

The Lifeline



September 2018

24-Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 54 Issue 9

Step Nine: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

When I was just shy of my fifth AA birthday, I finally completed my Eighth Step, and I was very proud of the list I had compiled of the people I'd harmed and was willing to make amends to. I even carried a pocket notebook around with me so that as names from the past popped into mind I could jot them down. The list had dozens of names on it, and several "John Does" whose names I couldn't remember.

But as I looked over the list, I realized it was missing the name of one of the most important people in my life: my mother's. Why had I forgotten hers? Her name was left off because I didn't think I could make direct amends to her since she was in a hospital suffering from Alzheimer's disease, and it had been several years since she had recognized or talked to anybody. Since she wouldn't know who I was, I saw no use in trying to make amends to her.

Nothing I read in AA literature, however, told me that I could make amends only to people who could talk to me. In fact, the Ninth Step said I was to make "direct amends. . . whenever possible," and there was no valid reason why I couldn't make amends to my mother.

Although my mother didn't react to people, she was physically active and spent hours walking around the yard of the nursing home. She would walk in a straight line, with her hands held to her chest, until she met a fence or a tree and then she would make a sharp turn, and continue on until she met another obstacle.

During a visit to the nursing home, I joined her, putting my arm around her and walking with her as I made my amends. I told her that I was her youngest son, that I loved her and missed her, and that I was an alcoholic and had done many things I knew had hurt her.

I was crying by this time, but as we walked together I continued. I told her that I was sober and met with other alcoholics who helped me stay sober, and that one of the things I had to do was make amends to people I had harmed. And I told her I had to do more than just apologize to her for the harm I had done; I had to make changes. There was no reaction from my mother as we walked, but patients and staff certainly had odd looks for the crying, middle-aged man walking with his arm around a five-foot-tall woman who hadn't spoken to anyone for three years.

My mother was not reacting at all to what I had to say, but I continued with my amends. I would, I told her, try to make amends to her in two ways: first, I would continue to do what I had done for over four years to stay sober: go to meetings, pray, read the Big Book, and work with other alcoholics. . . and do it just a day at a time. Second, every day I would try to do something nice for somebody, without telling anyone what I had done. If I did tell someone about my good deed, then that deed wouldn't count as part of my amends. Maybe I would empty an ashtray or pick up a piece of litter or slow down on the freeway so a car could get into my lane. Whatever I did, it was to be spontaneous and dedicated to my mother.

As I finished telling my mother all of this, I felt something touch my back. I had been talking and crying and not paying much attention to anything except keeping pace with my mother and telling her my story, and I assumed someone was walking behind us without me knowing it. But when I turned around, no one was there. What I had felt was my mother's hand as she put her arm around my back and patted me.

Did she understand what I'd told her? I don't know. She never patted me again, or reacted to me or other visitors. I chose to believe, however, that through my mother my Higher Power had told me that I'd done the right thing, and that, as a gift, I was being left not with the memory of a mother who had lost contact with the world, but with the memory of a mother who could still show her love and forgiveness.

That was a gift I never would have received if I was still on the streets drinking.

- Dale C.

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St. Paul & Suburban Area Intergroup, Inc.
608 Seventh Street West - St. Paul, MN 55102

Web Site: www.aastpaul.org

E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org

Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday through Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to 1 PM

Tradition Nine: A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards and committees directly responsible to those they serve.

It's always fascinating to learn just how people came to Alcoholics Anonymous. In my case, I looked AA up in the phone book and called our local central office. Thank goodness, some service board or committee put it there! The person on the other end of the line took my number and had an AA member call me back for the one-on-one, language-of-the-heart introduction that began my incredible journey in sobriety.

At my very first AA meeting, I was warmly greeted and taken to the literature rack at the front of the meeting room. My greeter selected some of the pamphlets for me to take home. I could relate not only to the AA members but to the AA literature as well. Thank goodness, some service board or committee wrote, published, and distributed these pamphlets!

Although I only planned to attend one meeting a week, I went to more because I had a car and some other newcomers didn't. One would call and ask if I planned on going to a meeting that night and I'd say yes in spite of myself. So, I picked up a meeting list which helped us find meetings--where and when. Thank goodness some service board or committee gathered the information, printed and circulated this list!

Many of my AA friends--and yours too, I'm sure--found the Fellowship in a variety of ways, and not a few are due to some kind of service board or committee whose efforts facilitate our Twelfth Step work. Correctional, Treatment, and Hospitals and Institutions committees arrange for institutional meetings and bridge the gap between a facility and an individual AA or a group.

In some instances, a doctor or member of the clergy recommended AA to their patient or parishioner; Cooperation with the Professional Community committees most probably paved the way. Some AA members were exposed to a radio or TV program, not necessarily produced by AA but by someone who has benefited from the work of a Public Information committee. All these dedicated endeavors of service boards or committees make our Twelfth Step work possible.

The preliminary work done by AA service boards and committees directly responsible to those they serve (you and me) is invaluable to the future of the Fellowship. I might not be here today if they hadn't put Alcoholics Anonymous in the phone book!

- Lois C.

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"I've discovered I'm unique — just like everyone else!"



"My sponsor says I have to keep an open mind — but I think mine's closed for repairs."

(Clara T. Cartoons reprinted with permission, Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc.)

Thoughts From Your Board

It is a remarkable privilege to serve on the Intergroup Board! Being a chronic, low-bottom alcoholic and addict for most of my life, I never imagined myself being involved in "the solution" on this level! Alcoholics Anonymous has offered me many opportunities to learn, grow and change.

Fortunately, I have had many human guides on my journey who have encouraged me to reach beyond just showing up. A.A. has been good to me, so when folks within the Fellowship offer me suggestions, I try to follow them to the best of my ability.

It was suggested to me to volunteer for Intergroup and doing so has enriched my quality of sobriety. I spent a long time traveling the sad road of insanity to reach my personal rock-bottom, and I'm grateful today for the gift of willingness to spend my days traveling the Road of Happy Destiny. I am embracing the opportunity to serve on the Intergroup Board, and I recommend volunteering to any A.A.'s out there who want to elevate their personal recovery through giving back.

- Erik M. – Board Member-At-Large, 2018

Note From Your Office

Your office is excited to share with you that we now have our own Sobriety Birthday/ Anniversary Cards available for sale! Designed in-house, these can be bought "As Is," or with the Medallion of your choosing. Two templates are available: one with balloons and one with a cake (see images below).

The cards alone are \$3.00/each, tax included. Purchase the card with a standard bronze medallion for \$5.00, and save \$0.50. The same goes if you buy the card with one of our gift medallions for \$18.50; you'll also save \$0.50!



The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup, Incorporated. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition, or Concept, in addition to descriptions of personal experience. We also welcome cartoons and drawings expressing the wry side of our A.A. experience.

Please email your article to lifeline@aastpaul.org, or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 608 Seventh Street West, St. Paul MN 55102. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length, and content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc.

Saint Paul Intergroup's
2018 Annual
Ice Cream Social
&
Long-Timers Recognition

*Enjoy an Ice Cream Social and join in recognition
of those with more than a quarter century
of continuous sobriety!*

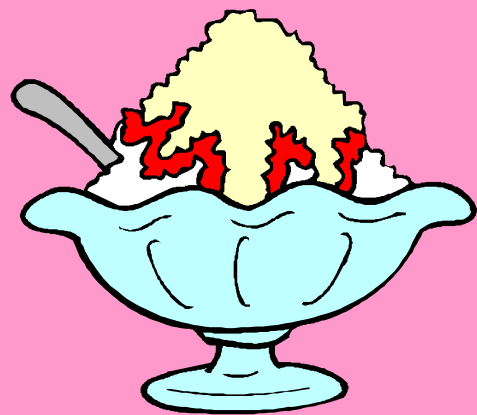
WHEN:

**Saturday, Sept. 22nd
1:00PM - 3:30PM**

WHERE:

**Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
285 North Dale St.
St. Paul, MN 55103**

Hear how they did it!



For More information, please contact St. Paul Intergroup: 651-227-5502



ASL interpretation available upon request. Please contact staff at Intergroup by Wednesday, August 15th to secure arrangements.

Announcements & Updates

HOOTS!

We are weathering the change in the phone system with only a few glitches. Please remember to call the Night Owl backup phone number if you experience any problems during your shift.

A reminder here for you all: when your group assigns a new Night Owl coordinator, please let us know who that new person is so that we can contact them with reminders when your group's shift is coming up.

ONLY Two Open shifts at this time:

1st Monday 10pm - 6am

2nd Sunday 2pm - 7pm

WANTED: One New Night Owl Committee volunteer

The Night Owl Committee members take turns carrying the back-up Phone for one week at a time. We help out if a volunteer has a problem and we also make the reminder calls.

Requirements:

- >1 year sobriety
- >Answer the back-up phone during your rotation
- >Experience with Night Owl
- >2 yr commitment

Thank you!

Frank N.
Night Owl Committee Coordinator

Night Owl Tidbit: Do you have an interesting Night Owl story you want to share? Send an e-mail to nightowl@aastpaul.org.

Group and Area News

Meeting to Resume: The WBL Redeemer group will resume meeting Thursdays at 7:30PM on September 6th, after a summer hiatus. The group meets at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, 3770 Bellaire Avenue, White Bear Lake, MN 55110. The group hosts a Closed, All-ages, Mixed, Big Book and Step meeting.

Meeting to Resume: The Wednesday AA group will resume meeting Wednesdays at 11:00AM on September 1st, after a summer hiatus, The group meets at the Church of the Risen Savior, 1501 County Road 42 East, Burnsville, MN 55306. The group hosts an Open, All-ages, Mixed, Step, Topic/Discussion meeting.

Please Let us know about any meeting changes, new meetings, or any meetings that are no longer. Please email: lifeline@aastpaul.org

Your News?

We invite you to share your AA news here!

Please send your items to:

lifeline@aastpaul.org

We look forward to hearing from you.



**Looking for a Service Opportunity?
Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl!**

Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:
Saturday, Sep 15th, Oct 20th, Nov 17th

Every Third Saturday from 10:00 -11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office

608 Seventh Street West - St. Paul, MN 55102

To RSVP please call: 651-227-5502



St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes, July 17th 7:30pm

1. Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.
2. Last month minutes reviewed, motioned Steve B. and seconded by John K, motion approved.
3. Treasurer's Report, C.J. M – Total Contributions: Currently stuck in the \$3k-\$4k range. Please encourage all groups to become involved at Intergroup through donation, volunteer, Night Owl, etc... Total Sales: Down - \$5,400 due to Gopher State Literature Sales last month. Operational Expenses: We should see a decrease in the operational expenses because of the phone system transfer.
4. Office Report, Bill S – New merchandise is available at the Intergroup Office - sobriety birthday cards, AA flyers, and pamphlets! Please stop by the office and check it out!! To improve communication between Intergroup and speaker volunteers – please give Intergroup your email address. *Please email lifeline@aastpaul.org for further information.*
5. Night Owl Report, Frank N – Phones have officially transferred. 2 N.O. Shifts Open. 1 N.O. Committee Position Open. *Please contact Frank N at NightOwl@aastpaul.org or leave a message at the Intergroup Office.*
6. Website Report, Sergey – Website is functioning well. GSO created a meeting app – we are considering linking Intergroup's data with the app. Just a reminder – please email flyers about upcoming AA events to the Webservants – this really helps AA members and Night Owl volunteers find special events during holidays. *Contact Jonathan & Sergey at webservant@aastpaul.org.*
7. Outreach Program, Carolyn M – There are 0 “MIA” meetings on the list. Please encourage all groups to elect an Intergroup Liaison to attend our monthly Intergroup Meeting and become involved. *Please contact Carolyn M at outreach@aastpaul.org.*
8. Update from the Board, Vance O. is our new Member @ Large and Justin D is our new Alt Treasurer. Our phone and internet service officially transferred over. 75% of volunteers showed up to the Night Owl Phone Training!!
9. Liaison Reports: District 8: Mike C – Report from Area 36 Delegate presented. District 15: N/A District 19: Dan R – N/A
10. Intergroup Events:
 - Recap: Open House and Night Owl Training were extremely successful!
 - Upcoming: St. Paul Intergroup – Ice Cream Social and Long Timers Recognition on Saturday, September 22nd from 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM (Incorrect time on flyers – please discard)
11. Old Business: Update on phone: transferred over and saving \$250 a month
12. New Business: Member at Large 1-year position – Vance O. elected
13. Group AA Announcements:
 - a. OMD Potluck, Sobriety Recognition, & Speaker meeting - 1st Friday @7:00 pm at 550 W 7th St., Saint Paul. Speaker: TBD
 - b. Maplewood Alano Potluck, Sobriety Recognition, & Speaker meeting - 3rd Saturday @6:30 pm at 1955 Prosperity Road.
 - c. Main Idea Sobriety Recognition: 2nd Friday: 7:30:9:00 pm located @ 499 Wacouta Street, St Paul.
14. Suggestions for next month's agenda: N/A
15. Grapevine Report, Julie K; Volunteer for August, Rachael P
16. Concept IV review, Frank N; Volunteer for Concept V for August, Lindsey D.
17. Mock Rep Report, Lindsey D.; Volunteer for August, Julie K
18. Closed with the Responsibility Statement .

Meetings Represented: District 8; Basic Text, St. Paul; Como Park Big Book, Roseville; Happy, Joyous & Free, Mahtomedi; Hole In The Doughnut, Roseville; Main Idea, St. Paul; Maplewood Groups, Maplewood; Pocketing Our Pride, St. Paul; Problems & Solutions, St. Paul; Roll of Nickels, Hudson, WI; Rule 62, St. Paul; Summit Hill, St. Paul; Third Edition, St. Paul; Uptown, St. Paul; West End, St. Paul; Women's Basic Text, St. Paul.

<u>2018 Steering Board:</u>		<u>Office Calls/Visitors—July 2018</u>	
Chair:	Lesli D.	Meeting information	75
Alternate Chair:	Rob C.	Inventory/hours/location	25
Secretary:	Carolyn M.	12th Step calls	8
Treasurer:	C.J. M.	Temporary sponsor	21
Alternate Treasurer:	Justin D.	Speaker request	31
Members-at-Large 2018:	Tom S. & Erik M.	Staff & Other Calls	118
Members-at-Large 2019	Brian L. & TBD	Total Calls	278
Advisor to the Board:	Jenni S.	Average Calls/Day	12.6
Manager:	Dennis B.	Total Visitors	223

September 2018 REPS' MEETING: Tuesday, September 18th @ 7:30 PM
 SAINT STANISLAUS CHURCH (Church Basement)
 398 West Superior Street; St. Paul, MN 55102

**7th Tradition
Suggestions for Groups**

“Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

50% St. Paul Intergroup
608 Seventh Street West
St. Paul, MN 55102

30% General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36
Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee

Ramsey County:
District 8, P.O. Box 131523
St. Paul, MN 55113

Dakota County:
District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:
District 15, P.O. Box 181
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SE Ramsey County:
District 26, P.O. Box 75980
St. Paul, MN 55175

JULY CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors	41
Total Group Contributions:	\$5378
Number of Faithful Fivers:	17
Total from Faithful Fivers:	\$1383



District Meetings

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
Fairview Community Center
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 108
Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St.
Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
Rosemount
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)
Grace Lutheran Church
1730 Old Hudson Rd.
St. Paul
2nd Sun., 7:00PM
www.district26-area36.org



**Thanks to all the Groups
that contributed in July**

- 11th Step Meditation
- A Baffled Lot
- Anoka Day By Day
- Apple Valley Daily Reflections
- Apple Valley Monday AM Women's Mtg.
- Children of Chaos Plus
- Como Park BB
- CRC Friends of Bill W.
- Element Group
- Forest Lake Alano
- Fourth Dimension
- Fresh Air Group
- Friday Night By The Book
- Gloria Dei AA
- Happy Hour Men's Meeting
- Highland Park Groups
- Hole in the Doughnut Group
- Hudson Alano Society
- Hugo Group
- Joy of Living Group
- Live and Let Live
- Midway Club
- OMD
- Pocketing Our Pride - Mpls
- Positively 4th Street
- Ringmaster's Group
- Rivertown BB Group-Hastings
- Roseville Wed Night
- Saturday Morning Treats
- Sisters of Serenity
- South Saint Paul 301 Club
- St. Croix Alano
- Stepsisters of Northfield Group
- Stillwater Morning Groups
- Summit Hill
- Third Tradition Northfield
- Una Luz en el Camino
- Unity Service & Recovery
- Uptown Club
- Valley Creek Monday
- Valley Creek Thurs Night

Thanks to all of the FANTASTIC Office Volunteers who helped in July

- Adam P., Angie R., Anne B., Barb M.,
- Chris H., Christian C., Chuck L.,
- Frank D., Jack L., Jimmy D.,
- Joe R., Marc B. Marc S.,
- Marcia H., Pam M., Patrick C.,
- Sara W., Steve R., Suzanne B.,

Thanks to our AWESOME Night Owls too!



The Blessing and the Curse of Rotation

In the July edition of *The Lifeline*, our West Central Region Trustee, Tom A., wrote about the principle of rotation. The spirit of rotation is a much-venerated principle stated plainly in the long-form of Tradition Nine – “Rotating leadership is the best.” A.A. practice has built rotation into most of our service structures. At the group level, many officers serve for one-year rotations. At the District and Area level, most positions are elected for two-year rotations, including the General Service Representatives (GSRs). This matches the two-year term of Area Delegates that make up most of our General Service Conference. Rotation is such a part of our A.A. life that we hardly question it. But rotation seems to be both a blessing and a curse.

Around 10 years ago, I was serving as an Area Treasurer in another Area within the West Central Region. As part of my duties, I was attending the West Central Regional A.A. Service Conference (WCRAASC) that was held in Lincoln, Nebraska that year. After the service conference, I took advantage of being close to Omaha and drove to see my sponsor who lived there. Over lunch with my sponsor and another of the men he sponsored, the two of them asked me what General Service Conference agenda items we had been discussing at the WCRAASC. When I told them, they both burst out laughing. I was surprised and confused and asked what was so funny. They explained that the two of them had served at the Area level in Nebraska more than 20 years earlier. What they found hilarious was that the agenda items I described to them were the same items they had debated over 20 years previously. It was as if A.A. was caught in a time warp. Did we debate the same issues every year or did we recycle them on some other schedule? In any case, my lunch-mates were not impressed with A.A.'s progress on this set of agenda items. They wondered out loud if this was the result of the curse of rotation.

The conventional wisdom that we ascribe to rotation is that it prevents any one A.A. member from getting too entrenched in a position. Given that whatever position the member holds will change within two years, there is less concern that an A.A. member's ego will become problematic. Two years is a short enough timeframe that our trusted servants hardly have time to establish a fiefdom in their service roles. Rotation is meant to reinforce humility.

The flip side of this arbitrary principle of rotation is that our service structures see constant turnover. With most officers and other elected trusted servants having no more than two years of experience in a particular role, there is no time for anyone to develop expertise. With unending churn among the trusted servants who make up our District Committees, Area Committees, and General Service Conference, it is easy to conclude that A.A. is ill-equipped to successfully face large, complex issues that might take many years to solve. Or A.A. will simply be doomed to repeat the same debates endlessly, recycling the same issues to the point of ridiculousness as my lunch mates had observed.

On the surface, the choice between humility and ineffectiveness looks like a bleak tradeoff. But what if we didn't see the trusted servants at each level of service as independent agents. What if it isn't up to our elected officers to carry the group conscience of A.A. on their own. What if each of us, as regular group members of A.A., has a responsibility to help inform and guide our elected trusted servants – no matter who they are – no matter how long they serve?

As Delegate for Area 36 Southern Minnesota, I have twice had the experience of attending the General Service Conference as our Area's contribution to the group conscience of A.A. Each time through the process leading up to the Conference, I have been grateful for and impressed by the enormous amount of time and care A.A. members in our Area have taken to become informed themselves, and then to inform me, where it concerned the many agenda items the Conference was considering. Instead of feeling burdened with having to solve all the great dilemmas facing A.A. on my own, I felt like I had the support of an entire Area full of A.A. members along with me.

(continued p. 2)

The Blessing and the Curse of Rotation (Con't).

But to get to that point, our Area had to spend a lot of time, effort, and money holding events and organizing discussions of the many agenda items I was going to face at the Conference. My role as a trusted servant was supported by a service structure designed to provide me with insight into the group conscience of our Area. I didn't have to rely on myself. And my participation in the group conscience at the Conference was not an individual act. By involving an entire Area, I was informed and supported by the collective experience of a multitude of A.A. members who are familiar with our Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. Because of the process we use in gathering input, I was able to hear from long-time A.A. members who had heard the same issues come up over and over. I benefitted from the experience of others in previous rotations, even though I have only served these two years in my role as Delegate.

Rotation in and of itself is not the problem. We can all help overcome the shortcomings of rotation by providing the continuity and connection between rotations. The spirit of rotation encourages humility among our trusted servants. Collectively, our responsibility is to stay engaged in the group conscience process and support those trusted servants by sharing our rich history and experience along the way. When we rotate out of a position, we leave the position, but we don't leave A.A. We don't abdicate our responsibility to support the next trusted servant in that same position.

This is the great responsibility of being an A.A. member – that it is on us to provide the continuity, history, and experience for each trusted servant who serves our group, District, or Area. We provide the connection between rotations. If we don't do our part, then our trusted servants have only their own individual experiences to draw on. If we each do our part, then we are much more likely as a Fellowship to make good decisions and to be able to tackle large, complex problems – because we will be bringing the wisdom and experience of many rotations to bear upon the issues at hand.

Thanks for all your service,
Curt K.
Panel 67 Delegate
Area 36 – Southern Minnesota
delegate@area36.org

AAWS - July 2018 - General Service Board

Definition of an alcoholic weekend: Start on Wednesday, end sometime on Monday.

That definition fits to a "T" the July Board weekend each year. Several factors converge on this quarterly meeting: 1) it is the first General Service Board (GSB) weekend after the General Service Conference (GSC); 2) it is the first General Service Board weekend for any new trustees, and hence, we add a day for orientation, which everyone attends; 3) We always have an AAWS Board meeting in conjunction with the GSB weekend. The details of the weekend will be provided by your delegate at your next area meeting. However, I will use this as an opportunity to share about it from a trustee's perspective.

I'll also preface the weekend's discussion with a couple comments from an experience the weekend prior to the General Service Board weekend. I was assigned (and relished) the task of the AAWS Director that was assigned to be at the Eastern Canada Forum. I am responsible to present on what AAWS, Inc. (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Incorporated) is in relation to AA. It is one of the two affiliate corporations of the General Service Board and for the most part is the General Service Office (GSO). The AA Grapevine is the other affiliate corporation.

(continued page 3)

AAWS - July 2018 - General Service Board (Con't).

The unique aspect of a forum in this area is that the majority of the AA groups and members in the geographical area where the forum was held was in the French-speaking area of Quebec. Translation services were available, which made the main presentations and discussions very manageable. Beyond that, though, was the experience of AA members cooperating and also using the "language of the heart" and these communications channels insured everyone received the AA message.

Wednesday of the Board weekend does not have any meetings, but background information for committees is delivered sometimes as late Wednesday. I'd suggest there's typically 250-400 pages of background for a typical AAWS/GSB Board weekend. Wednesday becomes a final prep and networking day. Thursday we have a meeting-before-the-meeting over coffee, and my AAWS Nominating Committee always kicks off AAWS at 8:30 at GSO.

The pace at which the GSO has addressed Conference Advisory Actions is amazing. We are already beginning to see drafts of literature changes for publications to process. The new book that came through the Archives Department on Bill's presentations at conferences is at its final editing stage, so very soon you will see notice that this book can be purchased. What a great historical item to have available to read.

Technology is a very-increasing vital aspect to carry our message. The web site is going through an entire redesign, and now an app is on the horizon. Per conference advisory action, the YouTube channel continues to have content added to it, and video versions of literature are constantly being scrutinized.

However, technology can't always be a solution. The Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS) is still in need of men to write to people in correctional facilities, and if everyone that reads this can help to find one more person to write – maybe yourself – the need can be addressed. There are several hundred across the U.S. that are waiting for the first letter.

Some AA members in the Twin Cities area reviewed three chapters of the upcoming ASL version of the book, Alcoholic Anonymous. I understand there was positive, interesting and enthusiastic feedback. This taking place in this calendar year did increase our translation costs, which overall is \$83,666 over budget.

Staff rotation does take place on September 1, 2018. A new list that will indicate the staff assignments as well as who the West Central Region's corresponding secretary is will be available soon.

Other expenses are higher, too, with office service and expense being \$72,801 over budget. With the GSC in New York this year, travel/meal/accommodations are \$281,805 higher than last year. Professional fees are \$112k higher than budget, partly due to the printer copy manuscript settlement.

Fortunately, contributions are still on a slight upward trend, both higher than budget and higher than last year, with \$3,816,472 being received for the first 6 months of the year. Literature sales revenue is up slightly, but book unit sales are down over last year. The net is that there is a \$140k loss year to date.

The 2020 International Convention in Detroit is getting a good deal of planning and attention. Site visits, meetings regarding security, having a vibrant host committee from the local AA's are some of the key issues that are being discussed. We discussed a souvenir item in my International

AAWS - July 2018 - General Service Board (Con't).

Conventions/Regional Forums committee, and something that has useful archival history is being planned.

I do hope everyone reading this is a Grapevine subscriber. The AAGV relies on the membership for subscription sales and purchases of its books and other media. Contributions are not an option; however, you can purchase a subscription for someone else, such as someone incarcerated, and that would also be a great support for AAGV. Also, don't forget the La Vina, for those that speak Spanish or may have a Hispanic AA population in their district. Consider subscribing and placing LaVina's in some key locations. The Grapevine is doing better than budgeted, but subscriptions continue to decrease. AAGV is embarking on a 3-year strategic plan, and the membership will be asked for feedback on how to best structure the Grapevine going forward.

There continues to be discussion on improving the GSC process, both agenda-wise and with regard to communications process between conferences. On a more personal note, I did ask the Conference Committee on Trustees for any information to bring to the July Board meeting, and I will be speaking with the chair and alternate chair about what took place at the GSB weekend.

An array of items in the CPC and Treatment/Accessibilities committee are in the works. One item that didn't move forward was a Remote Communities Workbook. However, a kit is being considered. LinkedIn, enhancing the "Members of the Clergy Asks about AA" is getting updated, accessibilities literature has minor edits taking place, and the deaf and hard-of-hearing needs continue to be discussed.

In addition, the committee requested that the staff secretary:

- Request shared experience from A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing regarding the types of technology used for participation in A.A.
- Request shared experience from groups about the ways they are lowering access barriers in carrying the message to A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing.
- Send a request to AA Grapevine to develop a book including shared experience from A.A. members who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing and are overcoming access barriers.

Here's something that was quite surprising: a change in correctional facilities moving from no-electronic-devices and requiring hard copy literature to eliminating hard copy literature and having tablets for inmates. A whole cottage industry has popped up providing these devices, and now people want our literature on it.

This is a quick summary of some unique items from a busy weekend. If there is an interest in a particular item or are wondering about something I didn't mention, do not hesitate to contact me or your delegate and we'll find answers. You'll also be receiving your GSC Final Conference reports about the time this goes to press. It is taking a bit longer to print due to reports being printed in their unabridged form, so it is about 25% larger than previous years.

Thank you for having the opportunity to be your servant.

Tom A.

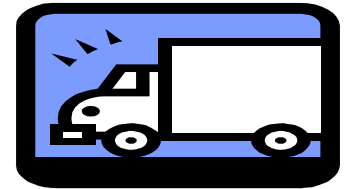
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