

Delegates Report Fall Workshop Area 69
November 2, 2013
Bountiful, Utah

I would like to thank District 1 for hosting this Workshop and I would like to thank all of you for this wonderful opportunity to be your Delegate. I have learned so much, yet there still more to learn. I am looking forward to the workshop topics this weekend. For me, I find my best teachers are you. I spoke with the Pacific Regional Trustee (Rod B.) yesterday; and he regrets that he will not be here this weekend because he is attending Board Weekend at GSO. What this also means is that the A.A.W.S. Highlights are old news, but I felt they are the latest that we have and should be passed on.

News from GSO (A.A.W.S. Highlights)

Most of the G.S.O. staff rotated into their new assignments on July 15, 2013.

Publishing

Total gross sales for the first six months, through June 2013 are \$6,484,189 which is \$45,331 over estimate for the period and behind last year's gross sales for this same period by \$9,300.

The Board priced the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Edition of the first edition, first printing of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (to be published April 2014) at \$12.00.

As a result of continual and increasing requests from inmates for a large print format of the abridged Big Book, the Board approved developing the concept of a large print version of the existing soft cover abridged edition *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Finance

For the first six months of 2013, contributions from A.A. groups and members of \$3,200,000 were \$28,579 over budget. Gross profit on literature sales of \$4,023,055 was \$165,501 over budget. Total expenses of \$7,636,443 were \$35,078 over budget. Net loss totaled \$412,817 compared with a six month budgeted loss of \$571,718.

Other

An overview of a report on the 2020 International Convention from Gregg Talley, International Conventions consultant, was shared at the A.A.W.S. Board meeting. In this report from the April, 2013 joint meeting of the trustees' and Conference Committees on International Conventions/Regional Forums, Gregg assured the committees - based on an earlier site visit to Detroit - that a vital re-growth is taking place within the inner city, and that financial and safety concerns were not a factor in the areas the International Convention will be using. More recent information confirmed the findings of this report.

Several outside organizations have proposed to the U.S. Post Office that a commemorative stamp featuring a full face photo of Bill W. be issued. It was also suggested that this stamp would be introduced at the 2015 International Convention of which there is no truth. Letters

have been written and sent to the U.S. Post Office and all Conference members that this proposal does not come from or have the support of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

Central Offices/Intergroups

I would like to talk to you about Central Offices/Intergroups. I feel the need to talk about Central Offices/Intergroups because an area Ad Hoc committee recommended cooperation between the Salt Lake City Central Office and Area 69 for the BTG.

I thought I understood the purpose of Central Office and the relationship between Area 69; however, after reading the AA literature (A.A. Service Manual, page S41 and A.A. Guidelines Central or Intergroup Offices) about the Central Office/Intergroup, I found that my understanding was limited.

The following except is from the A.A. Service Manual and the A.A. Guidelines Central or Intergroup Offices

The A.A. Service Manual pS41.

Working with Local Intergroups and Central Offices

Traditionally, general service committees and intergroups/central offices have performed different functions. Central offices provide local services; general service committees maintain the link between the A.A. groups and the A.A. General Service Board by means of the Conference. So these two separate but vital service structures coexist in many areas in mutual cooperation and harmony.

At the time the Conference was started, there were already well-established central offices in several large cities, providing services for local A.A. groups and members. Today, there are many more central offices throughout the U.S. and Canada, supported by the A.A. groups in the communities they serve. Each group elects a representative to attend central office meetings.

These offices provide such services as:

- 1. Receiving, arranging, and following up Twelfth Step calls.*
- 2. Answering inquiries about A.A.*
- 3. Establishing local public information committees.*
- 4. Maintaining information about local hospitals and recovery facilities for alcoholics.*
- 5. Publishing local A.A. meeting lists.*
- 6. Providing a newsletter.*

7. Ordering, selling, and distributing A.A. Conference-approved literature.

In contrast, the Conference structure is the method through which all A.A. groups in an area can provide the most effective communication within the area and between the groups and the General Service Board and G.S.O. on matters of policy that affect A.A. as a whole. These include policy on: Conference-approved literature, A.A. public information, A.A. cooperation with the professional community, A.A. activity in treatment and correctional facilities, A.A. finances, the AA. Grapevine, and the election of trustees to the General Service Board.

Many areas find that a liaison between the central office/intergroup and the area committee is very helpful in maintaining good relations and communication. In some areas the liaison has vote at the assembly; in others, a voice but not vote.

More information on working together is available through G.S.O. and in the pamphlets "The A.A. Group" and "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix," as well as in the Guidelines on Intergroups/Central Offices.

From A.A. Guidelines Central or Intergroup Offices

The A.A. Guidelines below are compiled from the shared experience of A.A. members throughout the U.S. and Canada. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference. In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist in reaching an informed group conscience.

CENTRAL OFFICES AND G.S.O.

The common experience has shown that A.A.'s worldwide unity is best served if A.A. groups maintain their own separate contacts with G.S.O. Direct group contact with G.S.O. doesn't take the place of services provided by a local service office, but helps G.S.O. to keep in closer touch with all groups.

There are, however, some important areas of interest in which close contact between the central offices and G.S.O. is not only desirable but necessary. Some central offices, for example, like to be provided with New Group Information Forms so that newly formed groups can be immediately listed with G.S.O. These forms, as well as forms for changing group information, are available from G.S.O. on request. Groups should not assume that if they list themselves with a central office they are automatically listed at G.S.O. New groups are encouraged to send a Group Information Form directly to the General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

For its own part, G.S.O. also seeks to keep central offices well informed. As a regular policy, the G.S.O. newsletter, Box 4-5-9, as well as A.A. Directories, are sent to each central office. G.S.O. also keeps a record of all central offices and is interested in assisting them wherever possible.

The staff member on the Group Services assignment is the liaison with central offices and intergroups.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to working together—Central Office or Intergroup Office and General Service Area Committee or the District Committee and the General Service Office of A.A. In 1990 the General Service Conference stressed the importance of communication and recommended that delegates establish and maintain contact with offices in their areas to share Conference information and assure that central/intergroup offices have a voice in the Fellowship through their existing service structure.

Try to find out what is going on by getting together from time to time with corresponding committees in your area. It is important to share ideas and discuss activities so as to avoid duplication of effort. It is not important who does the work (the General Service Committee or the Central Office or Intergroup Committee in your area) but that the work gets done—that help is there for the next alcoholic who needs us and our Fellowship.

Central offices and general service area committees are complementary, rather than competitive, A.A. operations. Both exist to help insure A.A. unity and to fulfill A.A.'s primary purpose of carrying the message.

There is a great deal of work for intergroup or central office committees concerned with public information, cooperation with the professional community, correctional and treatment facilities.

In 1986, the first A.A.W.S./Intergroup/Central Office Seminar was held to discuss questions on literature distribution, pricing and discounts, and to share ways to work together. Seminars are now held each year.

Because the Area will be talking about and voting on issues associated with the Central Office, the area needs to fully understand the purpose of Central Office and how they relate to Area 69. I believe reading the A.A. literature and discussing issues among ourselves is the only way to have a fully informed group conscience.

Lately, I have heard some discussions about how the A.A. traditions are being broken in Area 69. I wonder if we are being too rigid and at the same time I worry that maybe breaking the traditions is the cause of the discord in the area. The Grapevine article (April 1946) talked about the "Twelve points to assure our future". I believe that the downfall of A.A. will come about when we stop caring about the traditions. So, here is something to chew on: When we break or bend the A.A. traditions, are we putting the survival of A.A. at risk? What are our responsibilities as keepers of the A.A. Traditions?

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

Walter C., Area 69 Utah, Panel 63 Delegate