

Delegates Report Pre-Conference Assembly Area 69 Utah
March 29, 2014
Park City, Utah

“Communicating Our Legacies – Vital in a Changing World”

Hello my name is Walter and I am an alcoholic. You have given me the privilege and the honor to serve as your Delegate for Area 69 Utah, Panel 63. Thank you for this great honor of representing Area 69 Utah at the 64th General Service Conference.

Since we last met in Salina, I have visited several districts. Because of a scheduling conflict, I was not able to go to District 6. I would like to thank the Alternate Delegate (Doug R) for going to District 6 for me.

The distribution of the Agenda Items was completed this year via our area website. The Area 69 members [District Committee Members (DCMs), Area Officers, Standing Chairs, General Service Representatives (GSRs), and past Delegates] were given the location of the Agenda Items on the area website and the password to open the background material for the Agenda Items. The DCMs were tasked to answer any questions on the Agenda Items or pass on the background information for the Agenda Items.

This method of distributing the Agenda Items is new to the Area and to me. I hope to get feedback throughout the day as to whether this is effective or not. My wish and hope is to get input and guidance from the Past Delegates.

When visiting the districts, I talked about where the Agenda items came from and the vital role that the Groups play in the discussion of the Agenda Items. In other words, communicating through the General Service Structure. I summarized how to communicate through the structure using my own words, however, the service manual does a great job of explaining it. The following is from the Service Manual on Page S17:

Keeping a balance between ultimate authority and responsibility and the active, day-to-day functioning of world services means there must be constant communication among all elements of the structure.

THE GROUP: The communication process starts with the group, which lets its group conscience – for or against change, approval of a proposed action – be known to its elected general service representative (G.S.R.). The G.S.R. makes sure the group's wishes are heard and fully considered at the district and area levels, and that they are part of the delegate's thinking at the Conference. After each annual Conference, the G.S.R. is responsible for making sure that group members are informed about what went on at the Conference and made aware of the full range of Advisory Actions.

THE DISTRICT: Groups are organized into districts, collections of groups located near one another. The G.S.R.s of these groups select district committee members (D.C.M.s), who become part of the area committee.

THE AREA: The U.S./Canada Conference is divided into 93 areas, made up of a state or province, part of a state or province, or in some cases parts of more than one state or province. At the area assembly, a delegate is elected to represent the area at the annual Conference meeting.

THE CONFERENCE AND THE DELEGATE: At the annual Conference meeting, matters of importance to the Fellowship as a whole are first considered and discussed by one of the standing Conference committees, then brought to the full Conference in the form of committee recommendations. All Conference members then have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the recommendation before they are voted on. Committee recommendations that are approved become Conference Advisory Actions.

After the Conference, the delegate reports back to the area, working through D.C.M.s and group G.S.R.s. At the same time, any Conference Advisory Actions that were referred to the trustees are sent to either the appropriate trustees' committee, G.S.O., or the A.A. Grapevine for implementation.

Membership in the Conference consists of area delegates, trustees, directors of A.A. World Services and the Grapevine, and A.A. staff members of the General Service Office and the Grapevine. Traditionally, area delegates make up at least-two thirds of the Conference body.

THE TRUSTEES: The General Service Board is made up of 21 Trustees. It meets quarterly, and its actions are reported to the Fellowship through quarterly reports and also in the Final Conference Report. The board's two operating corporations, A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc., report in the same way. A.A.W.S. is the corporation that employs G.S.O. personnel, directs G.S.O. services, and is responsible for book and pamphlet publishing. The Grapevine corporate board employs the magazine's editorial and business staffs and publishes A.A.'s monthly magazine and related materials.

One of the questions that were asked while I was attending district meetings was what are the origins of the Agenda Items? Here is an explanation from the Service Manual on Page S55:

The final agenda for any Conference consists of items suggested by individual A.A. members, groups, delegates, trustees, area assemblies, area committee members, and directors and staff members of A.A.W.S. and the Grapevine. The Conference considers matters of policy for A.A. as a whole, and there are tried-and-true procedures for placing an item on the agenda in the most effective way – or, when the suggestion does not concern overall policy, for routing it to the most appropriate part of the service structure.

If a G.S.R. has an idea for an agenda item, chances are that he or she will want to discuss it first with the group, then at a district or area meeting, which can then forward it to the staff member at G.S.O. currently serving as Conference coordinator. An A.A. who is not part of the general service structure can give the idea to the group's G.S.R. or write directly to the Conference coordinator.

Whatever its origin, any agenda item follows the same path to the Conference agenda: The A.A. staff studies it in the light of previous Conference actions, then passes it on to the trustees' Conference Committee or the appropriate Conference committee. Usually, the

trustees' committee determines the most appropriate way of programming it – as a workshop or presentation subject, a proposal, or a committee concern.

I know this is a lot to take in, so please feel free to ask questions when you do not understand what is going on. I would encourage you to go to your DCM with any questions. However, any Area 69 committee member, Delegate or past Delegate can answer your questions. But you need to ask.

Now for some definitions:

Vote (Majority): Usually formal expression of opinion or will in response to a proposed decision; *especially:* one given as an indication of approval or disapproval of a proposal, motion, or candidate for office.

Sense of the meeting: General agreement reached by an assembled group; "no vote was taken, but after each discussion the chair summed up the sense of the meeting"

My goal in comparing vote and sense of the meeting is to eliminate any confusion about what we are doing today. However, some may still be confused, so please ask questions at any point where you do not understand what is being done or why we are doing it.

As you know, *it is the delegate's responsibility to serve the US/Canada Conference as a whole* (Service Manual, Page S48). Also, the "right of decision" is given to the delegate in Concept III (Service Manual, Page 11). So what does this all mean? This means that I will get the opinion (sense of the meeting) of Area 69 on the Agenda Items today and I will take this information with me to the General Service Conference. I will add the voice of Area 69 to all the other voices at the General Service Conference and vote for what is best for AA as a whole (Right of Decision, Concept III).

When discussing the Agenda Items, I would like to hear both sides fully before taking a sense of the meeting. In other words, if you have an opinion or information that has not been brought to the attention of the Pre-Conference Assembly please go to the mic and share.

Now, news from GSO; the following is from the A.A. World Services (A.A.W.S.) Board that met on 14 March 2014:

Celebrating the Big Book's 75th year – The General Service Office is developing communication pieces to be distributed within the Fellowship and the media; preparing displays and presentations, and a planning a special celebration at the General Service Conference.

Archives – The spring 2014 edition of the Archives newsletter, *Markings* was recently released to subscribers. Formerly sub-titled, "Your Archives Interchange," the spring edition is the first to carry the publication's new sub-title, "Your Archives eNewsletter."

Services – A.A.W.S. approved adding disclaimer language about links to external Web sites to the print versions of *Box 4-5-9* and *Markings*, going forward and to the anchor Web pages on www.aa.org for each newsletter in the Web site redesign.

Publishing

Sales – For the two months ended February 28, 2014, total gross sales were reported at \$2,114,739.

75th Anniversary Commemorative Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous – By the end of the preorder deadline of February 28, we received preorders for more than 100,000 units of the special edition Big Book. Preorders will start shipping on or about April 1, 2014, and our warehouses have been instructed to distribute all pre-orders by April 15, 2014.

Digital Publishing Program – The digital publishing program has added new titles and seen steady sales. Currently, the Big Book and Twelve & Twelve (in English and French) are published on Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Apple iTunes stores, with the Big Book in Spanish to follow.

Finance

A.A.W.S. approved the transfer of \$2,651,267.03 to the General Fund to cover the 2013 General Fund deficit for 2013.

The unaudited financial report for the one month ended January 31, 2014 reflected:

Net sales	\$1,013,307
Gross Profit (Literature)\$	646,329
Contributions	\$ 682,442
Total operating expenses	\$1,125,366

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