
AREA 69 NEWSLETTER

Fall Elections Assembly 2010

Our Area was blessed to be well represented this year at the International Convention in San Antonio, the District 12 Foro, and the Regional Forum. Since most of us were unable to attend all, or perhaps any of these events, this issue is being dedicated to presentations given by our Area trusted servants at these functions. I'm sure you'll agree they each did a terrific job and I hope you enjoy learning about them and about our program at the same time as much as I did!!!

We're first going to hear from our current Alternate Delegate, Renae H., who gave a presentation at the 2010 International regarding:

The Warranties: Maturity in the fellowship

I need to tell ya'all that the day I received the invitation in the mail to participate on a panel at the 75th International Convention, my heart was beating with such excitement along with a little bit of disbelief that I would actually be presented with such an honor. Just about as fast as the excitement came on with the news, it was just as quickly replaced with a ton of fear and insecurity! It's a wild ride to feel those two emotions within a 60 second period! So---here I am today---heart just a pounding, stomach squirming, knees quivering, and still trying to look "hip, slick, and cool"!

"The Warranties: Maturity in the Fellowship" Webster's defines "maturity" as, n) 1: The quality or state of being mature; ESP: Full development. Webster's also defines "mature" as, 1: Based on slow careful consideration. 2: Having attained a final or desired state. 3: Of or relating to a condition of full development.

In the final paragraph of the invitation letter it states: "Ever mindful of A.A.'s Primary Purpose we ask all speakers as they weave the selected topic into their talk, to focus on their experience, strength and hope as it relates to their recovery in A.A. from alcoholism." I was talking to a Past Delegate from our Area about this topic, commenting how this topic was going to be a bit of a challenge to tie this all together with my story. Then I asked him what his assigned topic was---He cheerfully stated that he was able to complete his talk---weaving it into an equally challenging topic for him. His reply went something like this; "Oh yes Renae, that may be a little difficult...but try weaving your story in with the topic "We Agnostic's"!

I have a sponsor who said to me some years ago after I had shared with her my struggle in sharing my story in front of others, mostly the "What it was like" part (my experience part). The "What happened" (strength part), and "What it is like now" (the hope part) were much easier to talk about. I felt that I spent most of the time allotted to speak on the "hell" side of it...what it was like...because that WAS my story,

after all. She made a statement that was so clear that it has resonated within me ever since. She told me that my story didn't really begin until I got sober and came into A.A.---the "What Happened and what it is like now" part.

Now I know that pretty much all of us come into A.A. with basically the "same story---different details". "What it was like": I began sniffing model car glue out of a brown paper lunch bag that I had stolen out my brothers' room at age 11; then, stealing diet pills and diuretics off the drug store shelves trying to fix my low self esteem and image. My mom used to say to me things like "you eat like a piggy." And things such as, I was "getting too fat", and that I needed to "suck in my tummy" and "stand up straight, and put my shoulders back". When I was young, these comments seemed criticizing and mean to me. (In hindsight, I know that my mom was only trying to teach me about healthy eating and good posture!) My first drink was at age 12. After that first drink, the gates were wide open and I was off to the races for the next 24 years.

"What happened": Black despair, spiritual de-gutting, physiological deterioration evidenced by massive bloating, jaundice, and hallucinations hearing voices coming out of my floor vents and spending, what seemed like hours, with my ear to the floor trying to make out what those voices were saying about me; and near the very end, finding myself flat on the floor unexpectedly due to apparent neurological temporary paralysis in my legs. Lastly, came the "family intervention" and a 30 day stay at a treatment facility at age 36. My husband and older children were under the impression that once "mom" was separated from the alcohol, that everything would go back to normal and "all would be well in Zion!"

"What it is like now": (The hope part---my favorite!) Little did I know when I was handed my \$8,000.00 dollar plus Big Book of Alcoholic's Anonymous (that's what my treatment cost in 1997), that it contained the recipe for true happiness---a design for living a life free from alcohol. Initially my attention was directed to the 12 Steps of recovery (the restoration of my sanity part) where about the first four or five years of my sobriety was lived, and where I first became acquainted with "service in general" and the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous (the part where I learn how to "play well with others---both inside and outside of A.A.!"). My first service position was as a group secretary serving a two year term, after which I got involved as a volunteer carrying the A.A. message through meetings into the Utah State Prison. I became active in District service at six years sober. It wasn't until then that I learned of the A.A. Service Manual Combined with the Twelve Concepts for World Service, where in lies the very heartbeat of my recovery program today. Hence, this is where my story merges with the topic of this panel.

The Warranties are first introduced in the "Conference Charter" found in Appendix A, page S92 of the A.A. Service Manual, and in appendix B, page S97 titled "A Resolution" offered by Bill W. and adopted at the 20th Anniversary Convention of A.A. in 1955 which authorizes the General Service Conference to act for Alcoholics Anonymous and to become the successor to its founders. This was voted by acclimation by the 1955 Convention, and later, by formal resolution and vote by the Conference.

I reference this information hoping that I have not offended anyone's intelligence or knowledge of the A.A. Service structure. My intent here is to give simple direction to where anyone could read and learn more about the Warranties and how the 12 Traditions and Concepts have seen A.A. through many difficult times, and how they continue to guide our fellowship through challenging situations over and over again. The A.A. Service Manual is the sum total of where the foundation, bricks and mortar are laid-

--the tools that are given to build this fellowship; guides to preserve and continue to grow for generations yet to come upon our steps and pass through our doors into this life restoring program we know today as Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Warranties, and there are six of them, are further discussed at length. in Concept 12 of the A.A. Service Manual combined with the Twelve Concepts for World Services, page 62, authored by Bill W. and adopted by the 12th Annual General Service Conference of A.A. on April 26th, 1962. The Warranties have often been described as “The A.A. Bill of Rights” because they are seen as “an expression of deep and loving respect for the spiritual liberties of their fellows (page 68).

Now, how does all this relate to Renae and her personal recovery...or anyone else’s for that matter? When I first came into the A.A. meeting rooms still wet behind the ears and ever so green...I was welcomed by bright-eyed and cheerful members who came in before me, and members who came before them, and so on back it goes. How could I possibly know back then, that many of those who had preceded me had labored so tirelessly to anvil out a plan of action that if followed, I might just have a chance of staying alive, and possibly have an opportunity to grow and mature into the woman, wife, mother, sister, daughter, and friend that I have become today?

*1) In the beginning, I was very angry and I wanted to lash out at anyone who would try to impose any type of perceived authority or direction over me. I was in charge and in control of myself...the master of my universe.

*2) I was envious of those whom I perceived as having financial wealth and power...that money would bring me happiness and freedom, if I could only get enough of it.

*3) I wanted to be treated better than my peers since I thought I was different from them and therefore entitled to special consideration and respect.

*4) I wanted my voice to be heard, after all, I knew everyone would want to hear every morsel of wisdom that I had to give, just roll off my tongue, and that they would see that my ideas and attitudes were obviously the best!

*5) I was extremely critical of everyone around me...if I had to do this “A.A. thing” and behave as a “member in good standing”, then by God, everyone else should have to too! That any deviations and/or infractions of the “rules” should be immediately reported to someone in authority and corrective measures and penalties be handed down swiftly!

*6) I hadn’t a clue who those “Big-wigs” back East were that were making policy and bossing the rest of us around---but they were so far away from me and my world, so I thought in early recovery, that quite frankly, I didn’t care what “they” did and how “they” conducted “their” business because it probably wouldn’t EVER have any direct affect on me or my personal recovery anyway.

12 Years later, here I am today in recovery---standing before you feeling bright-eyed and cheerful, full of life...living to the best of my ability, a program of recovery and action that has been laid out through our Three Legacies: Unity, Recovery, and Service.

I feel so impassioned and inspired every time I read the A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service, wherein lie the nuts and bolts, or fruits, if you will, of our co-founders labor (the mature part---Webster's 2: Having attained a final or desired state. 3: Of or relating to a condition of full development.), and the scope of our ability to continue to grow and "mature" within this wonderful Fellowship. The Warranties ensure the same to those yet to come.

These are the "capital T" truths of the Warranties in action for me today:

*1) There are Many Trusted Servants in A.A. working hard, most without pay (Tradition 8, some "special workers"), responsible to carry out the many needed services of A.A.'s Primary Purpose (Tradition 5). No one is in authority over another. I can rely and trust upon a Higher Power flowing through and having a hand in all of these affairs.

*2) That my material needs seem to be fewer and much less than what they once were---that to give my dollars and contribution of time to the future assurance that I may stay sober another day, are out of gratitude and love for what I have been "so freely given"; that my lineage, and yours, will have a place to come into called Alcoholics Anonymous; these are of much greater spiritual value and benefit than what all the money in the world could buy me today..

*3) That I and my peers are cut out of the same cloth---none better than the other.

*4) That I do have a voice in A.A. and I am guaranteed the "Right of Participation", (Concept 3..that all our voices shall be heard and given great consideration)---particularly at my Home Group level where the most important voice of all is expressed through its' group conscience, which ultimately funnels down the up-side-down triangle of service to the Conference and then to the General Service Board of Trustees who are committed to and charged with the responsibility to enact and carryout the needs of the Fellowship as expressed and directed through the final Conference Actions.

*5) I have been taught how to be patient, kind, and tolerant of myself and others knowing that if I fail to follow these simple spiritual principles, I am placing myself in a very vulnerable, belly-up position for my disease to go in for the kill... blindsiding me with the inevitable "bellying-up to the bar" and the ensuing pain affecting not only myself, but the pain and injury I may inflict upon many others.

*6) That there are many, many people in this program giving of their time and effort to ensure that we can all be touched in our personal struggle with alcoholism and personal recovery whether through the receiving of that first 12th Step call, or the receiving of that precious "Big Book" titled "Alcoholics Anonymous"; that meeting that offered us a hot cup of coffee and a broad welcoming bright-eyed smile; the A.A. pamphlets and A.A. published literature of experience, strength and hope, giving us that first sliver and glimmer of hope that maybe, just maybe, this "A.A. thing" could offer us a chance at a new way of life, too.

In conclusion, I'd like to share the last short paragraphs of Concept 12, Warranty #6, page, 74 of the "A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service":

"Therefore, we expect that our Conference will always try to act in the spirit of mutual respect and love---one member for another. In turn this sign signifies that mutual trust should prevail; that no action ought to taken in anger, haste, or recklessness; that care will be observed to respect and protect all minorities;

That no action should ever be personally punitive; that whenever possible, important actions will be taken in substantial unanimity; that our Conference ever be prudently on guard against tyrannies great or small, whether these be found in the majority or in the minority.

The sum of these several attitudes and practices is, in our view, the very essence of democracy---in action and spirit. Freedom under God to grow in his likeness and image will ever be the quest of Alcoholics Anonymous. May our General Service Conference be always seen as a chief symbol of this cherished liberty. To a man, we of A.A. believe that our freedom to serve is truly the freedom by which we live---the freedom of which we have our being.”

Next we'll hear from our Assembly/Agenda Chairperson, Keith M., discussing Self Support and the 7th Tradition.

My name is Keith M. and I am an alcoholic. My Home Group is the Moab Group. Down in Moab we currently have nine meetings per week and a monthly Home Group Business Meeting. In addition to these regularly scheduled meetings we have a few cleaning parties throughout the year, a founders day picnic, at least one holiday party, and we have scheduled a group inventory for October with Monte as the moderator. Self-Support usually suggests money, buck in the basket, etc.; however, I believe it is much more than that, self-support is an extremely spiritual principle. My first act of self-support was also my first service job in AA. After about 2 or 3 weeks attending the Moab Home group meetings, I was standing next to a wall fidgeting badly after the meeting was over. You see if I had a conversation with *you people*, then you would *know me* and you would ask me to leave and forget about that idea of “keep coming back”; I had been behaving badly for a long time. Well, back to that very nervous boy by the wall inching towards the door. I nearly tripped over an overflowing trash can. I asked a nice man “who empties the trash cans around here?” The shepherd (who later became my first sponsor) answered “you do and it looks like now would be a good time to start.” I was off! There are actually four trash cans in Old Triangle House and they all were emptied after every meeting for a long time. I would watch people during the meeting making deposits, which meant I would have an AA service job after the meeting. Trash man. Emptying trash lead to my second job coffee maker, first for a small meeting, then on to the big pot, brewing time one hour, which involved responsibility, a building key and showing up on time. No coffee! A good Home Group will go bad with no coffee! What group of sane rational people would trust the town drunk with a key to their safe place, their home base, their house where miracles are talked about openly? They did and I made coffee, at first, counting the scoops one finger at a time. These early service jobs are aspects of self-support and maybe more important than a buck in the basket.

The short form of the Seventh Tradition reads; “*Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*” As usual this tradition was written and ratified after the principle was well established within the Fellowship. In the beginning, more than one of the founders would have had no problem taking a few thousand dollars from the wealthy Rockefeller’s of their time, maybe even a few hundred thousand. Just think of the drunks we could save with a half million dollars! But no, the Fellowship received more than a few rejections from the large donors in those early years. The founders had a very good understanding of our primary purpose. The early program, and our

program of recovery today, is based on the simple principle of one drunk sharing with another. The Fellowship as a whole understood no amount of money could have paid for 12 step work or the continued sponsorship of new members. Some of these relationships last a lifetime and involve hundreds of thousands of hours. With misgivings, and a few hard feelings, Bill, Bob, and the other old timers accepted that A.A. needed to be poor. We needed to pay our own way. Goodness knows that for the majority of our lives we were not self-supporting. The fellowship needed just enough for expenses plus a prudent reserve. The idea became the AA financial principle then and now. It seems to me to be more of a spiritual principle rather than a financial principle. Most major organizations do not strive for corporate poverty.

A few statistics from GSO suggests the fellowship spends about \$7.00 per member per year and the average member contributes about \$5.00 per year. Personally, I am way ahead, I put \$2.00 or more in the hat per meeting and some days I go to more than one meeting. With an average of two to three meetings per week, that's about two to three hundred dollars per year. I always was an overachiever. Wait a minute, this is the money I give to my home group, not directly to GSO. If we consider the donation of my home group to GSO, which is about twenty dollars per month, or 30 cents per member, we are statistically about 4.00 per member per year, well below the national average; so maybe I am not an overachiever. Facts are facts and statistics are real - we are a cheap lot. I have observed during my recovery incredible acts of kindness and generosity one to one in the fellowship. Members traveling thousands of miles for 12 step calls, giving hundreds of hours of personal time, and then letting the basket go by, without a thought or misgiving. Back to the cost per member and the donations; if we are spending \$7.00 per member and only getting \$5.00, where does the short fall come from? Book sales, the Big Book has saved our collective bacon on many levels from the beginning. Literature sales contribute about \$2.00 per member per year to Services. If we as a whole could donate a little bit more, the cost of our Big Book could go down, maybe the Big Book could be free for all newcomers; however, I am not sure that's a good idea. Newcomers need to be self-supporting, too. The ever escalating price of the Big Book is very alarming. A few years ago, the difference between a \$4.50 book and a \$9.00 book meant that I was not going to have that \$9.00 book.

I think we have been putting a buck or two in the basket for at least 18 years; inflation is real, although I personally do not understand it; however, 3, 4, or 5 bucks may be necessary for your home group to function. A past delegate from the great state of Alaska helped me with a dilemma a few years ago. I was traveling a lot, only attending a few meetings per month at my home group. My monthly donation had dropped from \$25.00 per month to maybe \$6.00 per month, and the group balance sheet noticed. Self support means carrying my own weight. If I wanted a healthy home group, I needed to donate as if I was attending as usual so that the meeting would be there when I needed the meeting. I donate \$30.00 a month, every month, no matter how many meetings I attend.

One last story, my home group meets at a small recovery clubhouse, not an Alano Club, but somewhat similar. The club was built by members of the local Moab Fellowship back in the Uranium Boom of the late 1950's/ early 1960's. It is a very pleasant wood frame structure with blue-green aluminum siding, two interior rooms, including a small kitchen and a couple of restrooms. The 1500 square foot area can accommodate 70-80 members and a dozen al-anon in the smaller room. A few years ago it was noticed that 50 years of drunks having 7 to 12 meetings per week had taken a toll on the appearance of the Old Triangle House. Annual maintenance had kept the place functioning; but, it was

starting to look a little shabby. My home group business meeting suggested to the separate non-profit building board that a face lift might be in order. The building board got excited with a few thousand dollars in the capital improvement fund and came up with a lot of good ideas, including but not limited to new carpet and paint inside and out. The Old AA clubhouse is now a desert tan with Big Book Blue shutters. There was also a batch of new plants to improve the landscaping. The building board, having started off with years of accumulated funds and an adequate prudent reserve, soon ran out of money. With the building funds low, the building board members decided to raise the rent on those AA meetings. Now, of course, all the building board members attend those AA meetings. Only AA's can create an us and them situation all by ourselves. The majority of these building board members were local business types and were aware that rent of this type of structure in the downtown tourist area of Moab was about \$5000.00 per month. The increase from \$65.00 per month to \$160.00 was a very reasonable idea. The problem was that the AA group was struggling to make it at \$65.00. After a couple of years the group's prudent reserve was nearly depleted. The Moab Group had not donated to the Area or GSO for at least a year and half and there was no travel budget for the GSR. Why things have to go to an extreme before we notice is an enigma; it happened in our personal lives and it happens in our recovery. The Moab group still held regular meetings, newcomers were still getting sober or not. Old timers were still 12 stepping the new folk, Big Book Study groups were still reading the Big Book; however, group services were suffering - or not happening at all. We as a group had sponsored a local jail meeting for more than 15 years; but, this simply stopped. We had a beautiful meeting house; but, our house was not in order. The GSR resigned, we had collectively lost our primary purpose. During the monthly home group business meetings it was discussed that we needed more money. We needed to be part of AA as a whole. We needed to donate something to GSO and Area each month, the amount of the donation is not as important as becoming part of AA as a whole. After a multi-month campaign of communication about the need for funds, I can now report a \$20.00 monthly donation to both Area, and GSO and \$50.00 set aside each month for GSR travel defrayment. After only 8 months of explaining the spiritual need for more money, the Moab Group now has \$1700.00 over the \$500.00 prudent. Maybe too much money? Self support for my home group seems to be a balancing act; moving from too much money and lots of building improvement plans, to not enough money for simple group services. It's all about communicating the spiritual needs of our local fellowship. I would like to end with the long form of the Seventh Tradition;

"The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority."

After the International Convention held in July, our own linguistic district, District 12, held their annual Foro in Park City, and our Area Chairperson, Charlie G., gave the following presentation regarding the history of A.A.:

I am so grateful that district 12 has grown and flourished into a vital part of our Area history. Carlos has asked me to share a little bit here today on the History of A.A., and how it has grown so strong into a worldwide fellowship. I can only share with you what has been written before I came into this fellowship & hopefully a little bit of the Utah history since I joined A.A. on July 26th 1988.

Our History began even before there was Alcoholics Anonymous: ever since early man learned how to crush grapes there was alcohol around but for Alcoholics with the craving of the mind and an allergy of the body this became a fatal combination. There were two earlier fellowships that would help us learn and contribute to our society as we know it today.

Early on, one group of people formed to help alcoholics, the Washingtonians held their first public meeting Nov 19 1840. Growth of that movement was extremely rapid. Widespread and enthusiastic support came from thousands of existing temperance societies. This was due to the great success the Washingtonians had in mobilizing public attention on temperance by relaying their "experience sharing" of alcoholic debauchery followed by glorious accounts of personal reformation. One of the movement's leaders noted, "There is a prevalent impression, that none but reformed drunkards are admitted as members of the Washingtonian Society. This is a mistake. Any man may become a member by signing the pledge, and continue so by adhering to it."

The origins of Alcoholics Anonymous can also be traced to the Oxford Group, a religious movement popular in the United States and Europe in the early 20th century. Members of the Oxford Group practiced a formula of self-improvement by performing self-inventory, admitting wrongs, making amends, using prayer and meditation, and carrying the message to others.

In the early 1930s, a well-to-do Vermonter, Rowland H., visited the noted Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung, for help with his alcoholism. Jung determined that Rowland's case was medically hopeless, and that he could only find relief through a vital spiritual experience. Jung directed him to the Oxford Group. Rowland later introduced fellow Vermonter Edwin ("Ebby") T. to the group, and the two men along with several others were finally able to keep from drinking by practicing the Oxford Group principles.

One of Ebby's schoolmate friends from Vermont, and a drinking buddy, was Bill W.. Ebby sought out his old friend at his home at 182 Clinton Street in Brooklyn, New York, to carry the message of hope.

Bill W. had been a golden boy on Wall Street, enjoying success and power as a stock speculator but his promising career had been ruined by continuous and chronic alcoholism. Now, approaching 39 years of age, he was learning that his problem was hopeless, progressive, and irreversible. He had sought medical treatment at Towns Hospital in Manhattan, but he was still drinking.

Bill was, at first, unconvinced by Ebby's story of transformation and the claims of the Oxford Group. But in December 1934, after again landing in Towns hospital for treatment, Bill underwent a powerful spiritual experience unlike any he had ever known. His depression and despair were lifted, and he felt free and at peace. Bill stopped drinking, and worked the rest of his life to bring that freedom and peace to other alcoholics. The roots of Alcoholics Anonymous were planted. Here are some of the major Mile stones that tell the story of how A.A. formed & how it has grown into the world respected and strong fellowship it is today.

First known meetings in Mexico: Americans Lester F. and Pauline D. organize a group for Mexico City's English-speaking community. Meanwhile, a Mexican resident of Cleveland, Ricardo P., translates portions of the Big Book into Spanish. The importation of Spanish-language alcoholism-related publications and the creation of Spanish-speaking A.A. groups is approved at a late-summer conference of Mexico's Board of Public Information.

Nicaragua's inaugural group: In the fall of 1953, Grupo de A.A. La Merced is founded in León by Jack M., who took up residence in Nicaragua in 1950, and then joined A.A. while on a brief visit to the United States Groups in the capital city of Managua and other Nicaraguan population centers will start meeting a decade later, facilitated by the Alcoholic Foundation.

A.A. in Argentina: In the early 1950s, Hector G. of Buenos Aires is rescued from alcoholism after reading Alcoholics Anonymous and seeking the aid of a physician. He writes to the Alcoholic Foundation, which sends him A.A. literature in Spanish and asks permission to list him as a contact for referrals. Hector founds Argentina's first known group, and in 1955 will report that its members are relishing their newfound sobriety.

Mr. Eddie of El Salvador: Edward F., who has carried the Fellowship's message to several alcoholics in Boston and San Francisco, moves to San Salvador with his Salvadoran wife. After initially finding it hard to arouse interest in A.A., a friend of his wife introduces Edward to her alcoholic uncle, Don A., and the two men form a group that meets at the home of Atilio, a wealthy alcoholic. As membership grows, meetings are moved to the Garcia Flamenco school building. "Mr. Eddie," as he becomes known, will later help start groups in other Central American countries.

First meetings in Madrid: A Mrs. Garcia of New York informs G.S.O. New York of the wish of Dr. E. Pelaz, a psychiatrist at a Madrid sanitarium, to launch an A.A. group. The G.S.O. sends Pelaz pamphlets and the name of its Madrid contact, American Ray C. Ray and fellow alcoholic Dan C. begin holding English-language meetings in June 1955. By the end of the year membership has increased fourfold and a Spanish-American group is meeting at Pelaz's sanitarium. Before long, the Spaniards form a separate group, which quickly attracts more members and spurs the formation of A.A. groups countrywide.

Guatemala's first known A.A. group begins meeting in January 1960, through the efforts of Miguel Angel R. and Paulino G. The seed had been planted four years before by Reinaldo G., a friend of Miguel's who had joined A.A. in San Francisco before returning home to Guatemala. An Intergroup office will open three years later.

Growth of Spanish-speaking groups: As of 1969, 1,500 Spanish-speaking groups are listed at the G.S.O. in New York. A full-time Spanish Services staff position at G.S.O. New York is created in 1984. The assigned staff member helps handle all correspondence in Spanish, translates pamphlets and bulletins, develops new service materials, and performs other services as needed. A drawing was sent to the G.S.O. Spanish Service Desk by Berny, a Costa Rican member of A.A. "Hello!," it reads. "My name is The Happy Tico, I'm an alcoholic."

In 1986 Delegates from 25 countries with an A.A. service structure or office gather in Guatemala City, Guatemala, for the Ninth World Service Meeting (WSM). The meeting marked the fourth time the WSM

has been held outside of New York, and the second in Latin America. Previous WSM hosts were England, Finland, and Mexico.

In a textbook example of country-to-country sponsorship, Mexico succeeds in getting Cuba's first group going in February 1993: Grupo Sueño (Dream Group), in Havana. The year before, Cubans *Ciro V.* and *Juan A.* had asked government officials for permission to provide information about A.A. - in their words, "a program without nationalities, a political agenda, or financial interests" - but without success. Once A.A. Mexico informs the Cuban government of the particulars of A.A.'s program of recovery, the government changes its mind and welcomes the Fellowship. By the end of 2004, some 200 groups will have become active in Cuba. The arrival of A.A. in the country is celebrated every January.

Se publica *La Viña*. A Spanish-language edition of *The Grapevine* arrived in the summer of 1996. In this new bimonthly magazine *La Viña*, articles translated from *The Grapevine* share space with original material written in Spanish. *La Viña* is distributed in North America, Latin America, and Spain, and in recent years is welcomed by Spanish-speaking A. A.'s worldwide.

La Viña celebrates its 10th anniversary, flash forward to 2006. The magazine *La Viña*, A.A.'s "meeting in print" for Spanish-speaking alcoholics, was first published in 1996. *La Viña* celebrated its tenth anniversary in June 2006, the initial circulation of 6,000 had grown to nearly 10,000.

In 2008 A new, third edition of the Spanish Big Book - *Alcohólicos Anonimios* - was published by A.A. World Services. This third edition includes 32 new recovery stories, three stories translated from the first edition English-language Big Book, and 12 stories carried over from the previous Spanish edition.

A.A. members and guests from around the world celebrated A.A.'s 75th year in San Antonio, Texas, with the theme "A Vision for You." Marathon meetings begin at midnight on Thursday, July 1, and ran around the clock until Sunday morning, when the closing meeting took place in the Alamo-dome.

The 30 Millionth Big Book was presented to the AMA.

We also have a Utah History, recorded in *Our Book "One to One"* published by our archivist and this FORO as well as the formation of District 12 will be a part of the next history book we publish.

Hope for the future: Hopefully we will have a Delegate from District 12 someday serve A.A, worldwide as Area 69 Delegate. One of you attending here today could be a Delegate. It was been an honor to be asked to share a brief bit of history with you here today, Thanks to Carlos and all those fine people who made the Foro possible this weekend. Just keep coming back & you will all have a history here in Alcoholics Anonymous.

(sources used AA.org website time-line , A.A. comes of Age, and A.A.Grapevine digital Archives).

Following the District Foro was our Pacific Regional Forum in Torrance, California. I always love hearing someone's impressions from the first (insert any general service function name here) that they attend. This is a report from our Area Treasurer, *Pete G.*, on his first Regional Forum:

The Pacific Regional Forum was held in Torrence, Ca. on Aug 26 thru 28. This is my first Forum and my first Forum report. I was very impressed by the atmosphere and spirituality of the event.

The 2nd Tradition provides us the principal of the group conscience and also reminds us that our leaders are but trusted servants. Our Third Legacy provides AA with the dedicated servants we need at the District and Area levels. What about our General Service Office? What manner of trusted servant do we have serving the groups at GSO?

Truly we have the best possible servants doing their best to aid the groups in any way possible. The event was opened by our own Rod B., Pacific Regional Trustee. What a neat thing that is! The purpose of holding Forums every two years is to increase communication and cooperation between the Areas and GSO.

The first Panel included Ward Ewing, Class A Trustee and Chairman of the Board. He was accompanied by Terry Bedient, Class A Trustee and the Finances guy. A great explanation of the Conference was given and about the 135 voting members that comprise the Conference. Ward brought down the house as he spoke of his dealings in AA.

Terry Bedient explained how he was first exposed to AA as a Lieutenant in the Army assigned to a drug treatment unit. Was intrigued by our Traditions, and I suspect he still is. He has enormous CPC background. He mentioned that among the Class A (amateur) Trustees "Rule 62" has no meaning to them. They are not alcoholic, so they cannot grasp that concept.

My favorite sayings from Terry's opener were 'Anonymity Protects AA from Alcoholics'. Another saying was 'the Process is more important than the Outcome'. Finally, the reminder that Corporate Poverty is the basis for which we will always remain humble and attentive to the groups. Phyllis, our General Manager, provided another excellent saying in that "PRAASA is the equivalent to a college education in General Service".

Mary D., Staff Member, provided an excellent rundown of the General Service Office in New York. It is about 36,000 square feet and the building was built and is owned by the Rockefeller Foundation. It contains our Archives. We were treated to the video "Markings on the Journey", which is our Archives video.

My focus was centered on three things at the Forum. First was finance and any information that I could gather on contributions, expenses, financial statements and expectations. Second was Remote Members and how others are reaching out to those who are geographically or culturally inhibited to getting help. As long as Area 69 has 86,000 square miles, I suspect this will always be a topic of my interest. Third was The AA Grapevine.

The Grapevine was something which was a constant topic of discussion throughout the entire Forum. On Saturday, Alvin Zezula, AA Grapevine Director (non-trustee) spoke about the role of the Grapevine in AA's service structure. As you already know, the Grapevine started publication in 1944. It was interesting to find that in 1944, a copy of the Grapevine was sent to every know member serving in the armed forces.

The LaVina started publication in 1995 and neither of these important magazines receives contributions from either GSO or the members. In 1991, the Grapevine was requested to provide one Spanish article per month.

Which brings up the topic of financials. The Grapevine has lost money for the previous three years. In 1946 the cost of the Grapevine for a year was \$2.50, that is equal to \$27.00 in 2010 money – which is the cost of a subscription today. The recent increase in the cost of a subscription went primarily to offset the increased cost of mailing.

Losses for the magazines come out of the reserve fund, last year it was over \$250K. There is a deliberate budget deficit this year in order to cover web site improvements. In the Pacific Region last year, subscriptions were down from 17485 to 16090. That is over 1300 fewer subscriptions in just one years' time.

We can easily reverse this trend. Do you have a subscription to the Grapevine? Do you encourage your sponsees to get a subscription? Your group can order subscriptions to use as meeting topics, corrections work, treatment work, public information and for subscriptions to the library or for Doctor's offices. There are so many ways in which to help out in this situation.

I requested and have since received a complete copy of the Grapevine financials. They are available to anyone who wishes to see and use this information to support the Grapevine in your group or District.

There is also a way to contribute to the Grapevine, through articles. The Grapevine welcomes any articles pertaining to recovery. For more information on this, please see Lauana H., our Area Grapevine chairperson. This applies to GSO financials also.

Financially speaking, the new online contributions section of the AA website is reported to have steadily increasing use. Please encourage your group treasurer to use this feature and let all members know there is an online contribution now available.

Our 2010 revenue is/was down 26% over 2009 revenue. Literature sales were down 21% from a year ago but one should remember that in July 2009, there was a substantial price increase and many members, groups and Districts placed orders ahead of the increase. Also, purchases from non-members stands at 14%, down from 30% for the same period last year.

Well folks, that's it, the third and final Area 69 Newsletter written by your Panel 57 Immediate Past Delegate. I find it amusing and ironic that this particular task fell to me, because as past Newsletter Editors will attest, I have not been the best at submitting articles unless specifically directed. A little Higher Power humor at my expense? I think so!! ☺ Regardless, thank you for giving me this additional opportunity to be of service to the Utah Area.

Before ending, I would specifically like to issue an apology to District 12. Earlier this year I was given our first ever PRAASA report by District 12, which was to go in either the Post Conference or Fall Assembly Newsletter. I am embarrassed to say I forgot it at Post Conference and now, while it was in my hands quite recently, when putting this Newsletter together, I was unable to locate it. I'm sure it will jump out at me as soon as I get home from the weekend, and when it does, I will pass it on to your new Newsletter Editor for inclusion in a future Newsletter. I am SO deeply sorry, District 12!!

I would also like to say **THANK YOU** to everyone who has submitted something for the Newsletter this past year. There are some items that I have not been able to fit in, but please rest assured they will be passed on and your new editor will be very grateful!

And now we come to the end of our regularly scheduled Newsletter. However, you will notice that we have not come to the end of our pages!! Our *General Service Office*, and the *Grapevine* (and *La Vina*, for that matter) are in existence to be of service to us, the fellowship as a whole. At this time, we are being asked as a fellowship to provide input regarding the *Grapevine*, and regarding electronic delivery of *A.A.* literature. Would you please take the time to complete the following surveys and return them as requested as soon as possible? The more input we can get, the better they will be able to serve us, so please feel free to make copies to distribute at your home group, district, and/or to any and all of your friends and acquaintances in *Alcoholics Anonymous*. On behalf of *GSO* and the *Grapevine*, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude for your participation!!

GRAPEVINE SURVEY

Inspired by the 2010 Grapevine Conference Committee

1) What is the value of the Grapevine magazine to you? _____

2) How do you use the Grapevine magazine? _____

3) What would you like to change about the Grapevine magazine?

4) What do you think the purpose of the Grapevine magazine should be?

5) Please answer one of the following questions about the Grapevine magazine:

a) If you currently have a print subscription: If the GV offers digital delivery (eg, e-mail) in addition to the print version, will you opt out of the print version? Yes_____ NO_____

OR

b) If you currently do not have a print subscription: If the GV offers digital delivery (eg, e-mail) in addition to the print version, will you begin subscribing? Yes_____ NO_____

--If Yes, and the digital and print are a bundled subscription, would you opt out of the print version? Yes_____ NO_____

6) Important questions about you:

a) How old are you? _____

b) How long have you been sober? _____years

c) Are you a GSR? Yes_____ NO_____

d) What district are you in (if known): _____

7) Do you currently subscribe to the Grapevine Magazine? Yes_____ NO_____

8) If you do not currently subscribe, have you previously? Yes_____ NO_____ If yes:

a) How long ago? _____years

b) Why did you discontinue your subscription? (check all that apply)

___ Content

___ Price increase

___ No longer read magazines

___ No longer use or benefit from

___ Other:_____

9) If you do not currently subscribe to the Grapevine Magazine, what would need to change for you to subscribe?

- Content
- Format (digital)
- Price reduction (willing to sacrifice color, pages)
- Nothing, will not subscribe
- Other: _____

10) If you checked "content" as a reason you do not subscribe or as an area you would like to see change, please elaborate...what specific changes would you like to see?:

11) Do you think it is important for the Grapevine Magazine to continue?: Yes _____
NO _____

12) In reference to pricing: (the Grapevine currently operates in a deficit, with shortfalls being covered by General Service Board approved withdrawals from the Reserve Fund).

a) Do you think the Grapevine Magazine should be priced so that the Grapevine is self-supporting? Yes _____ NO _____ DON'T KNOW _____

b) Do you think the Grapevine Magazine should remain priced lower than the cost of production, and that the Grapevine Board and General Service Board should generate plans to subsidize operations to bring to the fellowship for consideration? Yes _____
NO _____ DON'T KNOW _____

Responses are to be submitted to your delegate no later than November 1, 2010. These will be compiled and forwarded to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board by year end, and will be included as background material for the 2011 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine.

Please mail to:

Monte S. Area 69

138 S. Eccles Ave.

Ogden, Utah 84404-4015

A.A. MEMBERS

electronic delivery...

Tell Us What You Think

The U.S. and Canada A.A. General Service office needs your input to help determine how best to serve those interested in accessing A.A. literature or information electronically.

1. Are you interested in reading A.A. literature on your mobile device or computer?
Yes_ No ___ Maybe ___ Don't know ___

If yes/maybe, which devices would you use?

E-Reader ___ Smart-phone/Mobile Device___

Computer/Desktop/Laptop/Net-book ___ Other (*please specify*)

-
2. Which A.A. book would you want available electronically?

-
3. Which A.A. pamphlet would you want available electronically?

-
4. What other services or information do you want your G.S.O. to provide electronically?

AREA # 69

AREA NAME: UTAH

*** PLEASE DO NOT SEND THIS FORM IN TO G.S.O. ***

e-mail completed form back to: erdaaa@yahoo.com or ebiz1@epsltd1.net or mail to: Charlie G., P. O. Box 261, Clearfield, UT 84089 or Pete G., P. O. Box 40, Washington, UT 84780 You may also request the form be e-mailed to you to facilitate e-mailing back.