know the results of the Conference and how their vote compared with our Area and A.A. as a whole.

When I served as GSR for my Home Group, it took several years for the Group to get interested and start providing input on the issues at a Group Conscience meeting that was held before the Mini-conference Assembly. Last year, the Group expressed an interesting sentiment. They asked for information about how the Area voted on the issues and what happened at the GSC in New York. I was pleased because after all, it's progress not perfection...

Jeff B., Area 44 Recording Secretary

Newsletter Committee

Mini-Conference Issue 2010

The Spring issue of *This Day* will attempt to arm the GSRs, and all AAs in Area 44, with as much background information as space allows on the topics to be discussed.

The editor will attempt to explain the issues involved in the questions being asked by this year's Conference. Feel free to use this issue at your group conscience, but remember that further explanation and answers to questions can come from our Area Delegate. He will be traveling Area 44 giving a Pre-Conference Briefing on the issues and answering any questions you may have. (See *Delegate Pre-Conference Report Schedule on page 1*) — **This Day Staff**

Delegate Preconference Report Schedule – 2011

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- Districts 30: (Spanish Speaking) 2:00pm **Sunday March 27th**, 256 Mulberry & 42 Street (2nd Floor), Newark. Hosted by District 30

Area 44 Mini-Conference – April 9th

Dear A.A. Friends:

The Area 44 Mini-Conference will be held on Saturday, April 9, 2011 in Wayne, New Jersey at the Wayne P.A.L., 1 Pal Place. To assist with your preparation for this important assembly, please find several pieces of pertinent information beginning on page 5. The Mini-Conference is a meaningful and timely Area 44 function because it provides an opportunity for your group's conscience to be expressed on AA issues and concerns. The collective area conscience can then be carried to the General Service Conference by your delegate along with the 92 other delegates in the United States and Canada.

The 2011 General Service Conference will be held in New York City, New York from May 1 to May 7, 2011 and has as its theme, "We are Responsible for A.A.'s Future - Let it Begin With Us." An estimated 1,300,000 A.A. members in 59,000 groups across the United States and Canada are represented by 93 delegates at the General Service Conference, which results in Conference Advisory Actions and produces Conference-approved literature for A.A. as a whole.

The Mini-Conference topics, (discussed on pages 5-8), were taken from the Final General Service Conference Agenda. Our Mini-Conference will consist of presentations by trusted servants within our area structure, as well as

open forums for sharing on each of the enclosed topics.

It is essential for your group's General Service Representative (GSR) to conduct a group conscience meeting to discuss these topics and questions. Your GSR will then bring your group's conscience to the Mini-Conference to share with other groups in our Area. If your group does not have a GSR, the group chairperson, another group officer or an interested group member may conduct the group conscience meeting and bring your group's feedback to the Mini-Conference.

In conducting your group conscience meeting, you may find it helpful to refer to AA literature, some of which are listed below:

1. *A.A. Service Manual/12 Concepts for World Service*
2. *2010 Final Conference Report*
3. *AA Tradition and How It Developed*
4. *Twelve Traditions Illustrated*
5. *Twelve Concepts Illustrated*
6. *AA Comes of Age*

Your group's voice and vote are important and valuable to AA as a whole. Please read the background discussions on page 5 and form a group conscience at your group meetings. Remember, the Mini-Conference is not just for GSRs, but for any interested AA member.

See you all at the Mini-Conference!

**In love and service, Wayne R.,
Panel 61 Delegate**

2011 AREA 44 MINI-CONFERENCE TOPICS & DISCUSSION ITEMS

Background Information & Some Food For Thought

TOPIC I: FINANCE

A. Consider a request "that the trustees' Finance Committee develop a Finance Workbook, a draft of which is to be made available for the 2012 General Service Conference, to assist group, intergroup/central offices, district and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition."

Background:

Backed by an Assembly vote, Area 29 Maryland asked that the Trustees' Committee on Finance consider the above item.

At a July 25, 2010 meeting they prepared the following list of suggestions for topics to be included in a proposed Finance Workbook:

1. Guidance for setting up bank accounts
2. Discussion of non-profit issues
3. Budget ideas
4. Guidance on use of group funds
5. How is a group's money used...at GSR?...at the Area?...at the District?
6. Suggestions for informing groups and members of where their money goes
7. Graphs or pie charts as visuals to describe where money goes
8. A list of items available to be used in Finance service work:
 - M-21 *I Am Responsible* wallet card
 - M-23 Conference Report, current year
 - MG-15 *AA Guidelines on Finance*
 - P-16 *The AA Group* pamphlet
 - P-43 *Twelve Traditions Illustrated*
 - P-44 *AA's Legacy of Service*
 - Tradition Checklist* from the AA Grapevine
 - F-42 Self-Support Green Card
 - FR-2 AA Group Contribution Envelope
 - FR-5 AA Birthday Contribution Envelope
 - Birthday Plan Cover Letter
 - FV-19 Self-Support Packet: Yellow sleeve containing the following items:
 - Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix* (F-3)
 - Historical Background of Self-Support Idea Starters
 - Memo to an AA Group Treasurer* (F-96)
 - Posters

9. Descriptions of each item available for use (in #8) and suggestions for their use

Pros

There is a lot of information on self-support published by GSO. The problem seems to be that the information is scattered. Financial information can be found in the *Annual AA Conference Report*, GSO's yellow-sheet guidelines, 5 different AA pamphlets, and AA service pieces and checklists.

Area 29 thinks it would be a good idea to collect the information into one place and call it a "Finance Workbook."

The Finance Workbook would cover discussions on the topics listed in 1-7 and 9, and perhaps have a pocket containing items listed in #8.

Other committees have "workbooks" which contain appropriate materials which can be updated from year to year without a delegate conference vote. These are known as "service pieces."

Cons

All of the suggested topics to be included in the workbook, items 1-7 can be found in the guidelines, pamphlets, and service materials listed in #8.

Do we need another printed workbook to discuss the same information, especially when the topic is AA finances?

What does your group think? Is your group's treasurer well versed in the topics 1-7 described above? Was he/she aware of, and is he/she familiar with, each of the items listed in #8 above?

B. Consider a request "that the trustees' Finance Committee convert Self-Support packet F-19 to a comprehensive Finance Kit."

Background:

After passing the motion, at an area assembly, by substantial unity, Area 29-Maryland also proposed the above item be considered by the Trustees' Committee on Finance.

At the 58th General Service Conference, Agenda Item A under Finance proposed the development of a Finance Kit. "The committee discussed a request that a Finance Kit be developed to assist group, intergroup/central offices, district, and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition. Recognizing the need for increased awareness, the committee suggested that AAWS consider the following:

1. Updating/reformatting Self-Support Packet (FV-19) to include the Finance Guidelines (MG-15).
2. Adding the information that is included in the Self-Support Packet (FV-19) to GSO's AA website.
3. That the Self-Support Packet (FV-19) be sent to incoming area treasurers.
4. Adding the Self-Support Packet (FV-19) to the Conference approved Literature Catalog."

In a letter dated December 30, 2010 Area 29 says, "It appears that the Trustees' Committee has complied with most of the 2008 Additional Committee Consideration with the exception, perhaps, of adding the AA Guidelines on Finance to the FV-19 packet and including all items in the FV-19 packet on the AA.org website. However, what we believe Area 54 was looking for in 2008, and what Area 29 would like to see developed, is a Finance Kit similar to that used by Corrections, PI, CPC, etc. This kit would be a starting point of information currently in existence, for use by Finance Chairs, Group Treasurers and other AA members.

In addition to the above list, (included under #8 of the previous proposal), it would be helpful to allow room in the kit for local sharing on finances, local Quarterly Contribution letters, local posters, and information for contributions to local service entities."

Contents of current Self-Support packet (Contained in FV-19 the yellow folder) 2/1/2011

- FV-19 the yellow holder
- F-42 the Green card
- F-3 Self-Support: Where money and Spirituality Mix
- F-96 The AA Group Treasurer
- MG-15AA Guidelines - Finance
- F-19A Historical Background of Self-Support
- F-19B But we do have expenses Flyer/poster
- F-19C Want the hand of AA always to be there?

Flyer/poster

- F-19D This is Twelfth Step work Flyer/poster
 - F-19E Idea starters (shared experience of members and areas)
 - F-19F Heart of the Fellowship Flyer/poster
 - F-85 Yellow Sticker to record group service number and addresses for Area, District, Intergroup, GSO
- This proposal only asks that we update the existing FV-19 Self-Support Packet and that it be added to a Finance Workbook and be made available to incoming group treasurers. It also asks that it be added to the Conference approved Literature Catalog. As a past area literature chair I was asked to order FV-19 for use at Pre and Post Conference Briefings. I always wondered why the item was not in the catalog, you had to know that it was available.

Pros and Cons

What does your group think? This item FV-19 already exists. This proposal is to add the Finance Guidelines, make it available on the AA website, mail it to incoming group treasurers, and add it to a possible Finance Workbook that was proposed on Finance Topic I.A. As with all items on the mini conference agenda the question remains – is there a need?

TOPIC II: GRAPEVINE

A. Consider that A.A. Grapevine, Inc., be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies such as but not limited to smart phones, tablets, e-reader, applications, and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products.

Background:

It's no secret that print media is in trouble. Even venerable print media companies are having financial difficulties due to declining subscriptions. The Grapevine and La Viña are no exception. The AA Grapevine 2011 - 2013 PowerPoint presentation included with the Conference background materials shows that subscriptions of the Grapevine and La Viña are down 9 - 10% from 2009 to 2010. There has been a similar decline in printed books which are down 15% over the same period. These declines resulted in a \$400,000 loss for these publications last year.

What needs to be done to deal with this situation? The 2011 Office Report on Digital Delivery Systems, also included with the Conference material, provides some insights into the changes required and highlight some changes which have already been made. The report states: "Everything has now changed - from distribution platforms and support technologies to subscriber demographics, from reader preferences to many new content alternatives." This has led the Grapevine and La Viña to make a number of changes in the past year including:

- Significantly updating and enhancing their website
- Launch digital versions of both the Grapevine & La Viña
- Switch fulfillment vendors, utilizing a vendor with a unified database and improved online, shopping cart functionality

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However, much more needs to be done to fully integrate with the new digital age. The key is to be more inclusive and expand the current Grapevine/La Viña audience from the current majority subscriber profile (Male, white, 50 to 59 with 20+ years of sobriety) to a diverse group of A.A. members of all ages, lengths of sobriety and level of tech expertise from the tech averse to the tech savvy. The PowerPoint presentation states in a slide on the objectives for digital channels that the Grapevine and La Viña will need to:

- Transition from print centric publishing to a digital hub
- Transform our publication from a "Meeting in print" to a "Meeting in media"
- Introduce web subscriptions
- Convert print subscriptions to digital
- Introduce smart phone apps and MP3s
- Connect and communicate with audiences regularly including GVRs and RLVs

Care needs to be taken and, as is typically the AA way, the process of implementing any improvements needs to be fully discussed and vetted. The 2004 Conference advisory action for allowing the "widest distribution of the AA and La Viña to all purchasers" cautions that there must be a guard against affiliation with any outside enterprise. Additionally, we need to remember that this "new vision" should not replace the print magazine and should still serve the Grapevine's core reader with a printed version whenever necessary.

Pros

The steps being taken are necessary to restore fiscal health to the Grapevine and La Viña. To ignore the trends with the industry, in general, and our magazines, specifically, is living in denial which we try to avoid these days. There is a large audience of alcoholics who are not currently being reached and helped by the message carried by our magazines. A growing number of these alcoholics, along with others interested in alcoholism, have access to the Internet or an MP3 player or a smart phone. Our Fellowship needs a coherent policy for delivering the Grapevine and La Viña message through these media in a way that is fiscally sound for A.A. and does not violate Tradition 6 concerning affiliation with outside entities. We need to let our Trusted servants (the Grapevine Conference committee and the A.A. Grapevine Board) recommend the approach to be taken after which we can thoroughly discuss and move forward with substantial unanimity.

Cons

This whole process is moving too fast and needs to be discussed in more depth before any action is taken to utilize digital channels and distribution technologies. We need to avoid a difficult and embarrassing situation like the one in which Amazon was allowed to sell the Big Book and their Kindle readers but it later became necessary to cancel the relationship. All aspects of this need to be carefully considered and discussed. It also appears that while lip service is being paid to retaining the printed version of the magazine, this format will receive much less attention. The printed version is crucial for meeting in prison and for that significant portion of our fellowship who do not have access to digital media due for financial or technical aversion issues.

What do you think? Do we need a comprehen-

sive policy for dealing with digital media or should we focus on dealing with the issues of printing the magazine?

B. Consider permitting A.A. Grapevine, Inc., to accept contributions limited to the same General Service Board contribution policy, to be used for operation expenses with excess funds continuing to be forwarded to the Reserve Fund.

Background:

The Grapevine Board of Directors and staff recognize that there are conference recommendations that inform the status quo and set precedent, yet, in the interest of the continuation of the Grapevine, propose Agenda Item B which considers AA Grapevine Inc.'s acceptance of contributions. Grapevine was founded in the heyday of magazines – an era now passed. Over Grapevine's 66 year history it has not been able to pay for its expenses through the sale of subscriptions and products for one third of the time, thereby necessitating periodic drawdowns from the Reserve Fund. Acceptance of contributions from AA members would add another way to meet expenses.

Founded in 1944, AA Grapevine has played an integral role in the growth and development of AA as well as the recovery of hundreds of thousands of alcoholics over the last 66 years.

The General Service Conference approved and adopted Grapevine (GV) as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous that might, that as Bill W. envisioned, "reflect as accurately as possible the Voice of AA."

As the "AA meeting in print," the content is primarily contributed by the Fellowship. GV is a basic tool for recovery from alcoholism and twelve step work – a sentiment echoed by 11,332 responses to GV's four surveys conducted in 2010.

Grapevine and La Viña (LV)'s personal stories convey how alcoholics become and stay sober by practicing AA principles combined with letters, suggestions for meeting discussion topics, news from the general service structure, member photos, art, humor and more – all carrying the message to over 250,000 readers each month.

Digital editions of both GV and LV debuted in December 2010 joining AA Grapevine.org, the Audio Grapevine, the Digital Archive, related books and products offering options to members whose desire for AA's message remains unchanged yet whose preferences for consuming it have.

Grapevine was and is groundbreaking in many ways. Founded in the midst of the magazine's Golden Age, well before the paradigm changing developments of the new content environment; it has operated largely without competition or major changes to the magazine and publishing industries.

Everything has now changed – from distribution platforms and support technologies to subscriber demographics, from reader preferences to many new content alternatives.

Last year, Grapevine caught up by updating its website and content management capability, launched digital versions of Grapevine and La Viña and switched fulfillment vendors to one that unified the database and improved the online shopping cart. Grapevine is poised to function as a digitally based organization capable of responding to a broader audience.

Importantly, the new vision does not replace the print magazine by online presence or related web

content but focuses on transition, still serving GV's core reader with print wherever needed.

"Quite rightly, each new generation of AA world servants will be eager to make operational improvements. Unforeseen flaws in the present structure will doubtless show up later on. New service needs and problems will arise that may make structural changes necessary. Such alterations should certainly be effected and these contingencies squarely met."

Bill W., From *Twelve Concepts for World Service*

Pros

Bill noted in the above quote times have changed so Grapevine must adjust. Today's magazine industry is struggling. Last year it was pointed out that the average Grapevine subscriber was over 50 years old. Grapevine has been adjusting to reach a younger readership by going digital. The present short-fall is unsustainable. The Grapevine is the only magazine for alcoholics, it has no competition. It is the only magazine that operates without advertising revenue. What is the harm of the Grapevine accepting donations?

Cons

No, the Grapevine should not accept individual donations. Will the dollar that was meant for General Service wind up going toward the Grapevine? There is a limited number of donors and AA will be competing with itself for the dollar. Have you ever seen the original Grapevine? (A facsimile copy is available at the Grapevine table). It was a tabloid newspaper much like *This Day*. There wasn't any glossy paper and full color pictures. If the message is the most important part of the Grapevine why not go back to the tabloid newsletter style in order to save money. If the Grapevine serves the fellowship by helping the next sick and suffering alcoholic why should it show a profit? Should anyone profit from doing service? The Grapevine provides a service to the fellowship, it shouldn't have to show a profit.

TOPIC III: LITERATURE

A. Consider a request to include the A.A.

Preamble in the front inside pages of the Big Book.

Background:

As of October 2010 the Big Book is in its 4th edition, 26th printing. The first 3 editions had a combined total of 106 printings. In addition to the major changes in stories between editions there have been quite a number of minor changes made between printings, including, but not limited to, additions of the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts, changes in AA statistics, changes to "Other Available AA Books and Pamphlets," and corrections of typographical errors and spelling etc. But of the text dealing with recovery principles, as Bill W. described while preparing the 2nd edition in 1955 "not an iota has been changed."

The fellowship has been steadfast in their desire to keep the original message intact. Toward that end the 1995 General Service Conference recommended that the first 164 pages of the *Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, the *Doctor's Opinion*, *Dr. Bob's Nightmare* and the appendices remain as is. This recommendation was reiterated in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 while the Big Book 4th Edition was in preparation. It was further recommended in 1999 that the publications

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department of the General Service Office maintain the following specific editorial responsibilities regarding the 4th edition BB project:

- Editorial fine-tuning such as footnotes, punctuation, capitalizations, spelling, updating jacket materials, page numbers, etc. Thus page numbers are likely to change for content after page 164.
- Coordinating the flow of work between the book designer, typesetter, proofreaders, and the production people who order the paper and schedule the printing with the book manufacturer
- In the case of the proposed 4th edition of Alcoholics Anonymous the GSO editors would prepare and coordinate new material and changes such as new material, cover jacket and design, jacket copy, preface, foreword to the 4th edition, and changes such as title page, contents page, factual material that appears in footnotes, and introductions to personal stories.

So it is with great hesitancy that the General Service Conference even considers a request to make changes to our beloved Big Book for fear of distorting the message that has served us so well and out of consideration of historical precedence. With that noted a request has been made by a GSR from Area 43, New Hampshire, to add the AA Preamble to the front inside pages to the Big Book. This request was approved by the conference agenda committee for inclusion on the agenda for this year's conference.

The background material for this request is brief. "Our reasons for asking are as follows. Now that the traditions and concepts are included in the appendices in the Big Book it has become closer to the complete manual for AA. So with the steps, traditions, and concepts it gives the guidelines for personal recovery, unity, and service respectively. The one thing that is missing is The AA Preamble, which is read at the start of nearly every group and defines what AA as a whole is. It seems appropriate therefore to have this in the book that gave its name to the fellowship. The hardcover 4th edition has two clean pages and a third that has just the words 'Alcoholics Anonymous' on it. It might be appropriate to put the preamble under that heading on the third page."

"If the statement of the preamble were put into the Big Book it would serve to seal an unbreakable connection between group, fellowship, and book. There is another reason, it may not be a general problem, but I have heard a couple people recently talking about writing their own preamble in their own groups, to replace the AA Preamble. The argument used was that 'it is not in the Big Book' even though most of the preamble is taken from the foreword to the first edition. This would help to offset this."

What is a preamble? *Webster's New Dictionary* defines preamble as "An introduction, especially one to a constitution, statute etc., stating the reason for it and its purpose."

The following was published in the May 1992 issue of The AA Grapevine. "The words contained in the AA Preamble are probably the most often repeated words throughout the AA fellowship. Used to open many meetings around the world, the preamble encapsulated the essence of AA's traditions and gives us an overview of the practices and prin-

ciples so vital to AA life. Yet where did these words come from? Who wrote them and why?

Following the first major surge of AA membership in the early 1940s, due in part to the Jack Alexander article about AA in the *Saturday Evening Post*, and subsequent media stories about AA, there was an increasing and widespread interest in AA both among potential candidates for the fellowship and among those alcoholic family members and professionals who dealt with alcoholics in their daily lives. With a hope of providing such a concise definition of AA for such interested people the June 1947 Grapevine carried the original version of what is now known throughout the AA world as The Preamble. It was written by Tom Y., the Grapevine's first editor, who borrowed heavily for the phrasing on the following paragraph in the Foreword to the first edition of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"We are not an organization in the conventional sense of the word. There are no fees or dues whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted."

The Preamble, initially referred to as the AA definition, took its place thereafter in each monthly issue of the Grapevine and soon began to appear in conference-approved literature and many other AA publications. The phraseology from the Big Book regarding an "honest" desire to stop drinking as the only requirement for membership was carried over into the original wording of the preamble. However at the 1958 General Service Conference a delegate asked about the words "honest desire" to stop drinking, suggesting that since the word "honest" does not appear in the Third Tradition it might be deleted from the preamble.

In discussion, most conference members felt that as AA had matured it had become almost impossible to determine what constituted an "honest" desire to stop drinking and also that some who might be interested in the program might be confused by that phrase.

Who is to determine what an honest desire is anyway. Thus, as a part of the evolution of AA the phrase had been dropped from common usage. The mid-summer meeting of the AA General Service Board ratified the deletion and since then the preamble has read simply the desire to start drinking.

At the same time the phrase "AA has no dues or fees" was clarified to read as it presently does, "there are no dues or fees for AA membership, we are self-supporting through our own contributions."

Pros

Over the years as the preamble caught on within the fellowship and with non-alcoholic friends of AA, it has been translated into many other languages. In addition the preamble has been used in television and radio public service announcements, has been adapted, subject to copyright approval, by many other twelve step fellowships as a concise definition of who and what they are. It has also been cited in many research papers, self-help books, master's thesis, and has appeared in the occasional doctoral dissertation.

What better place therefore to place the AA definition, i.e. what AA is and what it is not, then in the beginning pages of the basic text of our fellowship, where its origins are. Many potential members are

exposed to the Big Book before they ever attend the meeting. Many have such fear that they do not get the opportunity to hear the preamble read and learn the reason for AA and its purpose. By placing it in the beginning of the Big Book it may dispel some of those fears just enough to give newcomer courage to attend his or her first AA meeting. And when they get to their first meeting, and hear the preamble read, they would be assured that they are in the right place.

Cons

Two of the more well known non conference-approved preambles that some groups use are the Wilmington Preamble and the Texas Preamble, both of which date back to the 1940s. Very similar to each other and expanding upon the information contained in the official AA Preamble they are lengthier and may include some controversial statements. The Wilmington Preamble, for instance, states "I wish to remind you that whatever is said at this meeting expresses our own individual opinion as of today and as of up to this moment. We do not speak for AA as a whole and you are free to disagree as you see fit. In fact it is suggested that you pay no attention to anything, which might not be reconciled with what is in the AA Big Book."

Apparently there are those who use this as justification not to use the standard AA Preamble in meetings even though technically the AA Preamble can be reconciled with what can be found in the Big Book, since it was derived from information in the foreword to the first edition.

Tradition Four states, "Each group should be autonomous except in matters effecting other AA groups or AA as whole." They have the right to run their meetings as they choose.

What does your group think? Would adding the preamble to the Big Book change the Big Book?

TOPIC IV: POLICY & ADMISSIONS

A. Discuss request to change the deadline for the submission of Conference agenda items.

Background:

A GSR from Area 1, Alabama/Northwest Florida, writes:

- 1) The issues to be discussed at the General Service Conference are presently sent out and received by the Delegates in January/February. This does not adequately allow for distribution and discussion of the issues by Groups and Districts. The Areas are holding a conference during this period prior to the GSC. The Districts only hold one meeting per month. The Groups only hold one business meeting per month.
- 2) The background package itself does not invite participation. Our trusted servants at groups are overwhelmed and intimidated by its sheer size.
- 3) There is, and has been, a problem getting groups to participate at the Area level. This is a nationwide problem.

They suggest a November cutoff date will give the areas and districts sufficient time to distribute them to the groups and enable them to properly discuss them and to form an informed group conscience. It will allow for workshops to be held. It will enable the groups and individual AAs to feel a part of the decision-making process. It can bring non-participating groups back into AA as a whole.

Deadline for submitting GSC agenda items and

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distribution of background has evolved over the life of the Conference. Delegates have always received the background for the Conference committee on which they serve. In 1968 only questions of importance were sent to the delegate in advance. Oral presentation were given early in the Conference sessions, with discussion and voting to be taken at a later date during the Conference. In 1971 it was voted that the agenda for all Conference committees be mailed to all delegates before the Conference. In 1973 it was suggested that all delegates try to get suggestions for the 1974 agenda to the Conference secretary by November 15, 1973. In 1974 it was recommended agenda items be finalized for approval at the October Policy Committee and board meetings, so the November *Quarterly Report* will reflect this approval and allow for early assembly discussions. In 1992 the Conference recommended that Final Conference Committee agendas be automatically sent to all Conference members no later than March 15 each year.

In 1993, the General Service Conference recommended that:

In order for groups/districts/areas to fully participate in the Conference process, the following steps be taken:

- Conference agenda items be submitted as early as possible but no later than January 15 each year.
- Final Conference committee agendas be automatically sent to all Conference members by February 15 each year.
- Background material for each specific committee be sent to its members by February 15 each year, with other committees' background material available upon request.

Following the 1993 action, there was a gradual increase year-to-year in the number of requests for all background material, and delegates began to distribute background material more widely in their areas.

Currently, a list of preliminary agenda items is mailed to delegates with the Conference Communications Kit in early January. Committee agendas are finalized following the trustees' committee meetings during the General Service Board weekend at the end of January, and delegates are sent the background they have requested by February 15.

Pros and Cons

As you can tell from the chart, contained in *The Role of the GSR in the General Service Conference* article on page 4, there is not a whole lot of time to receive the topics, explain them to the GSRs and ask the GSRs to explain them to their groups. And then bring that group's conscience to the Mini Conference. The schedule is tight but seems to work in Area 44. How current would the topics be if they were cutoff last October 1st, four months prior? What does your group think?

B. Review report from the General Service Board regarding Concept V Appeal to the General Service Conference.

- a) [Literature Committee:] Consider a request to reconsider the 2010 Conference Advisory Action that "the trustees' Literature Committee develop literature which focuses on spirituality that

includes stories from atheists and agnostics who are successfully sober in Alcoholics Anonymous."

Background

The 2007 General Service Conference was a tumultuous one from various reports including the evaluations provided by the attendees. There were a number of floor actions on the last day of the Conference intended to reverse votes previously taken at the Conference and, in effect, serve the purpose of a minority appeal. This led a trustee's committee on the General Service Conference to establish a subcommittee to define a process for making Concept V Minority Appeals to the Conference. This subcommittee was charged with answering questions like:

- Who does the minority make the announcement to that there will be a minority appeal?
- What is the deadline for making such an appeal?
- Who makes the documentation from the minority report available at the Conference?
- To whom are the minority report and documentation given?

After work at both the 2008 and 2009 conferences, a recommendation was made last year at the 2010 Conference based on a report provided in the background materials dated October 26, 2009. Following a lengthy discussion and debate, a floor action was made to amend the report based on concerns expressed during the discussion. The amended report, dated January, 2011, was reviewed at the January trustee's sharing session and an agreement was reached to forward the report to the Conference Policy & Admission committee.

The report provides a comprehensive 9-step process for making a Concept V Minority appeal to the Conference (*see the background materials on this topic, given out at the Delegate's Preconference Reports, for the full report*). The report answers the questions above and several others posed to the subcommittee. The deadline for submitting such appeals is suggested as 30 days prior to the Conference but appeals will still be considered up to the Opening Session of the General Service Conference. However, appeals received less than 30 days prior run the risk of not being heard. The first step of the report cautions that it is hoped "that an individual entitled under Concept V to appeal would exhaust every avenue offered within the General Service Structure prior to making an appeal to the General Service Conference." In fact, such appeals are quite rare and have only occurred twice in the 57 year history of the Conference has this occurred, once in 1962 and again in 2007. The report defines "individuals entitled" to make these appeals as "members of staff, committees, corporate boards or trustees."

It should also be mentioned that the second part of the Mini-conference topic dealing with reconsidering the 2010 Conference Advisory Action by the trustee's Literature committee to develop an atheists/agnostic pamphlet is an example of an attempt to make a Concept V Minority appeal. This appeal came directly from a group and, with no process in place to handle such appeals, their appeal will be forwarded to the Conference.

Pros

Much time and attention has been given to developing a well thought out process. The process identifies the deadline for making these appeals, who can

make such appeals and how the documentation for the appeals should be handled. The process proposed also includes flexibility by allowing the Conference where a Minority Appeal is requested to determine how best to handle the appeal on a case-by-case basis. Having this process in place would avoid having individual groups submit Minority Appeals as occurred this year with the atheists/agnostics pamphlet.

Cons

The supporting documentation states that these appeals occur rarely. Indeed, only two such appeals have been made in 57 years! Is there a need to spend the time and effort on this issue when it occurs so infrequently. Also, the process only allows minority appeals to come from Trustees and Staff members with no mention of how a Delegate would make such an appeal, even though they constitute 71% of the attendees at a General Service Conference.

Should the report submitted by the Policy & Admissions committee be approved by the Conference as prepared or does additional work need to be done?

TOPIC V: PUBLIC INFORMATION

A. Consider approval of the General Service Board "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates."

Background

Stuart Smalley looking into the mirror on *SNL* saying "I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and doggone it people like me." pops to mind when thinking of a member of a 12-Step program depicted on television. Characters from other television shows and movies might enter into your thoughts too. When the AA General Service Board or the AA General Service Conference try to determine how AA is depicted in any type of visual media, which includes t.v., film, streaming video on the Internet or otherwise, the issue is limited to the content of AA approved video or public service announcements (PSAs).

Our AA General Service Board (GSB) upon recommendation from the General Service Conference (GSC) formed a subcommittee to consider a policy for visual media. At the end of January, this subcommittee met to discuss issues such as whether actors' faces should be shown and if it fits with AA tradition for actors to directly address audiences through the camera. Experience was drawn upon from current PSAs to discern the way actors should portray AA on screen. Traditions Eleven and Twelve were brought up for consideration in relation to PSAs, which are used for various audiences such as correctional facilities, employment/human resources professionals, health care professionals, etc. The Eleventh Tradition (short form) provides that: *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.* The Twelfth Tradition states that *anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.* Potential members were taken into account because any actor could in the future become a member of AA. Each video has a disclaimer stating that these are actors

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SPEAK OUT! This Day Newsletter provides this forum for individual AA's viewpoints and opinions. The opinions expressed here are individual opinions only and not necessarily the opinions of This Day, Area 44 or AA as a whole. We welcome your comments, opinions or viewpoints on anything found in this newsletter.

— The Editor

Generosity As a Measure of Gratitude

Our pamphlet Self-Support is sub-titled Where Money and Spirituality Mix. The title is an invitation to me to consider money from a spiritual perspective and to think of generosity as a spiritual quality.

Don't turn the page, reader! Stay with me. This is not an appeal for money. It is, rather, an appeal to consider that "root of all evil," money,

from a spiritual point of view rather than from a material point of view.

I have money in my pocket today only because I'm sober. I'm sober today only by the grace of a loving God. My finances, therefore, are an ancillary benefit of my sobriety. I can hold a job and make money today only because of the gift that I've been given. I can clothe, house and feed myself because of the gift of sobriety and I can also be as generous as I can be with the gift.

When I begin to think of things in this light, in this spiritual light, I begin to see that everything is a gift. It's all God's stuff. He gives me a little to use and, in gratitude, I use some of it to help others. I use my time, my energy, my talents and I give my money. The extent to which I use these things to help others is not a function of how well off I am. I am not a benefactor. I contribute what I can so that others may live, so that others may be given the same chance to recover as I was given.

Money becomes the vehicle of generosity and generosity is the mark of gratitude. Money is not something to be hoarded. It is to be shared. Sharing my gift is usually thought of as sharing my story at an AA meeting.

But it can also be thought of as sharing the benefits of sobriety.

Do we each need to take an inventory of how well we respond to the gifts we've been given? Do we keep those gifts to ourselves or do we share the gifts with others. Do we truly give what we can? Or do we self-centeredly and fearfully hold on to the gifts that have been given us? Do we truly believe that these gifts have been given us so that we may share them with others? Are we still thinking of money from a material perspective or can we see it from a spiritual perspective as something that enables me to live generously?

Do we need to engage our groups in a dialogue about how the group disposes of its excess funds? Does the group realize that self-support is the ideal? Is the group contributing to the achievement of the ideal?

We will be able to achieve the ideal of self-support if each of us and if each AA group strives to achieve the ideal through its own actions. Next time we throw a contribution into the basket, we should ask ourselves if that contribution is really representative of our gratitude for the gifts we've been given. *An anonymous and not-too-rich alcoholic*

Listen for the Similarities Not the Differences

I was given this suggestion right before my first ever meeting, and not only did it allow me to pay closer attention, but it also helped me to identify and come to see how I fit in. I relied on this and kept listening for the similarities during other meetings, and each time I did I found pieces of myself and my story come out of the mouths of others.

Besides identifying with others in this way, I also began identifying with the different stages of recovery. Each time someone shared their experience of using the steps to meet life on life's terms, I could begin relating my own journey of recovery and this gave me hope and the strength to keep going.

Like many of the lessons I've learned in recovery, I now apply this one in all areas of my life. Listening for the similarities in others experience at work, at home, and in all my relationships has increased my empathy not only for others, but also for myself.

Today, I'm quick to see how my experience and life journey is similar to others and this helps keep me connected, humble and happy.

Wisdom of the Rooms

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

rather than actual AA members.

The updated video titled *Hope* came to the attention of the GSB because some members thought that the video brought the traditions into opposition by having an actor addressing the camera as might be seen in a promotional video and this video was discussed by the subcommittee. Primarily, in past AA PSAs, actors were shown from an objective standpoint without addressing the camera directly visually or through the use of any lines: voice-over narration was used. Consideration was given by the subcommittee for background information about the prior committee's determination in January 2010 that because these PSAs are about drunks, rather than

actual A.A. members, full faces were shown. Although the title of the video in question was *Hope*, Step Twelve and depicting a character as carrying a message of hope was absent from the discussion by the subcommittee.

Solving the issue of traditions being brought into opposition, the subcommittee concluded that all video, showing actor's faces, should be given substantial unanimity, (2/3 majority), approval from the GSB and then the GSC. The trustees' Public Information Committee approved a new policy on January 29, 2011 and it was reviewed and approved by the GSB on January 31, 2011. In essence, the policy stipulates that within films produced by the GSB or its affiliates, an actor's full face may only be shown if the GSB determines unanimously that the

video is consistent with the AA tradition of attraction rather than promotion and that principles are placed before personalities. Existing videos using thespians to portray AA members or potential members may continue to be produced and distributed until retired from service. Videos with restricted distribution limited to AA groups may continue to be produced and distributed.

Individual AA members or groups are free to communicate comments to the GSC and GSB. What does your group think of the solution by the subcommittee for unanimity by the GSB and then the GSC for approval of future visual media? Do you or do your groups believe that other issues should be considered in the future? With more widespread access to visual media through the use of DVDs or other secure software files, should the approval process be expanded to include further AA membership approval before videos are distributed to the public in the future? Let your delegate know how your group feels about this topic at the Mini-Conference.

Policy on Actors Portraying AA Members or Potential AA Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates

Videos produced and distributed by the General Service Board or its affiliated corporations, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. and Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine, Inc., that include actors portraying AA members or potential AA members shall not show the actor's full face, unless:

- a) The General Service Board, by substantial unanimity, agrees that the proposed video is consistent with the AA tradition of attraction rather than promotion, and that such use of an actor or actors does not in fact or in appearance place personalities before principles, and
- b) The General Service Conference authorizes, by substantial unanimity, the production and distribution of such video.

For purposes of this Policy, a "video" is any item of visual media in which a live actor appears, regardless of the medium in which the video is presented (DVD, film, electronic file, etc.).

For purposes of this Policy, a "potential AA member" is a character in a video who is portrayed as seeking help from AA or who is portrayed as the recipient of Twelfth Step work in any form.

Existing videos using actors to portray AA members or potential members may continue to be produced and distributed until retired from service.

The videos "Markings on the Journey," and "Bill Discusses the Twelve Traditions," each of which is currently distributed only to AA groups, as well "Bill's Own Story," which also has restricted distribution, may continue to be produced and distributed.

A copy of this policy shall be given to all entities participating in the production of a video prior to commencement of production.

B. Consider revisions to "Understanding Anonymity" which include text on the topic of anonymity in the digital age and answers the question "What should I tell my loved ones about protecting the anonymity of the A.A. members they may meet?"

Background

Anonymity is one our most treasured spiritual principles. We have two traditions, Traditions 11 and 12, which provide guidance on how to apply this spiritual principle in our daily lives. The pamphlet, *Understanding Anonymity*, provides much of the

continued on page 12

The Clustering of District 15 and District 21

As the GSR for my home group, I was struggling to understand my role which I had held for about a year, and the responsibilities that came with it. As a member of District 21 I was only familiar with a handful of other GSRs in that District and the monthly meeting provided little information and was not well attended. Often times it was just myself and the DCM, sometimes, it was just myself. I knew something needed to change but I had no idea what options were available.

In the fall of 2008, a very active GSR in District 21 showed up to share with us at our District 21 Meeting the fact that she

had been attending a neighboring District's meetings because she too needed more information and direction. District 15 was a monthly meeting about 35 minutes away from mine. It was very well attended by GSRs and Standing Committee Members. Skeptical but willing, I decided to check it out and it changed my view of the GSR, DCM and District's roles immediately. They had a format and an agenda, they began and ended at the same time the 3rd Monday every month and, I could purchase literature there! Approximately 15 people were there the night I went. I walked away with more information, and more importantly, more inspiration, than I

could have ever imagined. Excited, I brought the information I had gathered back to my home group.

After attending this meeting several times and gathering more information every time I went, it was suggested that clustering might be the answer for my own District. Clustering could help District 21 gain strength through leadership, guidance, and attendance. If we clustered with District 15, all GSRs in District 21 could attend and bring information back to their groups. At any time, we could "de-cluster" which was important because every group is autonomous and District 21 did not want to lose their identity. With the help of the Area 44 Policy & Admissions Committee, District 15 and 21 clustered after a unanimous vote on April 19, 2009.

On June 15, 2009, District Elections were held. All positions were filled. The DCM was moving away and with that role open, I found myself raising my hand when Linda KK asked if anyone was interested in the DCM role for Clustered Districts 15/21. I don't know if I raised my hand, it just went up. After the vote was taken, I was named the new DCM for our newly clustered districts. Since then, our District has grown, not only in attendance, but in strength. Several GSRs from what were originally two separate Districts attend resulting in a monthly attendance at our District meeting of between 20-30 people. Every position has been filled continuously. We have held picnics, hosted pre-conference reports for our Section and plan on hosting a Day of Sharing and a GSR/DCM Workshop in 2011 and an Assembly in 2012. I am eternally grateful to that GSR that showed up that day at the District 21 meeting and even more grateful for the devoted GSRs that attend our District Meeting every month. It is a pleasure to serve AA, which gave my life back to me, and I cannot show enough gratitude for that. I hope to continually serve AA and the people in our fellowship because our primary purpose to help another alcoholic.

Yours in service, Bonnie P., DCM, District 15/21

District Service Meetings

- District 1&2** - 2nd Tuesday 7:30pm, Lafayette at the Sunrise House Cafeteria.
- District 3** - 3rd Friday 7:00 pm; Hillcrest Community Center, 1810 Macopin Road, West Milford
- District 4&6** - 3rd Thur. 7:30 pm, Upper Ridgewood Community Church, Hillcrest & Fairmount, Ridgewood
- District 5&7** - 2nd Thursday 7pm, St. Mary's Church corner of High and Legion, Closter
- District 8** - 2nd Tues. 7:30pm, Panther Valley Ecumenical Ch, Rt. 517, Allamuchy
- District 9** - 3rd Tues. 7:30 pm, Stanhope United Methodist Ch, Rte 183, Netcong
- District 10** - 2nd Tues. 7:30 pm, 1st Presbyterian Church, 513 Birch St, (corner of Church & Birch) Boonton
- District 11** - 4th Wed. 7:30 pm, Clifton Library, 292 Piaget Avenue Room A
- District 12** - 3rd Fri. 7pm, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 118 Chadwick (at Grange Road), Teaneck
- District 13** - 2nd Tue. 7:30 pm, Wesley Meth. Ch., 225 Washington Ave, Belleville
- District 14** - Last Tue. 7pm, St. Nicholas School Hall, 122 Ferry Street, Jersey City
- District 15/21** - 3rd Mon. 7:30 pm, Hunterdon Medical Center, Employee Cafeteria, Rt. 31 South, Flemington
- District 16** - 3rd Mon. 7:30pm Hillsdale Pres. Ch, Ridgedale Ave, Cedar Knolls
- District 17** - 3rd Fri. 8 pm, Alanan Assoc., 7th Avenue and 7th Street, Newark
- District 18** - 2nd Mon. 7:30 pm, Union Village United Methodist Ch, Mountain Ave. & Hillcrest Rd., Berkeley Heights
- District 19** - Last Mon. 7:30 pm, Friendship Hall, New Market Road, Piscataway
- District 20** - 2nd Tues 7:00pm, Trinity Episcopal, North & Forest Aves., Cranford
- District 22** - 3rd Wed. 7:30 pm, Cook College Extension Center, College Farm Road, New Brunswick
- District 23** - 2nd Thur. 7:30 pm, Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, 9 Jefferie Ave, South River
- District 24** - 3rd Mon. 8 pm, Trinity Episcopal Church, Ryers Lane, Matawan
- District 25** - Last Wed. 7:30 pm, Hope Lutheran Church, 21 Elton-Adelphia Road., Freehold
- District 26** - 3rd Thur. 7:30 pm, First Presbyterian Church (Tower Hill), 255 Harding Road, Red Bank
- District 27/29** - 3rd Mon. 7:30 pm, Holy Cross Luth. Ch, Hooper Ave, Toms River
- District 28** - 1st Tue. 7:30pm, St Margaret's Church, 3rd & Ludlow Avenue, Spring Lake
- District 30** - 4th Sunday 12 Noon, 69 Green Street, Newark
- District 31** - 2nd Thur. 6:30 pm, Immaculate Heart Of Mary Chapel, 77th Street & Broadway, North Bergen
- District 32** - 3rd Thur. 7:00 pm, Bayonne Library, 31st St. & Ave. C, Bayonne
- District 33** - Last Wed. 7:30 pm Faith Reform Ch. Washington & Prospect, Lodi
- District 34** - 3rd Sat. 9:30am, Our Lady of Sorrows, 217 Prospect St, (Lower Church) South Orange
- District 35** - 2nd Tue. 7:30 pm, Good Shepherd Lutheran. Church, North Richard Street and Union Avenue, in Somerville.
- District 36** - 3rd Fri. 7:30 pm, Trinity Episcopal Church, Trinity Lane, Woodbridge
- District 37** - 3rd Wed. 7:00 pm, First Lutheran Church 153 Park St (basement), Montclair
- District 38** - 3rd Thursday 7:30 pm, Presbyterian Church, 31 Fairfield Avenue, West Caldwell
- District 39** - 2nd Tues. 7pm, Trinity Epis. Church North & Forest Aves, Cranford
- District 40** - 4th Sunday 10:45am, St. Joseph's Center, 120 Division St, Elizabeth
- District 41** - First Thurs 7:00 pm, St. Matthew's Trinity Church, 8th & Washington Sts, Hoboken
- District 42** - 2nd & 4th Sunday 9:30am, 52 Throckmorton Street, Freehold

Garden State Young Peoples Conference Committee presents...

ESCAPE DISASTER TOGETHER

APRIL 15-17, 2011

Fairview Lake Conference Center, Stillwater, NJ

Registration Includes:

- All Meals + Lodging
- 3 Days 2 Nights of Continuous Meetings
- 2 Bonfire Meetings
- Saturday Night Dance
- Friday Night Ice cream Social
- Around the Clock Coffee/ Soft Drinks
- Recreational Activities
- Great Fellowship!!!

Conference Registration

Registration Price: \$ 150 - WE ACCEPT: Installment Payments/Deposit/Full Payment - Minimum amount of \$ 50 must be received before 4/1/2011 to reserve a spot. No refunds or checks accepted after 4/1/2011. Scholarships are available

Mail Registration and Checks to:
GSYP
P.O. BOX 10195
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

To learn more about GSYP, and Pre Conference Events visit:
www.gsyp.com

Questions, Comments, Scholarships?
Bill H: [REDACTED]
Ben C: [REDACTED]
Kerry M: [REDACTED]

Full Name: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____ Age: _____ Under 18 Parental Consent Required

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Special Diet Needs: _____

Anniversary Date: _____ Willing to Chair a Meeting: _____ Y _____ N _____ Topic Suggestions: _____

Who You Want to Room With: _____

T-Shirt Included with Registration!!
Sweat Shirts are \$ 15
Both will be available for sale at the Conference

Item	Size	\$
T-Shirt		
Sweat Shirt		
Donation		
Conference Payment (Payment Plan/Deposit/Paid in Full)		
Total Amount Enclosed		

To learn more about GSYP, The Annual Conference, and Pre Conference Events visit: www.gsyp.com

NNJGS Area 44 Office Calendar

MARCH

11-13	NERD	
13	AREA COM. MEETING	12 Noon
14	Luncheon Committee	7:00 PM
15	Archives Committee*	7:30 PM
15	Coop. w/Professional	8:00 PM
16	Convention Subcommittee	8:00 PM
17	Newsletter Committee	7:30 PM
19	Corrections Committee	10:00 AM
20	Garden State Young People	2:00 PM
21	Literature Sales	6:30 PM
21	Literature Committee	7:30 PM
26	GSR/DCM WORKSHOP	10:00 AM
28	Finance Committee	7:30 PM
31	Policy & Admissions	7:30 PM

APRIL

1	Translation Committee	7:30 PM
2	Grapevine Committee	10:00 AM
4	Remote Communities	7:30 PM
4	Mailing Committee	6:30 PM
5	Officers & Standing Com.	7:30 PM
7	Films Committee	7:30 PM
7	Joint Website Committee*	7:30 PM
9	MINI CONFERENCE, Wayne	9:00 AM
11	Convention Subcommittee	8:00 PM
11	Luncheon Committee	7:00 PM
12	Public Information	7:30 PM
13	Treatment Facilities Com	8:00 PM
15-17	GSPY CONFERENCE Stillwater, NJ	
17	GSPY in Piscataway	2:00 PM
18	Literature Sales	6:30 PM
18	Literature Committee	7:30 PM
19	Archives Committee*	7:30 PM
19	Coop. w/Professional	8:00 PM
20	Convention Committee	8:00 PM
21	Newsletter Committee	7:30 PM
25	Finance Committee	7:30 PM
28	Policy & Admissions	7:30 PM

MAY

1-7	GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE	
2	Mailing Committee	6:30 PM
2	Remote Communities	7:30 PM
3	Officers Meeting	7:30 PM
5	Films Committee	7:30 PM
5	Joint Website Committee	7:30 PM
5	Computer Committee	7:30 PM
6	Translation Committee	7:30 PM
7	Grapevine Committee	10:00 AM
9	Luncheon Committee	7:30 PM
9	Convention Subcommittee	8:00 PM
10	Public Information	7:30 PM
11	Treatment Facilities Com	8:00 PM
13	THIS DAY DEADLINE	5:00 PM
14	Corrections Committee	10:00 AM
15	AREA COM. MEETING	12 Noon
15	GSPY in Piscataway	2:00 PM
16	Literature Sales	6:30 PM
16	Literature Committee	7:30 PM

17	Archives Committee*	7:30 PM
17	Coop. w/Professional	8:00 PM
18	Convention Committee	8:00 PM
19	Newsletter Committee	7:30 PM
20-22	NER FORUM in Sturbridge, MA	
21	CORRECTIONS CONFERENCE	10:00 AM
23	Finance Committee	7:30 PM
24	Jt. Unity Meeting	7:30 PM
26	Policy & Admissions	7:30 PM

JUNE

2	Joint Website Committee*	7:30 PM
2	Films Committee	7:30 PM
3	Translation Committee	7:30 PM
4	Grapevine Committee	10:00 AM
6	Mailing Committee	6:30 PM
6	Remote Communities	7:30 PM
7	Officers & Standing Com.	7:30 PM
8	Treatment Facilities Com	8:00 PM
11	AREA ASSEMBLY S. Orange	9:00 AM
13	Luncheon Committee	7:30 PM
13	Convention Subcommittee	8:00 PM
14	Public Information	7:30 PM
15	Convention Committee	8:00 PM
16	Newsletter Committee	7:30 PM
19	Garden State Young People	2:00 PM
20	Literature Sales	6:30 PM
20	Literature Committee	7:30 PM
21	Archives Committee*	7:30 PM
21	Coop. w/Professional	8:00 PM

*Intergroup Office Morris Ave., Union

Intergroup Office Calendar

MARCH

3	Joint Website Committee*	7:30 PM
7	Delegates Meeting, Clark	8:30 PM
13	Bookers Exchange, Cranford	7:00 AM
15	History and Archives	7:30 PM
16	Nightwatch Committee	7:30 PM

APRIL

4	Delegates Meeting, Clark	8:30 PM
7	Joint Website Committee	7:30 PM
17	History and Archives	7:30 PM
24	(OFFICE CLOSED) Good Friday	

MAY

2	Delegates Meeting, Clark	8:30 PM
5	Joint Website Committee*	7:30 PM
18	Nightwatch Committee	7:30 PM
21	History and Archives	7:30 PM
21	(OFFICE CLOSED) President's Day	
24	Joint Unity Meeting*	7:30 PM
30	(OFFICE CLOSED) Memorial Day	

JUNE

2	Joint Website Committee	7:30 PM
6	Delegates Meeting, Clark	8:30 PM
12	Bookers Exchange, Cranford	7:00 AM
15	History and Archives	7:30 PM

*Area Office Plainfield Ave., S. Plainfield

Contributions are much needed, and always welcome! Make checks payable as indicated and always include your Area, District and Group ID number. Please send group and individual contributions to the addresses below:

NNJGS Area 44
2325 Plainfield Avenue Suite 2J
South Plainfield, NJ 07080
Make check payable to: NNJGS Area 44

Northern New Jersey Intergroup
2400 Morris Avenue, Suite 106
Union, NJ 07083-5705
Make check payable to:
Northern New Jersey Intergroup

General Service Office
PO Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Make check payable to: General Service Board

DISTRICT DOINGS

DISTRICT 39 event news update. We were proud to have assisted Districts 20 and 40 in hosting the area's January Assembly. Our GSR's have been terrific in talking up these events in our districts and because of the fantastic communication of our GSR's, we have seen more groups and members involved in area events. On February 13, 2011, the Mid-winter luncheon was held at the Forsgate Country Club in Monroe Township. The luncheon had a few hundred members and GSR's in attendance from area 44 and 45. District 39 has been without a DCM for several months and we are looking forward to being involved in other events coming up and look forward to seeing all of you this Spring! – *Love and Service, Tricia L. DCM*

DISTRICT 40, Elizabeth, along with Districts 20, and 39, held our 16th Annual Day Of Sharing on February 19th at St Joseph in Roselle. The GSRs

at our January 22nd meeting mentioned how much they enjoyed the January Assembly. They thought the workshops and the GSR presentations were excellent.

The new Bridgeway OSD group is doing well but needs support and speakers. It is on Thursday nights from 5-6pm at Bridgeway House Cafeteria 567 Morris Ave Elizabeth.

District 40 is also interested in starting up a women's meeting. Right now we are getting looking into the best day/time and possible locations. One may be Immaculate Conception or St John's. Possible format may be big book discussion or Step discussion right now we are asking for feed back from the women of Elizabeth.

We also are looking forward to the Delegate's Preconference Briefing, the GSRs were given the agenda topics to bring back to groups. – *Sincerely, Susanne M. DCM*

Come to AA at an Early Age?

We would like to know why. Don't forget to take our survey. Copies of our survey will be available at the Mini Conference in Wayne. You can always access the survey on our website www.nnjaa.org. Click on the "This Day" tab and answer the questions. Results are emailed directly to us. Deadline is May 13th. Survey results will be published in the Summer Issue of This Day and be available at the June 11th Assembly in South Orange.

SOBERFEST 2011 August 13th, 10am-6pm Reichler Park, South Brunswick



Highlights

- Speaker (12pm & 3pm)
 - Fun activities (kids & adults)
 - Great food ▪ 50/50
 - Price - \$6 per person food included
 - pay at door
- Spend a day in the park... Family, Friends, Fellowship, Food, Fun

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE MAY 13th NEWSLETTER@NNJAA.ORG

This newsletter is produced four times annually by the Newsletter Committee, a joint committee of Northern New Jersey General Service Area 44 and Northern New Jersey Intergroup.

NOTE: This Newsletter will be published on the Website. The first name and last initial of the author will be published unless otherwise requested.

Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to AA, as a whole, nor does the publication of any article imply an endorsement by either AA, General Services or Intergroup. Comments, questions and articles may be directed to the

Newsletter Committee at NNJGS Area 44, Suite 2J, 2325 Plainfield Ave. South Plainfield, NJ 07080 or e-mailed to: NEWSLETTER@NNJAA.ORG

DISTRICT 3

29th Annual Day of Sharing Saturday June 4th "AA's Future Begins with Us" at Hillcrest Community Center 1816 Macopin Road, West Milford
Still looking for volunteers for to help with: Program, Publicity, Hospitality, Food, Greeting, and Set-up/Clean-up. It's a great way to get involved and be a "part of."

For more info contact: District3@nnjaa.org



www.nnjaa.org/members
password: onedayatatime

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THIS DAY

Joint News of NNJGS Area 44
and Northern New Jersey Intergroup
2325 Plainfield Ave., Suite 2J
South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Spring 2011



NERAASA 2011, Tarrytown, NY. Attendees marked how far they traveled on a map of the North East Region

Mini-Conference

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

conventional wisdom on anonymity including a Question & Answer section divided between questions about personal anonymity and anonymity at the media level.

At the 2010 General Service Conference, two additional considerations were made: that a draft be developed on the topics of: 1). anonymity in the digital age and 2). that the question above concerning anonymity and loved ones be made for inclusion in the *Understanding Anonymity* pamphlet. The Trustee committee on Public Information (PI) met several times during the year, starting in August, to consider these topics. A report, dated January 29, 2011, was forwarded to the Public Information Conference committee to determine what action to take. Their report was included in the background materials but the exact textual changes will only be forwarded to the Delegates who are members of the PI Conference committee prior to the Conference.

The report, however, outlined the changes that would be made in the pamphlet and presented the rationale for making those changes. Some of the changes being made would include:

- Cleaning up phrases like "such as the Internet" and including other forms of Internet communication such as Social Networking sites, blogs and tweets
- Include language that suggests that AA members think about anonymity on the Web
- Give anonymity its own section in the Question and Answers section
- The new order of sections for the Questions would be: Anonymity in the Digital Age, Social Networking, Personal Anonymity and Anonymity at the Media level
- Provide consistent language throughout the pamphlet
- Include enhanced text on page 10 to provide additional guidance to the loved ones of alcoholics on protecting anonymity.

Pros

The background material states that "the insidious nature of the Internet is that anonymity can easily be violated." If you agree with that statement, then in reviewing the current version of this pamphlet, you will see that there is not enough information on anonymity in today's digital age. In the section of questions and answers on Anonymity at the media level:

- There is no mention of handling full-face photos on the Internet or

social networking sites like Facebook

- Question 3 mentions videotapes of talks and meetings but makes no mention of video on the Internet
- Question 4 discusses Web sites and online meeting but makes no mention of social networking sites, blogs or tweets.

The current pamphlet has been updated over the years to include both TV and the Internet. Keep in mind that when the traditions were written in the mid 40's, TV had just appeared on the scene. However, the pamphlet does not include sufficient language or provide enough advice and suggestions on how to deal with anonymity in today's digital age. Considering the "insidious nature" of the Internet, one might even suggest that these changes might not go far enough.

Cons

This pamphlet has been updated to deal with new media as they have arisen. The current pamphlet includes mention of the Internet in the first question on personal anonymity and there is an entire question in the section on anonymity at the media level on the topic. The prior modifications to the pamphlet are sufficient and we should ask whether we need to bear the cost of changing this pamphlet. In

addition, some of the proposed changes like adding entire new sections on anonymity in the digital age and social networking go too far in changing the pamphlet and, by including these sections first, we may lose sight of the fact that personal anonymity and anonymity at the media level are the key points to stress.

Should the draft changes to the *Understanding Anonymity* pamphlet be sent to the Conference for approval? Is there sufficient coverage of these topics in the current pamphlet?

*Yours in service,
the This Day Committee*

UNITY BREAKFAST

Please join us for breakfast & fellowship

Saturday, May 14

Knight's of Columbus, 140

Ledgewood Ave.

Route 46 East, Netcong

No Dues or Fees (for fun & for free)

8:00 am Doors Open

8:30 am Breakfast served

9:00 am Speakers Begin

Various Groups from up and down the East Coast to participate.

Participating groups will each give a brief talk on group unity