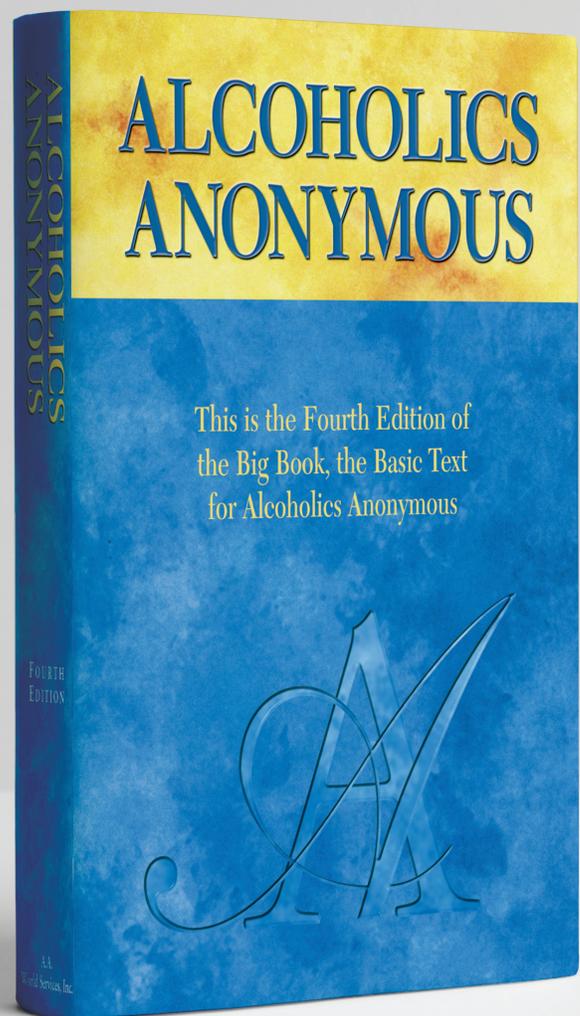


# Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages

## **2019 General Service Conference**

This 69th General Service Conference electronic interim report is produced to support delegate reporting by providing the Advisory Actions, Additional Committee Considerations, Recommendations not resulting in Advisory Actions and Floor Actions not resulting in Advisory Actions — in English, French and Spanish. A brief Conference summary and Delegate Area Service Highlights are also included. Because the Conference took place in May instead of April this year, this abbreviated report is being produced.



## ■ The 69th General Service Conference Convenes

“Our Big Book — 80 Years, 71 Languages” was the theme of the recently concluded 69th General Service Conference, held in New York City May 19–25. As the Fellowship’s original “oldtimer in print” — also available digitally and as an audio disc — *Alcoholics Anonymous*, our basic text, has sold over 40 million copies, is available in 71 languages, and has helped carry the A.A. message in more than 180 countries around the world.

Working closely with Dr. Bob and the Fellowship’s earliest members, Bill W. recognized that in order to keep the program from getting “garbled” or misinterpreted, it would be necessary to put the process down on paper — to make clear what the first 100 members did to achieve and maintain their sobriety. The process was not without difficulty, of course, with many disagreements over what should be in the book. Nevertheless, together, those early A.A.s constructed a pathway to sobriety that was broad, enduring and inclusive.

With our basic text as the backdrop, the 69th General Service Conference was made up of 93 delegates, 27 trustees and corporate directors from A.A.W.S. and Grapevine, along with 15 General Service Office, Grapevine and La Viña staff members.

Following a warm welcome Sunday morning from Michele Grinberg, Class A (nonalcoholic) chairperson of the General Service Board, and the official roll call by G.S.O.’s general manager Greg T., Anthony F. of South Dakota, delegate chair of the Conference, referenced the Conference theme: “Seventy-one languages — I have to admit, I wonder how translators do it. ‘Whoopie party’? Really, Bill? I’d sure like to know how that got translated into Navajo. Or how it just got translated to our French-speaking friends.” Additionally, Anthony contemplated one of the many issues slated to come before the Conference, noting, “In 1939, when the book was first published, I’m guessing none of them imagined we would be here deciding on a possible fifth edition.”

Delayed temporarily by bad weather that disrupted her travel plans, the Conference keynote address was delivered on Monday by Yoli F., Southwest regional trustee. In her talk, Yoli shared an anecdote about the Big Book from her early sobriety: “My first awakening of the value of the Big Book and translations came from a story by Fran P. in the July 1990 Grapevine titled ‘Grupa Una,’ about a woman in Romania named Juliet who was in search of recovery from alcoholism during the oppressive years of 1984–85. Fran writes, ‘Their faith in A.A. regularly moved me to tears. The first weekend Juliet had the literature, for example, she stayed at home. On Monday, I noticed she seemed quite tired. When asked why, she said she had been sitting up copying the Big Book by hand. Shocked, I told her that I was giving her my copy to keep forever, that she didn’t need to copy a single word.’”

Beginning on Sunday afternoon and running through to Saturday, Conference week is long and often arduous, punctuated by board and committee reports, presentations and discussions, area service highlights, workshops, sharing sessions and a visit to G.S.O. Additionally, the trustee elections, which took place on Wednesday, allowed Tom A. and Lucien J., the trustees’ and Conference committee chairs respectively, to sharpen their comic deliveries as they filled some of the silence between votes with a selection of jokes from the new Grapevine book *Take Me to Your Sponsor*. Also providing a little comic relief to the week-long proceedings was a performance by the 475 Riverside Players, a rag-tag thespian ensemble (comprised of G.S.O. and La Viña staff), who provided a homegrown production of “Dorothy Goes to the International Convention,” based on the all-time classic, “The Wizard of Oz.”

The main focus of each Conference, however, is on the deliberations of each of the 13 Conference committees, and it is during committee meetings that the major work of the Conference is done. With comprehensive background provided for each agenda item (made available for advance distribution to the Fellowship in English, French and Spanish), Conference committees discuss numerous issues of interest to the Fellowship as a whole and come up with recommendations, some of which result in Conference Advisory Actions.

Addressing some difficult issues — issues of trust, growth and unity as a Fellowship in the digital age — the 69th Conference worked its way through agenda items, slowly and carefully formulating a path forward for the Fellowship. Not all Conference discussions resulted in Advisory Actions, though; many of the important matters addressed at the Conference were articulated in the “additional considerations” of each committee — more informal suggestions and guidance on how best to carry the message.

By Friday evening, with discussion and voting on committee agendas and floor actions finally complete, as has become the custom at each Conference, rotating Panel 68 delegates lined up around the room for emotional two-minute farewells, often recounting their gratitude and expressing confidence in the remaining delegates to carry on the meaningful work of the Conference and the Fellowship.

On that poignant note, the 2019 General Service Conference officially concluded with the Serenity Prayer in three languages, led by Marge M. (English), Eric P. (French) and Jesus O. (Spanish). Reconvening briefly on Saturday morning for a final brunch featuring emotional talks by rotating trustees, Conference members bid each other a fond farewell and began to turn their attention toward next year’s Conference with its theme, “2020: A Clear Vision for You.”

## ■ Advisory Actions

*Conference Advisory Actions represent recommendations made by the standing committees and approved by the Conference body as a whole or recommendations discussed and voted on by all Conference members during general sessions. The group conscience of the Fellowship in the United States and Canada was expressed in the following Advisory Actions, which the General Service Board accepted in its legally required annual meeting following the 2019 Conference.*

### FLOOR ACTIONS

It was recommended that:

- 1 The proposed floor action that “A draft Fourth Edition of the Spanish Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 2020 General Service Conference” be committed to the trustees’ Literature Committee.
- 2 The proposed floor action that “The pamphlet ‘A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic’ be updated and a progress report and/or a draft be presented to the 2020 General Service Conference” be committed to the trustees’ Literature Committee.
- 3 The “A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials” be recommended to the trustees’ Literature Committee with an updated proposed policy to be brought back to the 70th General Service Conference.

### AGENDA

It was recommended that:

- 4 The theme for the 2020 General Service Conference be: “2020: A Clear Vision for You.”
- 5 The following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2020 General Service Conference:
  - Recovery — Who Is Missing in Our Rooms?
  - Unity — Practicing Our Principles
  - Service — Keeping A.A. Relevant
- 6 The workshop topic for the 2020 General Service Conference be:
  - Attraction Through Action

### ARCHIVES\*

- 7 The 1940s home movie of the co-founders and their wives be added to the Archives video “Markings on the Journey” at an estimated cost of \$5,000.

### COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

It was recommended that:

- 3 The text “They may help arrange hospitalization” be removed from the section “What can you expect from A.A.?” in the pamphlet “Alcoholics Anonymous in Your Community.”

### CORRECTIONS

No recommendations.

### FINANCE

It was recommended that:

- 9 The level of \$5,000 for individual bequests to the General Service Board from A.A. members be raised to \$10,000.

### GRAPEVINE

No recommendations.

### INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ REGIONAL FORUMS\*

It was recommended that:

- 10 An anonymity-protected photograph of the flag ceremony be taken at the 2020 International Convention.



\*Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee assignment.

- 11 An anonymity-protected Internet broadcast of the 2020 International Convention Opening Flag Ceremony be approved.
- 12 Anonymity-protected video footage with highlights of the 2020 International Convention be produced for maintaining archival footage of the Convention, as well as for sharing the spirit and enthusiasm of the 2020 International Convention.

### LITERATURE

It was recommended that:

- 13 The pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” be revised to add the following text regarding anonymity:
  - 1. Under the section, “What does a sponsor do and not do?” (p. 13), after the current bullet “Impresses upon the newcomer the importance of all our Traditions,” add a new bullet with the following language:  
Emphasizes the relevance and spiritual value of anonymity, both on a person to person basis, as well as at the public level including social media. (For more information see the pamphlet, “Understanding Anonymity”).
  - 2. Under the section, “How can a sponsor explain the A.A. program?” (p. 15), add a 6th paragraph:  
Many sponsors discuss the significance of anonymity at a personal level and public level early on. Anonymity at a personal level provides protection for all members from the identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers. At the public level of press, radio, films, and other media technologies, such as the internet, anonymity stresses the equality in the Fellowship of all members by putting the brake on those who might otherwise exploit their A.A. affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain. The sponsor is quick to point out the benefit of anonymity at this public level. Sponsors may provide examples from their own experience of maintaining public anonymity.
- 14 The trustees’ Literature Committee update the pamphlet “The Twelve Steps Illustrated” and bring back a progress report or draft pamphlet to the 2020 General Service Conference.
- 15 The trustees’ Literature Committee update the pamphlet “The Twelve Concepts Illustrated” and bring back a progress report or draft pamphlet to the 2020 General Service Conference.

### POLICY/ADMISSIONS

It was recommended that:

- 16 To allow time for discussion, the “Process for Polling the General Service Conference between Annual Meetings” which currently reads:

#### *Timing*

In keeping with the G.S.B. Bylaws, Conference mem-

bers will be given two weeks from the time the poll is emailed to respond with their vote. Dates for all votes and motions will be included with the poll, using a form similar to the “Timeline for Polling Conference Between Meetings.” All times listed are Eastern Time. The original poll will be emailed by 2 p.m., and voting will open that day and remain open for two weeks.

Voting will close at 2 p.m. two weeks after the poll was emailed. By 5 p.m. on the day the poll results are due, Conference members will be notified of the results by email. A request for any minority opinion will be included with the poll results.

Be replaced with:

#### *Timing*

In keeping with the G.S.B. Bylaws, Conference members will be given two weeks from the time the poll is emailed to respond with their vote. Dates for all votes and motions will be included with the poll, using a form similar to the “Timeline for Polling Conference Between Meetings.” All times listed are Eastern Time. The original poll will be emailed by 2 p.m., and discussion will open that day and remain open for **one week. Voting will commence on day seven at 2 p.m. after discussion closes.**

Voting will close at 2 p.m. two weeks after the poll was emailed. By 5 p.m. on the day the poll results are due, Conference members will be notified of the results by email. A request for any minority opinion will be included with the poll results.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

It was recommended that:

- 17 The trustees’ Committee on Public Information develop a plan to produce video shorts based on current A.A. pamphlets that provide information about A.A. to the public and that a report be brought back to the 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information.
- 18 The video PSA “My World” be discontinued.
- 19 The “Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or its Affiliates” be reaffirmed.
- 20 Two PSAs be developed at a cost not to exceed \$50,000 for each PSA, and that if full-face characters are shown, to include an “actor portrayal” disclaimer on screen.
- 21 The text addressing anonymity and safety be included in the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” as follows:
  - Q. Is it okay to tell someone if I witness or experience inappropriate behavior that happens either during or outside meeting times? Can I alert the proper authorities if there is criminal behavior?
  - A. Groups strive to provide as safe an environment as possible in which members can focus on sobriety, and, while anonymity is central to that purpose, it is

not intended to be a cloak protecting inappropriate or criminal behavior. Saying something about inappropriate behavior or calling the proper authorities does not go against any A.A. Traditions and is meant to preserve the safety of all members.

- 22 The wording of the last sentence in the section titled "How A.A. Members Maintain Sobriety" in the flyer "A.A. at a Glance" be changed from:

Sobriety is maintained through sharing experience, strength and hope at group meetings and through the suggested Twelve Steps for recovery from alcoholism.

to:

Sobriety is maintained through sharing experience, strength and hope at group meetings and through the **Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, which are suggested as a program of recovery.**

- 23 A progress report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the A.A. W.S. YouTube channel be brought back to the 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information.
- 24 All current video PSA titles be updated for search optimization purposes.
- 25 A.A. World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc. apply for "LegitScript" certification to qualify for Google Ad Words/Grants.
- 26 A.A. World Services, Inc. apply for Google AdWords/Grants, for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public.
- 27 A.A. World Services, Inc. implement Google AdWords/Grants for the purpose of providing information about A.A. to the public and that a report be brought back to the 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information.

## REPORT AND CHARTER

No recommendations.

## TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

It was recommended that:

- 28 Ashley's story (an A.A. member who is Deaf) be added to the pamphlet "Access to A.A.: Members Share on Overcoming Barriers" and that the video version of the pamphlet be updated to reflect this change.
- 29 The pamphlet "A.A. for the Older Alcoholic – Never Too Late" be updated with a revised introduction; current and inclusive stories; reference to online A.A.; and an updated "How Do I Find A.A.?" section. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought back to the 2020 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.
- 30 The trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities develop anonymity-protected audio interviews with military professionals about their experience with A.A. as a resource for posting online.

## TRUSTEES

It was recommended that:

- 31 The following slate of trustees of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in May 2019 following presentation at the 2019 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

### Class B

Thomas A.	Francis G.
Cathy B.	Patricia LaN.
Carole B.	Jan L.
Beau B.	David N.
James D.	Newton P.
Mark E.	Ginger R. B.
Kathi F.	Cate W.

### Class A

Leslie S. Backus	Peter Luongo, Ph.D.,
Hon. Christine Carpenter	LCSW-C
Michele Grinberg, J.D.	Nancy McCarthy
Sister Judith Ann Karam,	Al J. Mooney, M.D.,
CSA, FACHE	FAAFP, FASAM

- 32 The following slate of officers of the General Service Board be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in May 2019 following presentation at the 2019 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

<i>Chairperson</i>	Michele Grinberg, J.D.
<i>First vice-chairperson</i>	Nancy McCarthy
<i>Second vice-chairperson</i>	Newton P.
<i>Treasurer</i>	Leslie S. Backus
<i>Secretary</i>	Ginger R. B.
<i>Assistant treasurer</i>	Bob Slotterback*
<i>Assistant secretary</i>	Mary C.*

\*G.S.O. employees

- 33 The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in May 2019 following presentation at the 2019 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

Beau B.	Homer M.
Cathy B.	David N.
Mary C.*	Gregory T.*
Deborah K.	Carolyn W.
Jan L.	

\*G.S.O. employees

- 34 The following slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board in May 2019 following presentation at the 2019 General Service Conference for disapproval if any:

Carole B.	Tommi H.
Josh E.	Nancy McCarthy
Mark E.	Ginger R. B.
Ino F.	Albin Z.
Kathi F.	

\*AA Grapevine employee

## ■ Committee Considerations

*Advisory Action 40 of the 1990 General Service Conference states: "Items discussed, but no action taken or recommendation made, as well as committee recommendations which are not adopted, be included in a separate section of the Final Report." Listed by committee, such items are included here "in their entirety" per Advisory Action of the 2019 General Service Conference.*

### AGENDA

Committee Considerations:

- The committee discussed the report of the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference and encourages Conference committee chairs to communicate with their committee both before and after the Board weekend conference calls with their corresponding trustees' committee chairs. The committee noted that this may help to ensure all Conference committee members are fully informed.
- The committee reviewed the 2019 General Service Conference evaluations and noted that improvements were implemented from the 68<sup>th</sup> G.S.C. Evaluation suggestions.
- The committee reviewed the summary of the 2019 General Service Conference evaluations. The committee suggests that Conference members be given the option to select the Conference Manual format and that the online version of the evaluation form be formatted such that it can be continually updated during Conference week.
- The committee reviewed the report on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference, which included sharing from the 2019 Conference committee chairs. The committee noted that the January conference call portion of the plan was implemented and request reporting of the 2019 participant survey results to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee.
- The committee reviewed the sharing results of the 2019 survey of Conference committee chairs.

### ARCHIVES\*

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the revised Archives Workbook and newly released Archives Service Piece, "Archives Checklist: A quick guide for local A.A. archivists" and expressed satisfaction with the content. The committee suggested that the use of gender specific language be avoided, when possible, in future printings of the Archives Workbook.
- The committee appreciates the work of the trustees' Committee on Archives in exploring the feasibility of including in the A.A.W.S. Literature catalog all reproductions of archival materials being distributed by the Archives department upon request. However, the committee expressed concerns of pursuing this suggestion, noting that over-exposure of these items would increase the workload of the Archives staff and could trivialize the archival materials.

\*Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee assignment.

### CORRECTIONS

Committee Considerations:

- The committee considered a request for a review of all corrections-related literature in order to make the language more modern and inclusive and agreed to take no action. The committee noted that there was not a widely expressed need to warrant a change in the language currently used in A.A. literature for corrections. The committee also noted the absence of suitable language alternatives that could be used across all areas.
- The committee considered a request that the General Service Office establish and help maintain a database of Correctional facilities in each service area in the U.S. and Canada and the status of meetings held therein, and took no action. The committee noted the merits of the goal but considered that the diverse experiences and needs in different areas would be better served by a tool, or resource, that would help areas develop their own database tailored to their needs. The committee requested that the staff on the corrections desk ask for shared experience from A.A. members involved in corrections service for tools currently being used to create local databases with correctional facility meeting information, the status of the meetings, contacts, possible needs, and any other relevant information, and that the information be considered for a possible service piece or added to the Corrections Workbook, as appropriate.
- The committee expressed appreciation for the hard work accomplished by the trustees' Committee on Corrections and encouraged the continued communication between the chairs of the trustees' and Conference committees on Corrections throughout the year.
- The committee reviewed the Corrections Kit and Workbook and noted that many of the pamphlets used in correction service work have staples. The committee shared that a growing number of correctional facilities will not allow materials with staples into their facilities. The committee requested that the Publishing Department give priority to pamphlets used in corrections service for publication without staples, including, but not limited to, "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," "The Twelve Steps Illustrated," "Many Paths to Spirituality," "Is A.A. for Me?," "This Is A.A.," "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.," "Do you think you're different?," "Too Young?" and "Women in A.A."

### COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

Committee Considerations:

- The committee discussed the progress on implementing a static LinkedIn page and felt that the overall goal

of the 2018 Advisory Action on creating a LinkedIn page had not yet been achieved. The committee agreed that the wording suggested for the LinkedIn page did not adequately describe Alcoholics Anonymous. The presence of a LinkedIn page describing Alcoholics Anonymous would be a valuable tool to aid local C.P.C. committee work in the U.S. and Canada to inform professionals about A.A. The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities revisit the plan for implementing a LinkedIn page taking into consideration the following suggestions:

- » Add a disclaimer explaining that the "promoted" content on the LinkedIn page is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous.
  - » Include information from current A.A. literature about what A.A. does and does not do that can be useful to professionals who work with alcoholics.
  - » Add a concise description of Alcoholics Anonymous that is based on the Conference-approved literature intended for professionals that was reviewed at the October 2018 trustees' meeting.
  - » Add a link to [aa.org](http://aa.org) and a link to the information for professionals' page.
  - » Add a link to the *About A.A.* newsletter.
  - » Include a schedule of C.P.C. exhibits at national level events that are coordinated through the General Service Office.
  - » Annually provide a report tracking the A.A. LinkedIn page, including visits to [aa.org](http://aa.org) from the LinkedIn page for review by the Conference Committee on C.P.C.
- The committee requested that the trustees' committee review the pamphlet "A.A. in Your Community" with a focus on what professionals can expect from A.A. and A.A. members and bring a report back to the 2020 Conference Committee on C.P.C.
  - The committee reviewed the C.P.C. Kit and Workbook and noted their value to local C.P.C. committees and suggested that a section be added where local experiences can be noted.

## FINANCE

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed and discussed area contributions for delegate expenses for the Conference and took no action.
- The committee reviewed area contributions for delegate expenses, discussed the costs of the Conference and suggested that the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee provide a detailed breakdown of Conference expenses be included as background when delegate expenses are reviewed every two years, beginning in 2021.
- The committee requested that additional information regarding statistical information on delegate fees and

contribution limits be available as background when reviewed every two years, beginning in 2021.

- The committee reviewed and discussed the Conference-approved maximum annual contribution of \$5,000 to the General Service Board from an individual A.A. member and took no action.
- The committee reviewed the Self-Support Packet and suggested the following changes:
  - » In the Finance Guidelines mirror the language on how to make a contribution from the end of "The A.A. Group Treasurer" pamphlet.
  - » Include the regular contribution envelope in the packet.
  - » Revise the back of the Self-Support card as suggested, to reflect the following:
    - Move "What is the value of your sobriety?" under the title.
    - Move last bullet under "Some facts" to be first: "Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide."
    - Rephrase the first bullet under "Some facts" to read: "Historically, less than half of all A.A. groups contribute to the General Service Office" and make it the second bullet.
    - Remove second bullet regarding "Costs of services..." from "Some facts."
    - Rephrase the third bullet under "Some facts" to read: "Gross profit from literature sales make up for the shortfall in contributions," or something similar to emphasize being more self-supporting.
    - Remove the titles "Personal thoughts" and "Some facts."
    - Include contribution information from the end of "The A.A. Group Treasurer" pamphlet.

## GRAPEVINE

Committee Considerations:

- The committee considered a request to remove the Alcoholism at Large section from AA Grapevine and took no action. The committee affirmed Grapevine and La Viña's editorial freedom, as expressed in the Grapevine Charter that states: "to prepare, edit, print and publish...written material concerning generally the subject of alcoholism and related matters and dealing with various means, methods, techniques and procedures available or proposed for the treatment, relief, rehabilitation and recovery of persons suffering from or potentially subject to alcoholism."
- The committee requested that the disclaimer for the Alcoholism at Large section be printed more prominently and visibly.
- The committee agreed to forward to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2020 or later:

1. The Early Days of AA (working title)  
Classic stories previously published in Grapevine by members from the 1930s, '40s and '50s about what A.A. was like in its earliest days.
  2. Getting Involved in General Service (working title)  
Inspiring stories previously published in Grapevine by A.A. members who have been involved in general service.
  3. Surrender and Hope (working title) (La Viña book)  
Stories by Spanish-speaking A.A. members, previously published in La Viña, about how they came to surrender and join A.A. for a new life.
- The committee reviewed the progress report on the AA Grapevine Workbook revisions and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft at the next Conference. The committee also forwarded suggestions to the Grapevine office including expanding shared experience and how to use GV/LV as a recovery tool.
  - The committee reviewed the AA Grapevine Fellowship Survey and summary and noted the actions the Grapevine Board and staff have taken on the findings. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the next Conference on further actions taken.

#### **INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS/ REGIONAL FORUMS\***

##### Committee Considerations:

- The committee discussed ways of encouraging interest in Regional and Local Forums and attracting first time attendees and suggested:
  - » Compiling notes from the first timer sharing at a Forum for later distribution to encourage members to attend a future Forum;
  - » Consider developing a Regional Forum app;
  - » Consider developing a micro-site in addition to surface mail for distributing the Regional Forum flyers;
  - » Increase awareness at the local level, including “intentional” outreach to different populations (i.e., young people, Spanish-speaking communities, Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing);
  - » Encourage local welcome committees to create “Save the Date” flyers;
  - » Consider inviting A.A. W.S./AA Grapevine directors to “non-service” A.A. events to increase awareness of regional forums;
  - » Place information about Regional Forums in the AA Grapevine and La Viña.

#### **LITERATURE**

##### Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the request for the development of a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* which would include a section of stories comprised of individuals who got sober under the age of 25, and took no action noting that A.A. is inclu-

sive, never exclusive. If a Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* is to be developed the committee suggested that stories be gathered from as broad a cross-section of the Fellowship as possible, including from those who got sober under 25.

- The committee reviewed the progress report on the development of a pamphlet for Spanish-speaking women and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee reviewed the progress report on the development of a pamphlet based upon A.A.'s Three Legacies and looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee reviewed the progress report on the comprehensive update to the video “Your A.A. General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure.” The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or draft revised video at the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee reviewed a progress report for the pamphlet “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” and suggested an emphasis on the importance of anonymity on social media perhaps by adding an image of the Anonymity in the Digital Age poster as well as the following text:

To quote Bill W.'s writing on page 15 from *The Language of the Heart*, “...it should be the privilege, even the right, of each individual or group to handle anonymity as they wish.” However, when dealing with social media, personal anonymity as well as the group's anonymity may be easily compromised. We must be careful when using social media to not use full names and/or photos of A.A. members in a way that would identify them or others as A.A. members.

The committee looks forward to reviewing a progress report or revised draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.

- The committee reviewed a progress report on the revision of the pamphlet “Too Young?” The committee looks forward to reviewing a draft revised pamphlet and/or samples of other potential formats of the pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee reviewed a progress report on the revision of the pamphlet “Young People and A.A.” The committee looks forward to reviewing a revised draft pamphlet at the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee reviewed a progress report for language on safety and A.A. for inclusion in the booklet *Living Sober* and the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” and clarified that the language is meant to focus on safety at the group level.
- The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Literature develop a Literature Committee Workbook and provide a progress report to the 2020 General Service Conference.

\*Members serve on this committee as a secondary committee assignment.

- The committee considered a request to add information regarding safety to the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” and took no action. The committee noted that the pamphlet already addresses safety.
- The committee discussed the draft of the proposed revision to A.A. World Services’ “Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials” and supports the proposed policy and its intended impact to support more effectively carrying the A.A. message.

In keeping with Concept Eight which states in part, “The Trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a) with respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principle planners and administrators...” the committee expressed support for G.S.O.’s publishing professionals and their efforts working on behalf of A.A.

In keeping with Concept One which states in part, “The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship,” the committee recognized the importance and the sensitivity of maintaining the integrity of the Conference process for developing and updating literature to best reflect A.A.’s collective experience, strength and hope.

The committee requested that the final version of the complete text of A.A. World Services’ “Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials” be included as background for future General Service Conference committees.

- The committee reviewed the matrix of A.A. recovery literature and suggested that the trustees’ Literature Committee consider an update to the pamphlet “Is A.A. for Me?” The committee noted that the pamphlet has not been updated since 1989.

## POLICY/ADMISSIONS

### Committee Considerations:

- In reviewing the report from G.S.O.’s general manager on site selection for the General Service Conference, the committee noted the change of dates for the 71st G.S.C. that will take place in 2021 and that it had been necessary for the general manager to move forward and contract for the hotel for the 72nd General Service Conference prior to the selection of dates by the Conference Policy/Admissions Committee.

The 71st General Service Conference will take place from April 18-24, 2021 in Brooklyn, New York and the 72nd General Service Conference will take place from April 24-30, 2022 in Brooklyn, New York.

- In order to provide additional flexibility to the General Service Office management in contracting the most cost-effective and appropriate venues for the General Service Conference, the committee agreed to select three proposed dates for the 73rd and 74th General Service Conferences. The committee selected the following dates in order of preference for the 73rd General

Service Conference: April 23-29, 2023; April 30-May 6, 2023 and April 16-22, 2023. The committee selected the following dates in order of preference for the 74th General Service Conference: April 14-20, 2024; April 28-May 4, 2024 and May 5-11, 2024. The committee noted that these proposed Conference dates do not conflict with any significant holidays. The committee asks that all Conference members be notified of the final dates for the 73rd and 74th General Service Conferences as soon as they are finalized by G.S.O. management.

- The committee reviewed the report from G.S.O.’s general manager on site selection of the General Service Conference and looks forward to a progress report for review by the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee considered a process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss, and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference committee and appreciates the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference’s work on developing a process thus far. The committee noted the inclusion of a rationale on items not forwarded that are listed on the grid of proposed agenda items. The committee requested that the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference continue developing the process outlined in their report and provide a report to the 2020 General Service Conference that includes more information regarding the distribution of background and the January conference call between the trustee committee chair and the corresponding Conference committee.
- The committee requested that the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference develop a process for approving qualified representatives from other A.A. service structures to observe the U.S. and Canada General Service Conference that allows for these observers to be presented for General Service Conference consideration prior to the General Service Conference week for review by the 2020 General Service Conference.
- The committee discussed a request to “develop a procedure to deal with special requests/agenda items” and took no action. The committee noted that Concept Three and the Conference Charter provide adequate guidance and flexibility for dealing with agenda items that are outside of the usual process.
- The committee discussed reconsidering the 1986 Advisory Action regarding a simple majority vote by the full Conference and took no action. The committee asked that implementation of this 1986 advisory action resume with the 69<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference Final Report:
  - If a committee recommendation does not receive the two-thirds vote required to become a Conference Advisory Action, but has a majority of votes, it automatically becomes a suggestion and be duly noted in the Conference Report.
- The committee noted that the trustees’ General Service Conference Committee scheduled a Presentation/

Discussion on the Equitable Distribution of the Workload of Conference Committees at the 69th General Service Conference. The committee looks forward to receiving a plan or progress report on this important process for review by the 2020 General Service Conference from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference.

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed and accepted the 2018 annual report from the trustees' Public Information Committee regarding aa.org and aagrapevine.org.
- The committee suggested that the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department update all A.A. pamphlet covers to prominently display the G.S.O. website "www.aa.org."
- The committee also suggested that it may be helpful to include "www.aagrapevine.org" on the cover of A.A. pamphlets.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the 2018 report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on the Usefulness and Relevance of Public Service Announcements.
- The committee reviewed and accepted the information on centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the public service announcement "Changes."
- The committee suggested that the trustees' Committee on Public Information explore online platforms as a possible additional media outlet for future public service announcement distribution.
- The committee suggested that the "how to find A.A." section of all existing PSAs be edited to include current terminologies that describe how people search for A.A.
- The committee reviewed the contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook, and asked that the contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook continue to be updated with current and relevant information for P.I. committees.

### **REPORT AND CHARTER**

Committee Considerations:

- The committee accepted a report from the Publishing Department outlining the General Service Office process for timely and accurate preparation and publication of *The A.A. Service Manual, 2020-2022 Edition* and the 2019 General Service Conference *Final Report*.
- The committee reviewed the progress report from the A.A.W.S. Publishing Department on the redesign of The A.A. Service Manual and forwarded their comments to the Publishing Department.
- The committee considered the A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S., and Western U.S.) especially in light of the new ERP system and the Meeting Guide app, and requested that the General Service Office explore alternative methods of accessing and distributing the contact information contained in the A.A. Directories

(Canada, Eastern U.S., and Western U.S.) The committee requested that a report be brought back to the 2020 Report and Charter Conference Committee.

- The committee agreed with the suggestion from G.S.O. management that a new level of privacy was needed in the General Service Conference Final Report for Conference members' personal information, and that as of 2019:
  - » The roster section for Area Delegates include only each person's name, city, state or province.
  - » The bios of trustees and nontrustee directors include only each person's name, city, state or province.
  - » No email addresses for delegates, trustees, or non-trustee directors will be included.

### **TREATMENT & ACCESSIBILITIES**

Committee Considerations:

- The committee considered revising the pamphlet "Bridging the Gap Between Treatment and A.A. Through Contact Programs" to include related corrections activities and agreed with the concept. The committee requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities consult with the trustees' Committee on Corrections to review all treatment and corrections committee literature from G.S.O. related to bridging the gap and temporary contact activities with the following in mind:
  - » How treatment and corrections material can be updated for currency and inclusion;
  - » How this material could be combined;
  - » What material might be discontinued;
  - » How the combined material might be broadened to encompass the full range of possibilities in which a temporary contact might be useful.

The committee requested that a report be brought to the 2020 Conference Treatment and Accessibilities committee.

- The committee reviewed a draft Remote Communities Kit and agreed that there is a need for this new material. The committee suggested that before the Kit is made available that a guideline or workbook be developed for inclusion. The guideline or workbook might use a locally produced current Remote Communities workbook as an example.

The committee also suggested that the guideline or workbook include a list of available material, with details, including the intended audience, and suggestions for when, why and how it might be used.

The committee forwarded a list of additional pamphlets and service material to be considered for inclusion in the Kit. The committee suggested that the trustees' committee not include paper copies of the pamphlets in the Kit but provide a list of material by category and purpose, linked to encourage digital use.

The committee noted the availability and relevance of past articles in Grapevine, *Box 4-5-9*, and *About A.A.*, and requested that the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities and staff work with AA Grapevine to make past Remote Communities articles from Grapevine available for those involved in Remote Communities service.

- The committee reviewed the Treatment Committees Kit and Workbook and forwarded a list of suggestions to the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities.
- The committee reviewed the Accessibilities Kit and Workbook and forwarded a list of suggestions to the trustees' Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community/Treatment and Accessibilities.

### TRUSTEES

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the resumes and approved as eligible for election all Class B trustee candidates for Northeast regional trustee, Southwest regional trustee, and trustee-at-large/Canada.
- The committee reviewed the drafted procedures for a partial or complete reorganization of the General Service Board, the A.A. World Services Board and AA Grapevine Board. The committee agreed that the procedure needed additional specificity, offered suggestions, and requested that the trustees' Committee on Nominating bring back a revised plan to the 2020 Conference Committee on Trustees.

### *Recommendations Not Resulting in Conference Advisory Actions*

#### CORRECTIONS

- The Scope of the Conference Committee on Corrections which currently reads: "The purpose of the committee will be to encourage A.A. members to assume responsibility to carry the message to alcoholics who cannot, of their own free will, seek A.A. help"

Be revised, to read:

The purpose of the committee will be to encourage A.A. members to assume responsibility to carry the message to alcoholics who cannot seek A.A. help **outside the walls.**

#### LITERATURE

- A draft Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be developed and a progress report be brought to the 2020 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that:

The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, "The Doctor's

Opinion," "Dr. Bob's Nightmare," and the Appendices remain as is.

- Text be added to the foreword of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* as follows (Bold text reflects addition):

A.A.'s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole.

A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the Fellowship itself. They outline the means by which A.A. maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows.

**A.A.'s Twelve Concepts for World Service are an interpretation of A.A.'s world service structure. The Concepts provide guidelines for carrying the message to thousands of suffering alcoholics yet to come. They aim to record the 'why' of our service structure. They may be found in The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service.**

- The phrase "Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers" be added as the final sentence to the "Open Meeting" side of the Primary Purpose (Blue) Card. The card will read as follows (Bold text reflects addition):

#### **THIS IS AN OPEN MEETING OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

This is an open meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are glad you are all here — especially newcomers. In keeping with our singleness of purpose and our Third Tradition which states that "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking," we ask that all who participate confine their discussion to their problems with alcohol. **Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers.**

### *Floor Actions Not Resulting in Conference Advisory Actions*

- Production of *The Language of the Heart* in Spanish as an audio book be prioritized by AA Grapevine, Inc. and a timeline for production be reported at the 70th General Service Conference. **(Not approved)**
- The pamphlet "The 'God' Word" be added as one of the pamphlets used in Corrections service for possible publication without staples. **(Conference declined to consider)**
- In order to illustrate the importance of the committee recommendations that achieve simple majority but not substantial unanimity (i.e., a vote of two-thirds), that such "simple majority suggestions" be prominently included in the Conference *Final Report*. **(Not approved)**
- The "Alcoholism at Large" section be removed from the AA Grapevine. **(Conference declined to consider)**

## ■ Area Service Highlights — Panel 69 Delegates

**Alabama/N.W. Florida:** Area 1 encompasses all of Alabama and the panhandle of Florida, and consists of 24 districts with one area-wide Spanish-speaking district. Our assembly meets quarterly, with a pre-Conference assembly each April or March, depending on when Auburn has their A Day game, because we meet in Auburn, Alabama. We have great rates on our rooms, so, naturally, in a college football town, when hotels can charge 400 percent more per night, it's written in our contract that we work around the football schedule. We gladly do it, because we alcoholics are happy to save money every chance we get. During assemblies we have workshops, committee meetings and an area service meeting. All of these are closed meetings. We have an Ask-It Basket that past delegates sit on. These are great, because you can always get answers to questions such as "What should we do if a drunk comes to our meeting?" or "What should our group do about cross talking, or someone who only talks about themselves?" We have a hospitality room that serves snacks, drinks and coffee throughout the whole weekend. We're self-supporting, except for the times when someone brings a new sponsee who hasn't learned to practice honesty yet. We have an area convention every other year, but, being alcoholics, we're skipping this year and should have one again in 2020. Despite the few small issues that we have sometimes, as other areas do, we love each other and have fun because of the common solution we all agree on. We actively carry a message of hope to those who may be just as hopeless as I once was, and this is truly an honor. — *Kevin H.*

**Arkansas:** Area 4 encompasses the entire state of Arkansas, which is 53,179 square miles, with a population of approximately three million people. Area 4 is mostly rural and is comprised of more than 4,500 A.A. members in 262 groups and 13 districts. District 13 is a Spanish linguistic district that serves the entire state with 14 groups and provides translation for its members during our assemblies and convention. In accordance with our Area 4 Structure & Guidelines, area assemblies are a Saturday-and-Sunday event held quarterly, starting in January, at a fixed central location. On Saturday, we offer a Tradition and Concept panel, reports from area officers and D.C.M.s, an Ask-It Basket panel, committee meetings and an open A.A. speaker meeting. On Sunday, our D.C.M. meeting is held at 7 a.m. and is followed by orientation for G.S.R.s, committee reports, a workshop and the business meeting. Past delegates, delegate, alternate delegate, area officers, D.C.M.s and G.S.R.s are voting members of the assembly. We have ten permanent committees that meet and report at each assembly. These committees consist of past delegates, area officers, D.C.M.s and G.S.R.s. The chairperson for each committee is appointed by the area chair and area co-chair. All of our committees are very active.

Committees and area officers present workshops to groups and districts and assist district committees as needed. Eleven districts hold their service meetings quarterly, a month before the quarterly area assembly. Two districts hold their service meetings monthly. I am humbled by and grateful for the honor to serve Area 4 Arkansas as its Panel 69 delegate. — *Brad M.*

**British Columbia/Yukon:** Area 79 includes the Yukon Territory, most of British Columbia and one small section of Washington State. At 1,431,210 square kilometers (approximately 889,000 miles), it is the second largest delegate area in the U.S./Canada structure. Area 79 has 48 districts, including some that are equal in size to the states of Mississippi and Maryland combined. From the southernmost tip of British Columbia to the northernmost tip of the Yukon Territory is a staggering 2,540 km, or 1,587 miles. I am somewhat biased, but I think British Columbia and the Yukon contain some of the most beautiful geography in the world. We have the Pacific Ocean on our west coast, as well as mountain ranges, rivers and lakes equal to none. Our area events, January and July quarterlies, April Pre-Conference Assembly and October Voting Assembly are held in various districts within Area 79, so travel can be extensive. We most often travel by car, which for some includes ferry travel, and some districts (especially in the north) can only be easily reached by plane. The members of Alcoholics Anonymous are represented in our area by over 820 groups. Our General Service Committee (G.S.C.) has 14 members who also sit on the Area Committee and who serve as area officers. We have three area-specific standing committees. First, we have a Remote Communities Committee, and its mission statement in part is "to assist those who are unable to make it to regular face-to-face meetings on a consistent basis." The second is our Website Committee, whose responsibility is to oversee a team of web volunteers who keep our events and meeting listings up to date and who are also responsible for posting our Conference background materials on a secure password-protected site, among other things. The third is our "Grassroots" Committee, and for Panel 69, this is under the umbrella of our Remote Communities Committee. "Grassroots" is our area newsletter, and it is published quarterly after our area events and contains the minutes and reports for those events. — *Gail P.*

**California (Central):** Area 93 is made up of 23 active districts — 16 English-speaking and seven overlying Hispanic districts. There are 948 active groups and approximately 29,000 A.A. members. The geographical makeup of our area begins in the Hollywood Hills at Mulholland Drive, with our southern border touching our mother area, Area 5, which "gave birth" to our area some short 19 years ago. The border goes northeast through the Antelope Valley to

the foot of the Owens Valley, and then west across the southern end of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It runs across the San Joaquin Valley and farther west to the Pacific Coast. Finally, it heads down the coast, south past Santa Barbara and then east to the southern end of the San Fernando Valley. We have 15 committees. Our Seniors in Sobriety Committee, now entering its second full panel, continues to mature and participate in events outside our area. We continue to look at better serving remote regions with an ad hoc committee and have aspirations of utilizing technology to make area events (such as committee meetings and possibly assemblies) available to those remotely situated members. Our C.P.C. Committee participates in events such as California state-wide corrections association fairs, and our Accessibilities Committee — fresh off establishing a Bridging the Gap database — continues to grow and maintain that database to help connect those leaving facilities to get to their first meetings. We have also been participating in the Hispanic women's workshops held in our state for the last three years, sending liaisons to carry our ideas and bring back information. At the end of last year, our assembly approved the purchase of computer systems for all our officer positions. I consider this move a great step in assisting our trusted servants who serve the area. The diversity in landscape as well as our members makes Area 93 what it is. We are here to help bring A.A. to our neighborhoods and people, to carry our message and to be of service to our slice of the great state of California. — *Jeff G.*

**California (Northern Coastal):** Area 6 has an A.A. population of 60,721, 23 districts (five of them Spanish-speaking) and 151 subdistricts, altogether serving 2,126 groups. We are a fully Spanish/English bilingual area, with all official communications in both languages. In addition to our four annual assemblies, we have a monthly area committee meeting, and our eight area officers ensure that all districts are visited monthly. This level of communication enables the effective transmission of information up and down our service triangle and enhances our unity as a Fellowship. This past year we were privileged to host the Pacific Regional Forum, welcoming 918 participants (including 634 first-timers and 160 Spanish speakers); the third annual Hispanic Women's Workshop, with participation nationally and internationally; and our area's first Foro Hispano. We also provided accurate information to our groups and districts on the options available to them with respect to organizational structure and the legal and tax ramifications of those decisions. We continue to deepen our connection with other service committees in our area that predate the general service structure. Our area also continues to grapple with how to keep pace with technological innovation, and an ad hoc committee formed to consider the situation has recommended we form a standing technology committee. From the Redwoods to Monterey Bay by way of the Golden Gate, our area is as diverse as the communities that give it strength, and if you're looking for a particular type of meeting, chances are you'll find it in C.N.C.A. — *Teddy B.-W.*

**California (Southern):** Area 5, though small geographically, serves approximately 2,500 meetings and 35,000 members, has two official languages (Spanish and English) and offers Korean- and Russian-language meetings. Facilitating Twelfth Step work are 15 standing committees: Archives, Audio Visual, Cooperation with the Elder Community, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Corrections, Finance, Grapevine & La Viña, Guidelines & Policies, Literature, Public Information, Registration, "SCAAN" (the area newsletter), Translation, Treatment Facilities and Website (facilitated by a paid webmaster). These committees provided archive exhibits; carried the message to senior citizens and professionals; staffed a booth at the Los Angeles County Fair with English and Spanish speakers; maintained relationships with law enforcement, enabling visits with literature to incarcerating facilities of those arrested under the influence; maintained a contact-on-release program; and encouraged subscriptions to La Viña and Grapevine. Area 5 has five ad hoc committees: Accessibilities, Cooperation with the Young, Hispanic Women, Interpretation and Local Forum. Three committees reach remote communities and two facilitate overcoming language barriers. — *Thomas S.*

**Colorado:** Area 10 encompasses the state of Colorado and has approximately 20,000 A.A. members. Currently, our area is comprised of 832 groups in 30 geographic districts and two Spanish linguistic districts that split the state geographically. Each year we hold three area assemblies (in March, July and November), a corrections conference and a state convention. The 2019 Area 10 State Convention will be at the beautiful Keystone Resort August 30 to September 1. Historically, districts have bid to host assemblies in our area. Due to the size of our area assemblies, we have found it difficult to find venues to accommodate us. We are now coming to the end of a three-year experiment to see if holding our spring assemblies at a fixed location would alleviate problems. We will be having discussions with our groups at the assemblies to see if we want to make the process permanent or expand it to our other two assemblies each year. We will also be considering a proposal from one of our districts to create a temporary area-wide Bridging the Gap Committee to serve both Corrections and Treatment. Currently, central offices and intergroups serve the treatment community, and the area Corrections Committee serves prisons and jails. Last year we decided to expand the duties of our web chair and create a Technology Committee. Included within the purview of the committee will be the maintenance of our webpage, [www.coloradoaa.org](http://www.coloradoaa.org); our online repository of information; all of our electronic equipment, including computers used by various members of our area committee; transmitters and headsets used by our Translations Committee; and our leased software. Finally, our Finance Committee has been busy preparing guidelines for our area committee chairs on budget guidelines. The intent is to have standardized guidelines for preparing budgets for officers and chairs, including making use of historical precedence on standardized budgeting and expense forms. Additionally, the committee was asked to develop guidelines as to what

expenses are and what expenses are not normally eligible to be reimbursed. — *Scott M.*

**Connecticut:** Area 11, incorporated as a 501(c)3 in 2003 as the Area 11 General Service Committee, is comprised of 167 of the 169 cities and towns of Connecticut. The Fellowship carries A.A.'s message to our estimated membership of 33,000 alcoholics through 1,400 groups hosting 1,900 meetings, seven days a week, divided among ten districts — nine geographic and one linguistic. In recent years several districts have investigated redistricting or restructuring to help the 55 D.C.M.s communicate more effectively with their G.S.R.s. Area 11 hosts three yearly assemblies: pre-Conference, spring and fall. Between them are six regular area business meetings, four area sharing sessions and many service committee meetings of members who work tirelessly to carry the message of A.A. throughout the state. These service committees work endlessly to assist and communicate with the membership and the general public what A.A. is and all that we have to offer. In February 2018, we had the pleasure of hosting the 27th Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly (N.E.R.A.A.S.A.), which had the highest attendance to date. A move of our area office, archives and committee meeting space from our former location in Meriden to our new home in Southington happened in 2018. With all this service, fun can certainly be had in Area 11 by attending our five sober events, such as the Area 11 Convention. For 2018, the convention introduced the "Home Group Celebration" to help foster the spirit of unity. Each home group was encouraged to submit a colorful banner, have a minimum of eight attendees pre-register, and write a letter of gratitude (the winning submission was read from the podium at the Saturday night main meeting). This created so much enthusiasm and success that attendance at the 2018 convention sky-rocketed past the attendance numbers for the previous decade. It has been an honor to be in service with the dedicated membership of Area 11. I am grateful for this opportunity to give back to them. — *John D.*

**District of Columbia: District of Columbia:** I'm honored to represent Area 13, the capital of North America's United States and an area as rich in culture as it is in A.A. history. Area 13 includes the District of Columbia and Maryland's two most populous counties, a region whose residents are some of the most ethnically diverse in our country. This is reflected throughout our almost 800 listed groups as well as our many, many unlisted meetings. We continue to reach out to and visit these meetings, sharing highlights of area service and encouraging members to join us at our many events, including yearly assemblies, annual gratitude breakfast (currently in its 33rd year), annual mini-conference (now in its 46th year) and, in odd calendar years, our area inventory. Currently we have 11 English- and three Spanish-speaking districts. I am proud to report that of these 14 only three remain without a district committee member (D.C.M.). This is a huge accomplishment, given that just two panels ago we had only five active districts — two English and our three ever active, engaged and fully

represented Spanish-speaking districts. We have much to learn from our Hispanic and Latino members. With consistent area-level representation and contributions from almost 70 percent of their registered groups last year, they serve as an example to us all. Last year many A.A.s of all ages came together to host the 15th Eastern Area Convention of Young People in A.A. (E.A.C.Y.P.P.A.). Out of this achievement came the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia Young People in A.A. (D.M.V.Y.P.A.A.) service committee, which has recently started providing reports of their progress at our assemblies. This year we look forward to concluding what has been a four-year process of thoroughly revising our handbook and conducting our first joint service workshop with the sole intergroup in our area. While some nonalcoholics may choose to identify our nation's capital by its political climate, we prefer to stay close to our abundant spirit of service and adhere to our principles — "to place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united." Our lives depend on it. Thank you for allowing me to serve. — *Michelle G.*

**Florida (North):** Greetings from the northern part of sunny Florida. Area 14 has over 800 groups and 31 districts, including a linguistic district for our Spanish-speaking members. Our geographical area covers the northern half of Florida except the western tip of the Panhandle, south to Orlando and the Space Coast. We keep a high focus on the General Service Conference process and agenda items. Background material is distributed digitally, and several years ago we began to hold pre-Conference workshops in the districts ahead of our April assembly. In April, all workshops focus on the agenda items, and end with an informed sense of the assembly for our delegate. We take preparing our delegate for Conference very seriously. The area hosts four two-day assemblies each year. The week-end includes four administrative committees that oversee finances, website, assembly operations and district boundaries. Nine service coordinators lead educational workshops at assembly and around the districts. Our goal is to increase the enthusiasm and participation of our members by being highly inclusive, and there is now a scholarship fund to financially assist voting members in attending assembly. We have created a "First Timer" handout for new members at assembly, and often publish a newsletter to encourage interest in assembly. We have created a 13-minute DVD about the Traditions and currently support "Me plus One" — a self-support message introduced by one of our members. It encourages contributions in different ways to make up for those who cannot contribute. We have *A.A. Service Manual* workshops around the area, some with members using Skype to participate. In Area 14 we are not shy about celebrating service every day! — *Annette D.*

**Florida (South Florida/Bahamas/Virgin Islands/Antigua/St. Maarten/Cayman Islands):** Area 15 covers South Florida and the Caribbean Islands, from Pasco to Monroe Counties, with over 2,728 groups. We have 109 D.C.M.s, 52 alternate D.C.M.s, 1,354 G.S.R.s and 430 alternate G.S.R.s who work with Area 15 groups and membership. The area

is divided into 19 districts and two Spanish linguistics districts, with an additional five linguistic subdistricts that are working within the local regions. The areas affected by the hurricanes last year are slowly recovering; thank you for your assistance and prayers. The Area 15 assemblies are three-day events held four times a year, with the participation of over 400 members. They offer Concepts, *A.A. Service Manual*, Traditions and area committee workshops. In April, we conduct two-day pre-Conference workshops featuring Conference agenda presentations, report-backs from committees and feedback from the Fellowship. The area provides ASL and simultaneous Spanish interpretation during our assembly business meetings. The southern region is seeking members to assist in the translation of the pamphlet “Is A.A. for Me?” into Creole. Districts find new and innovative ways of sharing the message through billboards, airport and movie theatre displays. In July, we will host the Florida State Convention in Doral with an expected participation of over 2,000. In the past year we voted to create an Outreach Committee to provide the Area Committee an opportunity to work with all districts, sharing their experience and assisting with service workshops throughout Area 15. — *Shirley P.*

**Hawaii:** Hawai‘i Area 17 has around 5,300 members, 300 groups and 14 districts on six islands. The Pacific Ocean separates us from each other and from the rest of A.A., so it takes a lot of group contributions for us to participate in all levels of service. This year we will gather for three assemblies — Orientation, Inform the Delegate, and Budget — and three committee meetings. In 2020, we will hold four assemblies — Inventory, Inform the Delegate, Budget and Election — and three committee meetings. For decades, we have had A.A. members living in the remote communities of Hana, Lana‘i and Moloka‘i. Once a month, our young and young-at-heart members travel by boat, plane, car or motorcycle for a meeting, a potluck, beach day or campout, and lots of A.A. fun. Not all our districts are small, though. Kihei has so many meetings that the main street through town is called “The Road of Happy Destiny.” — *Coleen A.*

**Illinois (Chicago):** Area 19 has approximately 2,800 registered weekly meetings and 20 districts. Four of those are linguistic — three Spanish and one Polish. We have eight standing committees and seven special committees. The Chicago Area Service Committee meets every odd month. Our area service office currently has seven paid employees and myriad volunteers. The office and area are operating this year on a \$750,000 budget. Our bookstore has an extensive inventory not only of Conference-approved literature but also of area-approved non-A.A. literature and “drunk junk” such as jewelry, coins, bookmarks and coffee mugs. We are about to go live with our new website, with improved search and directions for meetings and a full on-line bookstore. We have a very active Corrections Committee that works regularly with neighboring areas to carry the message to inmates and help “bridge the gap” to those who upon release will return to Area 19. Our Archives Committee has just about finished up their book

project on the beginning of A.A. in the Chicagoland area. The book is in the final editing stage and hopefully will be ready for sale to the Fellowship this year. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the first A.A. meeting in Chicago. We celebrate this yearly by hosting the “All Chicago Open” meeting event in September. We host the Illinois State Conference every third year in a rotation with Areas 20 and 21. We are in the process of forming our committee to host in 2020. In addition, our Committee on Conferences is looking to bring back our area Second City Round-Up as a one-day event. In an attempt to get more participation at our area committees and to help those who have trouble getting to our downtown Chicago office for an evening committee meeting, we will be going live this year with audio and visual conferencing for committees through technology by Zoom. This will enable members to participate from a remote location and will hopefully allow for greater participation and therefore the ability to better carry the message as we move forward in our attempt to help the still-suffering alcoholic. — *Brian M. T.*

**Illinois (Southern):** As I visit some of the nearly 470 A.A. groups in the 15 districts of Area 21, I think of how blessed I am to call this part of America my home. Our area is very large and covers roughly two-thirds of our state, reaching from north of Peoria to the border with Kentucky. We have four area assemblies a year, hosted by different districts. And through the work of our committees and the effort of our members, A.A.’s life-giving message travels those long distances every day. Our love for alcoholics transcends the difficulties of carrying the message to rural communities, and not long ago we had the joy of seeing an inactive district spring to life again! Interest in sponsorship, the Big Book and service continues to increase, and Area 21 has responded by organizing service workshops, weekend conferences and, more recently, a pre-Conference workshop. Our area contains nearly two-thirds of the prisons in our state, and our ears are not deaf to the cries of our incarcerated brothers and sisters. Our Corrections Committee reaches out to them with meetings and literature, and we’re grateful for the much-needed literature provided by our Chicago and northern Illinois areas. Our area Technology Committee is focused on finding and implementing new ways to carry the message with our Traditions firmly in mind. Area 21 cooperates with neighboring areas on shared conferences, and we’re thrilled to see our young people on fire with excitement about A.A.’s 2030 International Convention in nearby St. Louis, Missouri. As I travel the vast prairielands to the north and down through the beautiful Shawnee Forest where I live, I’m struck by the warmth and compassion of my fellow A.A. members. The heart of A.A. beats strongly here in the Heartland, and each day I see the miracle of hope in the eyes of a newcomer who comes in out of the cold, sits down to a cup of coffee, and is warmed by the love we have for them as they listen to our stories of hope and recovery. — *Bobby D.*

**Indiana (Northern):** Area 22 is the northern half of Indiana. Area 22 accounts for five of the ten largest cities

in Indiana. My home city of Muncie comes in at the 11th largest. Area 22 consist of 48 districts. Each district has an odd number in our area. In those districts we host over 600 registered groups. Area 22 holds four assemblies each year, in February, May, August and November. We divide our area into four quadrants and have a structured rotation for each assembly to encourage participation for those who might not be able to travel the greater distances. A fifth assembly is added in even-numbered years, in October, for elections. The Election Assembly is always held centrally to encourage the most participation. Area 22 holds two D.C.M. conferences every year. The first, in March, is solely dedicated to preparing our delegate for the General Service Conference. Each committee reviews their specific Conference agenda items and offers its group conscience to the delegate. The second D.C.M. conference has been used in various ways, from a G.S.R/D.C.M. college/school or a general sharing session to my personal favorite — “dissecting” a piece of service literature. The Indiana State Convention alternates between our two areas; odd years are in the north. The 2019 convention marks the second time for Area 22 that we have been able to pay and register online. In 2019 we added a “Delegate’s Calendar” page to our website in an effort to eliminate questions as to when I, as delegate, am available to make an appearance and help anyone understand the definition of the word *ignorant* — which means “not knowing something I just learned five minutes ago.” From conventions to district meetings and website accessibility to one-on-one availability, all this is an attempt to assist and educate new and returning members in their journey, while encouraging enthusiastic contributions to service from the local level to as far as anyone would like to humble themselves. — *Brad A.*

**Iowa:** Area 24 is the southernmost state in the West Central Region. Iowa is predominately rural, with four major cities/metropolitan areas: Des Moines, Sioux City, the Quad Cities and Dubuque. Area 24 has 23 districts and over 650 listed groups. Making a meeting can be quite the task, requiring a drive of 15-30 miles or more to a town “nearby.” We hold five area functions throughout the year, including a spring assembly in June and a fall assembly in October. The host district is chosen through a bidding process and voted on by those in attendance at the assembly or one of the other service events. At these two assemblies we hold a G.S.R. sharing session, a D.C.M. sharing session, and an area officer and chair sharing session. The area chairs hold workshops on both Friday and Saturday nights, in addition to a speaker with entertainment to follow and, of course, fellowship. Area business is conducted throughout the day on Saturdays with many of the past delegates, G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, area officers and chairs all present. It is not uncommon to have most districts represented. We end the weekend together on Sunday with a spiritual speaker. Area 24 also holds three additional meetings in Marshalltown, which is centrally located for ease of participation from the entire area. On the Saturday of the January Area 24 service weekend, newly elected G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, area officers and chairs are welcomed in odd

years, and in even years various workshops and presentations are held. The area committee business meeting is held on the Sunday. At the meeting in March, also a two day event, we discuss the General Service Conference agenda items on Saturday, followed by a business meeting on Sunday. The one-day event held in August gathers past delegates, area officers, chairs and D.C.M.s. Area 24 can be found on the Internet at [www.aa-iowa.org](http://www.aa-iowa.org). If you are ever in the great state of Iowa, we would be glad to have you. — *Dan G.*

**Louisiana:** It’s an honor to be representing Area 27 here at the General Service Conference. Upon my election, I became the keeper of the delegate’s sweatshirt that identifies me as the “Head Sick.” Area 27 encompasses the state of Louisiana and consists of 24 districts, one of which is a statewide Spanish linguistic district. We have 507 registered groups and roughly 12,000 members. We hold four assemblies per year, as well as a state convention that rotates around Louisiana. Our area assembly is currently held in Alexandria, a city more centrally located so that more may participate. We have a pre-Conference assembly in April, where we review Conference agenda items to give feedback to our delegate. Every other year, our area conducts an inventory normally facilitated by the Southeast Regional trustee. At our regular assemblies, the G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s attend workshops and sharing sessions and participate on our area standing committees: Archives, C.P.C., Corrections, Grapevine, P.I., State Convention, Treatment, Website, and Budget & Finance. We are pleased to report that we’ve entered our second year with an active Accessibilities Committee. Our archives continue to be digitized, and the Archives Committee is busy taping oral histories from Louisiana oldtimers. Our C.P.C. Committee works with G.S.O. to staff national conventions in New Orleans, while our P.I., Treatment and Corrections Committees stay busy helping district committees throughout the state. In September of this year, Area 27 will host a corrections conference that we hope will become an annual event. We are also planning to hold the 2022 Southeast Regional Forum in New Orleans. Lots of planning is already underway, and the committee is chaired by one of our esteemed past delegates. It is a privilege to serve A.A. as the Panel 69 delegate from Area 27. — *Sue T.*

**Massachusetts (Eastern):** Area 30 is home to around 2,500 meetings across ten counties, from the southeast in Nantucket, north to Essex County and west to Worcester County — which includes Sturbridge, where Area 30 and Area 31 (western Massachusetts) will be hosting N.E.R.D., the Northeast Regional Delegates Weekend, in March 2020. In November of this year, Area 30 and Area 31 will be hosting the 56th Annual Massachusetts State A.A. Convention. We have 26 geographical districts plus one Spanish district, which is a linguistic district. Area 30 is home to Boston Central Service, which opened in 1945 and served most of New England at that time. We also have one Spanish intergroup and four other intergroups serving Worcester, Cape Cod and the Islands. We hold

monthly area meetings in Belmont, gathering the area officers, D.C.M.s, Conference committees, standing committees and liaisons from Boston Central Service, Worcester Intergroup and several Y.P.A.A. committees, including the Boston Host Committee for I.C.Y.P.A.A. 2019! We have five assemblies a year, which include budget assembly, a pre-Conference and a post-Conference assembly. Our assemblies are hosted by a different district on a rotating basis. We have translation and hearing-assist equipment at all of our assemblies and area meetings. We have a Finance Committee made up of the eight area officers and the committee chairs and their alternates. We meet at least three times a year to prepare the budget for the following year. Our website, [aaemass.org](http://aaemass.org), now has a Spanish link. In 2021 we will be hosting N.E.R.F., the Northeast Regional Forum (just trying to keep our past delegates busy). Oh... did I mention that I.C.Y.P.A.A. is coming to Boston this year? — *Jean K.*

**Michigan (Central):** Area 32 is in service to 1,100 registered Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. We have 14 districts in an area spanning 300 miles north to south and up to 125 miles east to west (at its widest point). We service an area spanning from Adrian to Alpena, including a portion of Michigan's thumb. We hold bimonthly area assemblies in our various districts. The districts volunteer to hold our area assemblies on a rotating schedule. We may meet in our southernmost district one month, and then in two months meet in our northernmost district. Regardless of where we meet, we have great representation from our groups all over the central portion of the state of Michigan. At our area assemblies we have 14 active service committees that meet and report to the assembly as a whole. We have a general service information meeting to provide members with information and education on various items within the service structure and to share ideas and opinions on A.A.'s welfare. We are truly blessed to have many past delegates and a past East Central Regional trustee attend our area assemblies on a regular basis to share their experience and guidance in service. Every quarter we meet with Areas 33 and 34 at a statewide service meeting that provides collaboration in the areas of C.P.C., Corrections and Grapevine, as well as other service opportunities that arise within our state. We also provide combined efforts on planning the state convention and our Michigan Mock Conference, which helps our delegates fully prepare for their service at the annual General Service Conference. Personally, I have a large legacy to uphold in my service position. In the district in which I reside (District 2, Area 32), I am the fifth delegate to serve the General Service Conference: preceding me were Alvin T., Panel 11; Harland S., Panel 41; Larry S., Panel 57 and Mike K., Panel 59. I have been blessed to know four of these five men personally in my sobriety and service journey, and they have paved the road for which I am truly humbled to be traveling. — *Lori C.*

**Michigan (Southeast):** We in Area 33 are small geographically as compared to other Michigan A.A. areas — but we are large in heart! We are totally excited for the 2020

International Convention and the opportunity to welcome the world to the Motor City! Our momentum is increasing as we prepare to host Alcoholics Anonymous from around the globe. Comprised of five counties, 24 districts, one Spanish-speaking district and 1,007 groups, we are culturally diverse, from the rural countryside to the urban center of Detroit, and we show true grit. Our commitment to our primary purpose brings us together in unity, allowing us to meet each month for our area assembly and business meeting. In addition to conducting business, we offer a monthly G.S.R. orientation and service manual study, as well as our committee meetings of D.C.M.s and our 14 standing committee chairs. We encourage member interaction during our area assemblies and special events. For example, our service fair highlights our standing committees and provides small-table discussion revolving around basic service issues. Our area "buddy program" is designed to welcome the G.S.R. newcomer to the assembly and to support G.S.R. retention. Our Detroit event Service Beyond the Group fosters district sponsorship within our area for inactive or underactive districts. Through humility and a respect for member contribution in the basket, we have identified two areas for paid outside services: 1) tax preparation — to ensure accurate and timely submissions; and 2) website design and management — bringing us into the future and allowing us to meet the challenge of a changing environment. Come join Area 33 as the world celebrates unity in this glorious Fellowship we know as Alcoholics Anonymous. Detroit is truly excited to say "Welcome" to each of you in 2020! — *Cynthia B.*

**Minnesota (Southern):** Area 36 is made up of the southern half of Minnesota, starting just south of St. Cloud and south, east and west, respectively, to the Iowa, Wisconsin and South Dakota borders. We are one of eight areas that make up the West Central Region. Area 36 is made up of roughly 960 registered groups and 27 districts, one of which is a Spanish-speaking linguistic district that hosts its own Spanish service conference once a year. We host a service conference called the Recovery, Unity and Service Conference in January. Its theme mirrors the theme of the General Service Conference each year. We have four area committee meetings and three area assemblies, one of which is combined with the Delegate's Workshop. We also host our yearly Trusted Servant Leadership Training, where we train our G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, committee chairs and area officers. Area 36 supports its archivist, webmaster and Corrections Committee chair to attend A.A.'s national workshops. We work in cooperation with Area 35 (northern Minnesota) specifically with respect to corrections and treatment to better serve Minnesota. Our Corrections Committee is actively working with correctional facilities to attend their "transition fairs" so we can reach the incarcerated A.A. member who is being released within six months. They are also working to update their temporary contact database to make it more user friendly. Our Public Information Committee facilitates an information booth in the Education Building at the Minnesota State Fair, where districts step up and take days to serve. Area 35 takes a weekend there as well. Our Structure Committee, which is

made up of our alternate D.C.M.s, is updating the Area 36 bylaws and the Area 36 Trusted Servant Guidelines. And this last year we passed a budget to include ASL interpretation on Saturday evening at the Recovery, Unity and Service Conference, as well as for our three assemblies and Delegate's Workshop so that everyone has a voice there. — *Missy P.*

**Missouri (Eastern):** Area 38 covers 32,000 square miles of the state of Missouri in its eastern half. Our area serves about 610 registered groups with approximately 9,668 members. With a recent redistricting that turned what was three metropolitan districts into four, we now have 24 geographical districts. Half of these districts are in the metropolitan St. Louis area and the other half are rural districts. Two of these districts are not very active at area level, but we are working hard to change that. We also have one Spanish-speaking linguistic district, which is statewide, extending into the western half of the state, Area 39. We hold four assemblies a year, one for every season. Recently, we have begun to move our assemblies around our area and have changed the spring and fall assemblies into two-day meetings. This has been very successful, especially in bringing new people into general service. We are grateful to have many of our past delegates attending assemblies. All of Area 38's ten standing committees continue to be very active. Our Corrections Committee was energized by having the first National Corrections Conference in our area several years ago. We also had the first National A.A. Technology Workshop in St. Louis, and our Technology Committee is busy with many projects. At our spring assembly we have a mock Conference to prepare the delegate for the G.S.C. We have instituted a workshop program in which the area offers to hold two workshops a year for districts and one for any group. In all, Area 38 has an enthusiastic and well-prepared group of trusted servants and I am grateful to serve as its delegate. — *Gene M.*

**Missouri (Western):** Area 39 covers approximately 35,000 square miles, with 230 groups and 17 districts, with one designated as a bilingual district. There are two central offices in Area 39, with one located in Kansas City and the other in Springfield. Our area is made up of three larger metropolitan cities, small towns and many rural townships. The Area 39 assembly meets four times yearly for an entire weekend. Saturday morning includes separate G.S.R. and D.C.M. meetings. Through this experience the members have much time to share their experience, strength and hope. The area committees are structured to match those of our General Service Conference and meet during the afternoon. Saturday evening at the assembly is designated for workshops followed by area officer reports and past delegate comments. On Sunday morning the Area 39 business of Alcoholics Anonymous is conducted, beginning with area committee reports and concluding with agenda item discussions and vote. In conjunction with Area 38 (eastern Missouri), we host the Missouri State Convention. Our area convention, Colors of Fall in the Ozarks, is held every fall in Branson. Our area Institutions Forum is held yearly, bringing together professionals in the

community to share with us their needs in understanding how A.A. and the professional can better work together to help the alcoholic who still suffers. Another major event hosted every other year by Area 39 is The Many Faces of Grapevine, which helps districts, groups and members understand the history and stay informed regarding the many services provided by Grapevine. I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude for being allowed to serve at the 69th General Service Conference. — *Jennifer D.*

**Montana:** Area 40 may be the largest geographical area in the Lower 48. There are 14 districts, all of which are active in one way or another in general service. These districts have a total of nearly 300 groups that host daily meetings to bring the message of A.A. and hope to the still-suffering alcoholic, whether they live on the plains and among the coulees of the east side or in the mountains and valleys of the west. We meet twice a year for a roundup where there are speakers, workshops and other forms of fellowship that usually involve ice cream. The location of these roundups rotates between the six largest cities in the area. In the spring and fall, we have our area assemblies, where we conduct the business of Area 40 and prepare for and review the work of the General Service Conference. Until recently we held our area assembly in Lewistown, where it was equally inconvenient for everyone. We have temporarily moved to Great Falls, where it is only inconvenient to most of us. We have a subcommittee that is researching on how to make attendance at assembly more attractive and accessible to all. In the past year we have created a formal position for a Bridging the Gap coordinator at the area level. We felt there were missed opportunities when individuals transitioning from treatment and correctional facilities were asking for help to attend A.A. meetings. By creating this position, we hope that we can provide assistance in a uniform and predictable way. This position has a committee and reports through the Treatment and Accessibilities Committee. It is a non-rotating position, as are the webmaster and archivist in Area 40. This fall we will be performing our area inventory at the assembly as well as hosting the West Central Regional trustee. The past inventory brought about some positive changes to the way we do business at our assemblies. We look forward to identifying other opportunities for improvement and growth. In March 2020, District 11 will host the West Central Regional A.A. Service Conference in Billings and in September 2021, District 81 will be hosting the West Central Regional Forum in Missoula. That covers most of what is happening in Montana, most of which makes up Area 40. — *Paul L.*

**Nevada:** Area 42 spans from Fort Bidwell, California, which is snuggled in the mountainous region of the Oregon-Nevada-California border, all the way to the Colorado River city of Laughlin, Nevada, which is in the sandy setting of the Mojave Desert. Area 42 has 664 active groups among 22 districts, two of which have significant Hispanic and Native American presences. Area 42 is the only area in the A.A. delegate structure that has been divided into two general service parts: the Southern Area

General Service Committee and the Northern Area General Service Committee. Each of these committees meets four times a year; the whole of Area 42 meets two times a year for our area assembly, held in the historic silver mining town of Tonopah, Nevada. In February I attended an old-timers panel, where it was clear that A.A. is alive and well in Area 42: 47 attendees had over 30 years of sobriety, and collectively there were over 2,000 years of sobriety in the room. The next day I facilitated a group inventory for S.W.A.C.Y.P.A.A., the Southwestern Area Conference of Young People in A.A. Eighteen members showed up to reflect on their committee's purpose and progress. The group inventory resulted in members' conviction that if they have a "legitimate reason," they can throw a conference anywhere. Young people in Area 42 found a need for a state Y.P.A.A. conference; they petitioned the area, and Area 42 agreed we need a Y.P.A.A. conference. Thus, N.A.C.Y.P.A.A. (Nevada Area Conference for Young People in A.A.) was created. The first conference will be held in 2020. This is the first year that Area 42 is creating the 13 Conference committees in our area. Usually the delegate picks between six to ten agenda items and the area body goes over them during our roundtables and at Tonopah. This year each Conference committee will review all the agenda items and will present them to the delegate for review. For an area that has many remote and diverse communities, we find a way for A.A. to reach these communities, remembering that recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another, sharing experience, strength and hope. — *Rhonda F.*

**New Jersey (Northern):** Eighty years ago in Area 44, Bill W. dictated the Big Book to Ruth Hock at 17 William Street in Newark, New Jersey. Today, one can attend meetings along with the 39,400 members at one of our 1,360 groups. The groups are organized into 32 geographic districts and two Spanish linguistic districts that are clustered in six sections to carry the message and make Twelfth Step work possible. Many of our districts host days of sharing, holiday alkathons and Traditions workshops. The districts work closely with our seven standing and 14 special committees, including Website, Translation, Newsletter, Remote Communities and Technology. Our Technology Committee is in the process of rolling out Office 365 and Sharepoint for our officers, committees, districts and G.S.R.s. Our version of "March Madness" is holding six pre-Conference reports in our geographic sections and two in our Spanish districts, all in the month of March, to prepare our delegate for the Conference. Our section coordinators work with the D.C.M.s in their sections to arrange a delegate post-Conference report in June to review the full actions of the Conference and to arrange a G.S.R./D.C.M. workshop for new G.S.R.s and D.C.M.s. The group conscience of the area is obtained from our four assemblies annually, including a mini-conference assembly in April just before the Conference. In February, our G.S.R. Midwinter Luncheon is held, with presentations by a Class A and a Class B trustee, to honor the G.S.R.s of our groups. At the end of September, the area hosts a three-day convention with a banquet, alkathons, speakers and a Grapevine play, which is a musical

parody that promotes the use of Grapevine and La Viña as recovery tools. When I was two months sober, I won a ticket to that convention and started doing service work, and service became a cornerstone of my sobriety. I am grateful and honored to serve my area and A.A. — *Jeff B.*

**New York (Central):** Area 47, Central New York, is about 130 miles wide, stretching from Canada down into Pennsylvania. We're one of four areas in New York. "Fun facts" about our area include, but are not limited to, the following: There are 675 active groups across 64 districts. That includes 23 groups that registered last year. Some districts meet independently, and some meet as clusters. The full area assembly meets 11 times a year. A typical agenda includes meetings of the ten standing committees, a panel or workshop, officer and chair reports, reviewing a Concept, and old and new business. The assemblies in March and April are spent discussing Conference agenda items and discerning the area's group conscience. The assembly is held in a different location each month. This allows local A.A. members to come see what area is all about or to buy literature when it's held in their town. The month we don't hold an area assembly we have a day of sharing or a weekend-long convention. This is when the General Service Conference report-back is given, and there are multiple other panels and speakers. And, yes, meeting every month *does* come up for debate with some frequency. We've started a new annual D.C.M. summit to better support our D.C.M.s. This provides a forum to share questions, issues and solutions to better serve the districts and to discuss what makes good leadership in A.A. Our area website is a great resource for spreading the word about upcoming events, posting meeting lists, understanding accessibility needs, and signing up for Bridging the Gap or corrections work. This August, the Empire State Convention of Young People in A.A. will be held in our area. Our young people will be hosting this event in Rochester, and they expect 800 people or more. Their enthusiasm and love of service is infectious and fills me with hope for the healthy present and future of A.A. in Area 47. — *Barb C.*

**New York (Southeast):** Area 49, southeastern New York ("SENY"), is comprised of 1,991 A.A. groups from 104 districts. In addition to the five boroughs of New York City, G.S.O., Bill's last drink and 182 Clinton Street, we are home to seven national wildlife refuges, the Hamptons, Montauk, Fire Island, Stepping Stones, the Catskills, the lower Hudson Valley and countless bars. SENY is comprised of 12 culturally diverse counties and an area-wide Hispanic district. All 13 service entities have their own general services meetings and officers, including a D.C.M.C. In four of our counties, the county itself serves as the district. We have three robust Y.P.A.A. committees; meetings in English, Spanish, Korean, Polish and Russian; some meetings with ASL translation; meetings for men, women, GLBTQ, and atheist and agnostic members. Our urban, suburban and rural transportation diversities present accessibility opportunities for our members to attend five annual area assemblies and one delegate's day of sharing, all of which rotate throughout SENY. All have

Spanish translation, as do our seven annual committee meetings hosted in the Bronx, a central location. Our calendar is on our website, [www.aaseny.org](http://www.aaseny.org). SENY elects five officers, and our area chair appoints the committee chairs, subject to approval by the SENY Committee. We hold an area inventory and revise the SENY Handbook every rotation. Like many other areas, our biggest opportunity for improvement is to increase participation at our assemblies. We're excited to be hosting the Northeast Regional Forum May 31-June 2 and invite you to join us at the G.S.O. road show. — *Jane E.*

**North Carolina:** I am happy to share that A.A. membership in Area 51 North Carolina is growing, and we are not a glum lot, with an annual state convention, Freedom from Bondage Corrections Conference and many other state-wide events to celebrate recovery. There are over 20,000 sober alcoholics in 1,095 regular and 52 corrections groups in our state. Our most exciting news for 2019 is that we are joining forces with Area 62 South Carolina to co-host our biennial Southern States Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly, lovingly known as S.S.A.A.S.A., at Lake Junaluska Retreat Center near Asheville, North Carolina, November 8-10. Y'all come join us. And finally, the English teacher in me could not help but create a sonnet using iambic pentameter to share our general service status with you: North Carolina's in a state of grace / From designation Area Fifty-one / With aliens who come from outer space / We surely have a plenitude of fun // Our districts number 39 in all / With three linguistic Spanish in the mix / We've two assemblies in the spring and fall / Committee meets four times a year amidst // At Winter Area Committee, D.C.M.s / Partake in Conference (mock) that is first-rate / Agenda items are discussed and then / Pre-Conferences commence across the state // So "alien" alcoholics in N.C. / Inform their delegate for G.S.C.! — *Katy P.*

**North Dakota:** Area 52 consists of 163 groups in nine districts, with approximately 3,300 members and 49.7 percent contributing to G.S.O. We have one group from Montana and a handful from Minnesota. We hold three area assemblies per year and will be welcoming our regional trustee, Tom A., at our March Assembly this year, which allows our area to benefit greatly from his knowledge, as part of March Assembly weekend is devoted to General Service Conference agenda items. Besides his knowledge, his expertise with ice cream is appreciated. The area, led by the most recent past delegate and assisted by the area committee chairs, hosts two G.S.R./P.I.-C.P.C. schools each year in February in towns not usually able to host larger service assemblies — one in the east and one in the western part of the state — to acquaint newly elected G.S.R.s to the service structure of A.A. using *The A.A. Service Manual* and Area 52 Service Handbook and to encourage their group's participation in district and area service. Area 52 has very active groups and districts, hosting Fellowship events, picnics, dances and roundups. Fargo/Moorhead Intergroup will be putting on the Third Annual A.A. Symposium for professionals, the public and A.A. members, featuring information for professionals, as

well as information on how to get involved with P.I./C.P.C. and institutions in order to carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. Area 52 will be hosting the 2019 W.C.R.A.A.F. (West Central Regional A.A. Forum) August 16-18 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, North Dakota. As an area, we have recently undertaken some redistricting, with less-served district committees/groups being absorbed by their neighboring districts. — *Curt W.*

**Nova Scotia, Newfoundland/Labrador:** Area 82 is divided by large bodies of water, which requires either an eight-hour ferry ride and a three-and-a-half-hour car ride to the airport from either end of Nova Scotia plus a plane trip to travel between the provinces. To reach Labrador requires a few plane trips from most places. To drive from the ferry terminal to the capital city in Newfoundland is also a ten-hour car ride. The very active Remote Communities Committee does a very good job of keeping our members in Labrador feel a part of our area. Every couple of weeks, they make time to have conference calls and discuss the program in general. Area 82 has 17 districts with 207 groups. The geography of Area 82 makes it very difficult to visit all groups or districts. The upside is that most parts of the area hold roundups or conventions, which gives the delegate a chance to attend and meet with members from a lot of the surrounding districts. Most districts in Area 82 have active committees in P.I., corrections and Grapevine. The message is being carried throughout the area. The geography of the area does not hinder a great turnout at our annual assembly, no matter in which province it is held. Therefore, I am happy to say that Alcoholics Anonymous is alive and well in Area 82. — *Kirk S.*

**Ohio (Central and Southeast Ohio):** Area 53 covers 39 counties in central and southeastern Ohio. The area currently has 765 registered groups, 25 districts and nine standing committees. All but two of the districts have a D.C.M., and all but one of the standing committees are active. The area assembly meets quarterly, and the Area Committee meets the following month to plan the agenda for the next assembly. The second weekend of March we hold a mini-conference to address a subset of the Conference agenda items. We normally have in attendance a G.S.O. Staff member and the regional trustee who give G.S.O. and regional reports and share their stories with us. Our Corrections Committee's "Spare Change Changes Lives" program purchased and donated to incarcerated A.A.s last year 1,285 Big Books and 843 "Twelve and Twelves." The Treatment Committee is re-introducing the Bridging the Gap program. The C.P.C./P.I. Committee is active throughout the area, making presentations and working with professionals. Our Group Services Committee conducts a G.S.R./D.C.M. school in districts on request, and at our annual mini-conference. Last year, the Grapevine Committee conducted a writing workshop that generated several submissions. Beginning with this panel, web administrator is an elected, rotating position. The Web Administration Team is introducing a new website, which is off to an impressive start. If you're interested, you can find it at [area53aa.org](http://area53aa.org). We are working to build stronger

relationships with the area's Y.P.A.A. groups *y con los grupos hispanohablantes*. Both of these communities are very active, but not participating consistently in the general service structure. Another goal for this panel is to reignite the Accessibilities Committee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share these highlights, and I look forward to serving as a member of Panel 69. — *Stephen S.*

**Ohio (Northeast):** Area 54 is home to approximately 1,500 registered groups. Our area covers 20 of Ohio's 88 counties, and there are 62 districts within our boundaries, which also include a Spanish-speaking district. There are eight intergroup/central offices in Area 54. We hold six assemblies each year. In addition, our area hosts a G.S.R. school in February and a D.C.M. college in August. These presentations are available, upon request, to travel to our districts and groups throughout the year. We also hold a Unity Day the third week of May to highlight the cooperative nature of A.A. services. In June we have our annual Open House Picnic, which is spearheaded by an Area 54 district. In November, we commemorate Gratitude Sunday, when we come together to fellowship, enjoy a meal and express our gratitude for this way of life. We host a weekend mini-conference each spring prior to the General Service Conference. Here we review Conference agenda items and provide our delegate with the conscience of the area. There is much activity and opportunity to serve in our area. Area 54 continues to work with our young people in A.A. and has gone another step further: We now have an O.Y.P.A.A. liaison who acts as a link to assist communication and cooperation with our young people's group. Additionally, we have embraced newer technology and can now accept electronic payments for our annual mini-conference. Change can be slow in A.A., and I am glad that Area 54 embraces new and better ways to connect with our members. As I close, I extend my humble thanks to Area 54 Northeast Ohio for allowing me to serve as their Panel 69 delegate. As my journey continues down the service triangle, I look forward to learning more about general service and growing into an ever-deepening appreciation for our Fellowship. — *Shyrl B.*

**Oklahoma:** Area 57 covers all of Oklahoma — 69,960 square miles. We have 405 registered A.A. groups with approximately 8,500 members. We have eight districts — four located in metro areas and four in the rural parts of the state. We also have a Spanish subdistrict. Each metro district has a monthly service meeting that does a report on a Tradition, a Concept and a service topic. The four rural districts have area-hosted workshops on service topics. We have four committee meetings and one assembly per year. We have an intergroup office in Oklahoma City and a central service office in Tulsa. Our area office has a paid secretary and displays our archives collection. Fun in the Fellowship is an annual service conference designed to generate interest in all areas of service, with committee workshops and two "schools" — one on being a G.S.R., the other on being a D.C.M. We hold an annual state conference in May, where we have a delegate's report and three days of speakers and service-related workshops. This

event draws over 1,000 members from all over the state. We also have a very active young people in Alcoholics Anonymous (Y.P.A.A.) group that puts on its own Conference, with the purpose of teaching about working on committees and in general service. Each year Area 57 hosts the Southwest Regional Delegates Assembly, preparing incoming delegates for the General Service Conference. I am grateful for the opportunity to be of service to Area 57 and to A.A. as a whole. — *Steve S.*

**Ontario (Eastern):** Area 83 covers approximately 63,000 square kilometers, from the Québec border in the east to Mississauga in the west, north to Algonquin Park, and south to New York State. District 42 is located in northern New York State, giving our area an international flair. There are approximately 13,500 members with 574 active groups in 25 districts, including eight correctional facility groups. District 16, our linguistic district, serves ten Spanish-speaking groups. Our seven subcommittee chairs, working with their district counterparts, strive to carry the message of recovery to the alcoholic who still suffers in eastern Ontario. We also have an appointed archivist and webmaster. An ad hoc committee is currently looking into the feasibility of creating a standalone Accessibilities Committee. A second ad hoc committee was formed to review our operating procedures. Our area hosts two assemblies per year, with a pre-Conference assembly in the spring, and seven area committee meetings throughout the two-year term. We are grateful to be part of the Eastern Canada Region and look forward to hosting the Regional Forum in November 2020. Our area is also pleased to participate in C.E.R.A.A.S.A., the biannual Canadian Eastern Region Service Assembly. Area 83 is one of four areas making up the Ontario Delegates Committee, and we will host the biannual committee meeting in February 2020. This meeting is designed to help prepare the delegates to represent their area at the General Service Conference and includes participation from alternate delegates, past delegates and our regional trustee. Our area remains healthy, vibrant and active in general service. I'm truly humbled to serve Area 83 as Panel 69 delegate. — *Rob M.*

**Ontario (Northwest):** Area 85 is northwestern Ontario from Hornepayne on the eastern border west to the Manitoba border. Our southern boundary is the U.S., and we extend north to Hudson Bay. It is an area of 203,251 square miles. To get an idea its size, Dr. Bob's state of Ohio would fit in 4.5 times and Bill's state of New York would fit in 3.7 times! We have seven districts, of which one has been dark for some years now. We have about 55 groups of which 17 are in the city of Thunder Bay; the rest are scattered throughout this vast area in small towns with populations well under 10,000, the exception being Kenora, near the Manitoba border. We have an excellent website that is easy to navigate and kept up to date. The area map is phenomenal. Our remote community meetings may be discontinued due to lack of First Nations people attending these videoconference meetings. Four years ago, attendance from the 13 remote communities

on board averaged four people per meeting; now it is one person every three or four meetings. It is hard to get volunteers to chair meetings when no one comes. Service is in decline in Area 85. It's difficult to get members involved. Never have there been so many vacant subcommittee positions: we almost didn't have an area treasurer. We need to use technology to allow members from outlying small groups to fill the positions without having to relocate to Thunder Bay. Many of our small-town groups feel a real disconnect with A.A. beyond our meeting rooms. To them, New York may as well be on the moon. That is why we have our spring assemblies hosted by these outlying districts. Members get to see A.A. on an entirely different level, and they get involved. Despite these challenges, which someone said are "opportunities in disguise," the very spirit of A.A. is alive and thriving in Area 85. — *Lorraine P.*

**Pennsylvania (Eastern):** Area 59 encompasses the eastern half of Pennsylvania. The Area Committee, nine subcommittees and special servants (e.g., archivist, web servant and tech servant) provide the general service link to approximately 33,000 members and 1,600 home groups in 48 districts – one being a Spanish linguistic district. The Area Committee cooperates with several P.E.N.N.S.C.Y.P.A.A. bid committees, an I.C.Y.P.A.A. bid committee and 11 intergroup associations to help carry the message. Our subcommittees are active with several priorities, including: 1) encouraging more active district support for the Bridging the Gap program; 2) updating digital communications and website; 3) supporting members to participate in national technology, corrections and archives workshops; 4) supporting both AA Grapevine and La Viña; 5) supporting intergroup and Y.P.A.A. Share-A-Day events; and, 6) researching better ways to digitally record our archives. Our service calendar features many events, including a D.C.M. and subcommittee chairperson orientation; the pre-Conference sharing session; two delegate Conference reports and mini-assemblies; area committee service inventory; an area service day; four quarterly area committee business meetings; and our General Service Assembly and Convention. During the past year, area officers and special servants worked to strengthen our communications and inspire more interest in general service by hosting four area forums across the area. These events featured a similar agenda to Regional Forums. Area officers presented member-requested service topics. The forums presented the opportunity for members to become more acquainted with their area servants and the role of general service. We are grateful for a robust service culture in eastern Pennsylvania. — *Ken D.*

**Pennsylvania (Western):** Area 60 of western Pennsylvania stretches from Lake Erie and New York State in the north all the way south to West Virginia and the Mason-Dixon Line between Pennsylvania and Maryland in the south. Our western edge borders Ohio, and the east is home to the Allegheny Mountains, which we share with Area 59. Area 60 is home to the Laurel Highlands, Pittsburgh and Lake Erie regions. Our area has a strong foothold in sobri-

ety, with 44 districts, 850 groups and 10,250 members, with approximately 44 percent of our groups donating to the General Service Office. We also have two intergroups — Pittsburgh and Erie. Area 60 meets six to seven times per year, with four quarterly meetings and three assemblies. Generally, we meet in the Pittsburgh area, but districts do have the opportunity to host area quarterly meetings, and in 2018 we held the third quarterly meeting in Erie, Pennsylvania. We are especially proud of our pre-Conference assembly weekend, where on Friday and Saturday we hold panels and then break off into committees to discuss specific agenda items. On Sunday at the pre-Conference assembly, we get a sense of the meeting on those several agenda items that were discussed in depth, giving the delegate a sense of how the area feels. Also, at our recent weekends we have hosted the trustee-at-large, the Northeast Regional trustee and a Class A trustee. All spent time explaining their roles at G.S.O. We have several standing committees, including a newsletter that is published quarterly, Literature, Grapevine, Archives, Corrections and Treatment. We also have a top-of-the-line website that averages approximately 1,500 unique visitors monthly. Area officers and coordinators attend days of sharing and workshops hosted by districts, and in 2021 we look forward to hosting N.E.R.A.S.S.A. in Pittsburgh, which will be close to transportation and a hop, skip and a jump from Dr. Bob's home in Akron, Ohio. — *Marjorie S.*

**Québec (Northeast):** It's with a great pleasure that I introduce Area 89 (northeast Québec) to you. Our area is a vast territory stretching from Louiseville in the west to Blanc-Sablon in the east, and from Chibougamau in the north to Lévis in the south — about 400,000 square kilometers altogether. The nearest district from my place is a 15-minute drive and the farthest is an 11-hour drive each way. Each year we hold two general assemblies and four regional assemblies. We also have seven committees: Archives, Correctional, Public Information, "Le Nordet," Seminars, Publications and Website. For our regional meeting in December, in even years we have a meeting called Welcoming the Newcomers, and in odd years we have our regional inventory. Both meetings run a whole weekend. Our large and beautiful area counts 21 districts. It has 250 groups — 240 French-speaking, five English-speaking, two bilingual, one in Atikamekw and two in the Innu language. There are 280 meetings per week, and we count 3,950 registered members. The Regional Executive Committee meets twice a year with the regional committees of the three other Québec areas. As delegates, we have the responsibility and privilege to be trustees of our bimonthly magazine, *La Vigne*. Eastern Québec has a very well-built website (quite easy to use) and a Seminars Committee. The seminars are given by our past delegates, who share with us their knowledge and experience of our principles and our legacy. Our area also has the honor and privilege to hold a Native convention, held in Pessamit, on the northern shore of the St. Lawrence River. August will mark the 19th year of this convention. We count on an intergroup in Quebec City, where we find various service committees. We also have an administrative assistant who is

the “ears” of our area. I am privileged to serve in an area that respects the A.A. principles and Traditions — a very healthy area in action. And it’s with gratitude and humility that I represent my friends. I thank them for giving me such an opportunity, and thanks to all of you for what you’re doing for A.A. — *Alain G.*

**Québec (Southeast):** Area 88 covers a large territory south of the St. Lawrence River, from the Eastern Townships to the Magdalene Islands. And we serve six French-speaking groups in the northwest of New Brunswick. We have 18 districts, mostly rural, and a total of 192 groups, with approximately 1,900 registered members. Our largest city is Sherbrooke, with a population of 165,000 including the immediate surroundings. Every other year, we try to fly to the Magdalene Islands to meet with this isolated district and answer to their needs. We hold three area meetings a year plus one annual meeting at the end of September for the election of executives at the area level. We also hold two gratitude dinners in June, one in the western part of the area and one in the eastern part to allow as many as possible to attend. These are organized by the district host with the help of the area executives. It is our way of showing our gratitude to A.A., and the profits of these events are donated to G.S.O. We hold workshops at the districts’ demand for their members and we ask them to invite the nearby districts in order to be more efficient and save on expenses. In January of this year, we held a welcome meeting for new people in service. There were six districts and a total of 43 people present. It was appreciated by everyone there. Last year, we held the Eastern Canada Regional Forum in Victoriaville, with an attendance of over 700. Thanks to the help of many volunteers, the weekend was a success. I conclude by expressing my gratitude to A.A. and my area for placing their trust in me. You — meaning all the A.A. members that I have worked with over the years — have made me a better person and A.A. servant. — *Serge V.*

**Saskatchewan:** Area 91 Saskatchewan just completed its first two-year term of our new committee system, with committee chairs for Archives & Trustees, Treatment & Accessibilities, Corrections, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Grapevine, Literature, Public Information, Finance and Remote Communities. As we move through the growing pains of change in Area 91, our new table officers and committee chairs are eager to build more tools to help carry the message to our members in Saskatchewan. We experienced a great loss in our area, as our newly elected Grapevine chair, Chico T., passed away unexpectedly at the beginning of February. Chico was an inspiration to us all, as his love for service was visible by the growth in his District 6, and it’s with heavy hearts we have to elect a new Grapevine chair at our upcoming March spring assembly in Carlyle, Saskatchewan. Financially, we had a surplus, with an increase in contributions from our groups; for our next year we will continue to carry the message of self-support, contributions and more on our committees. — *Ray M.*

**Texas (Northeast):** Area 65 covers about 70,000 square miles, with the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex centrally located within our borders. We have 29 districts, five of which serve our Spanish groups. It is estimated that we have around 500 active groups. (And wouldn’t it be wonderful if at least 25 percent of those groups had representation at our assemblies?) We start each January off with three orientations for G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, and anyone interested in learning about our general service structure from top to bottom. Our area committee meetings are generally in February, April, July and October, and are attended by area officers, 12 standing service committee chairs, and D.C.M.s. We have a two-day pre-Conference Spring Area Assembly in March, where members break into mock committees to discuss the final Conference agenda items. Each mock committee reports back to the assembly body afterwards for a collective sense of the area group conscience. I look forward to the extra time we have this year to continue to have discussions about the agenda items and to gather additional feedback from more of our members at the group and district levels before attending the G.S.C. in late May. It will be a challenge to prepare my report for the two-day post-Conference Summer Area Assembly held in mid-June, but I will do the best I can with God’s help, and will look forward to other opportunities for myself and my alternate to sharpen our reporting skills as we get invitations to visit our districts throughout the remainder of the year. Our Fall Area Assembly is a three-day event in September, and we combine it with a Conference format, where we invite past delegates, past or current trustees, and a G.S.O. staff member to speak Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning. We have found it very helpful to have G.S.R. and D.C.M. sharing sessions at each assembly, offering unified support and a larger pool of experience and solutions. Area 65 is blessed to have up to eight or nine past delegates still participating and serving in any way they can, whether it be in workshops, our orientations, ad hoc committees or sharing their knowledge or archival information from past panels at the mic during assemblies and area committee meetings. We are really excited about our newly formed Technology Committee, and look forward to their development, expertise and guidance in being more effective in this ever-growing digital world. I thank God for the privilege of serving our Fellowship with each and every one of you during this Conference. — *Tina P.*

**Texas (Southeast):** Area 67 is only 25,406 square miles, but is centered around Houston, the fourth largest city in the U.S. Our area encompasses not only Harris County, the country’s third largest county, but also its seven contiguous counties, which have a combined population of nearly seven million. So, while our area is the smallest geographically of Texas’s four areas, we have a larger population and therefore traditionally more groups. A recent count indicates we have 693 groups on our rolls. These groups come together to form 18 districts, five of which are linguistic (Spanish-speaking) districts. Our area meets quarterly starting in January with the combined area assembly and SETA Convention, which rotates between Houston,

Beaumont and Galveston. This year's convention was held in Galveston and had the theme "Carry the Message to Other Alcoholics" and registered just over 1,600 attendees. The remaining three assemblies have an average attendance of 200 members representing 30 percent of our active groups. This year, area trusted servants will be addressing several items from our recent area inventory, including concerns about how we conduct our two-day assemblies as well as their costs. This will add to an already busy year, as Area 67 will host not only the Texas A.A. State Convention in July but also the Southwest Regional Forum in October and finally the Third Annual National Correctional Facilities Committee (C.F.C.) Conference in November. So, if you find yourself in our area for any reason, I promise you will find amazing A.A. meetings and — regardless of the time of year — humidity. — *Troy B.-DiD.*

**Utah:** Area 69 is made up of the entire state of Utah, more than 84,000 square miles. In December 1944 the first A.A. meeting in Salt Lake City was held. We currently have 11 districts, with one being a Spanish-speaking district. Each district is represented by a D.C.M.C., D.C.M. or M.D.C. There are 516 registered groups and approximately 7,740 members. Of that number of groups, only around 401 groups are active. A lot of Area 69 is rural and remote. District 9 has one group that meets every day and is 461 miles from District 10, our largest district, which has 134 groups within the boundaries of South Salt Lake. In March 1951, Clyde G.'s name was pulled out of the hat to become the first delegate to represent Area 69. Today Area 69 has seven officers, nine standing committee chairs and one non-rotating repository archivist. Each year we hold three area assemblies. At the pre-Conference assembly in the spring, we hold roundtables with the standing chair committees to discuss the agenda items for the upcoming Conference and inform our delegate of the group conscience of the Utah area. In May at our post-Conference assembly, the delegate gives a report on what actions were taken at the Conference and presents financial reports. At the fall assembly, standing committee roundtables and/or panels are held so members can become better informed about ways to carry the message beyond the group level. In even years, our area elections are held. Area 69 holds two area committee meetings a year to allow the delegate to share current information from G.S.O., to discuss agenda items so the districts can be better informed, and to discuss solutions to ongoing problems and concerns in order to better carry the message. We hold three area workshops a year to provide a forum to discuss the General Service Conference theme and workshop/presentation topics for the current year. This may be done by panel presentations or roundtable discussions. Of our three workshops, one is a Bridging the Gap workshop, where we provide a joint forum for the Corrections and Treatment Committees to share experiences with the Bridging the Gap program and to discuss ways it can be better utilized in our area. All area events are hosted on a rotating basis among the districts and selected one or two years in advance. In the last two years we have been trans-

lating our area guidelines, assembly minutes and event flyers into Spanish to better carry the service message to our Spanish-speaking members. — *Matt D.*

**Virginia:** Area 71 covers approximately 40,000 square miles, encompassing 95 counties and 39 independent cities with a population of approximately 8.4 million. Virginia stretches from the beautiful shores of the Atlantic Ocean across the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains to the foothills of the Appalachians and up to the busy metropolitan area of northern Virginia. We have 1,572 listed groups within 44 active districts, of which one was formed last year as a result of a district split. We have 11 standing committees and seven special assignment coordinators, and we meet four times annually. We meet in January to plan the agenda for our spring assembly and again in July to set the agenda for our fall assembly. We have participation from all corners of the state, with an average attendance of 500 at assemblies. Area events rotate around the state to allow local members to participate and so that no one district has to always bear the long-distance travel. We also have an area convention hosted by a local district and the Archives Annual Open House each spring held at our archives office. The area sponsors two workshops each year, Corrections and P.I./C.P.C., which are hosted by local districts on a rotating basis. We recently began accepting group contributions online through our area website and have formed an ad hoc committee to begin the process of conducting an area inventory. I am both honored and excited to serve on Panel 69 of the General Service Conference. — *Barb D.*

**Washington (Western):** Area 72 encompasses the western half of Washington State and was born from an area split many years ago. We have 42 districts, two of which are geographical Spanish-speaking districts, and more than 1,500 groups. Our annual assembly breaks 800 in attendance, with over 400 voting members. We collaborate with neighboring areas to hold the Pacific Northwest Conference ([pnc1948.org](http://pnc1948.org)). We enjoy meaningful and ongoing engagement with our past delegates, who are ex officio members of our area committee. Last year we created a new appointed position dedicated solely to managing our area's translation and interpretation needs. We have an area history book named *Our Stories Disclose*. We are currently writing the third edition of this book. Over the past several years we have also begun to participate in topical national conferences such as the National A.A. Archives Workshop and National A.A. Technology Workshop. I am happy to say that we are doing very well in the western Washington area, and it is such a privilege to serve as delegate. — *Alan F.*

**West Virginia:** Our archives tell us that some locals went to Akron, Columbus and Cleveland to get sober. They came back and ordered the Big Book. Then two groups merged, and our first recorded meeting was in Charleston, West Virginia, in 1942. A group later decided to create an "All Purpose Foundation/Institution" that "combined research, education, rehabilitation and doing good."

Multiple rules and regulations ensued until huge disagreements stalled the project. A member wrote to the A.A. Foundation and got the “not in line with A.A. experience” response. Sometime later, the Foundation received a card folded in half with the text “Rule #62” on the outside of it. When it was opened it read, “Don’t take yourself so damn seriously.” Area 73 is the home of Rule #62! This could be a motto for many of our A.A. members. This may also account for the warmth, openness and welcoming vibe to A.A. in West Virginia. Most groups and districts are small. That lets those of us in service get to know each other pretty well. Area 73 has 55 counties, with some meetings in Ohio and Maryland. We have 17 districts (15 active) and seven regions. We have two assemblies and one convention a year, and rotate hosting throughout the state. West Virginia is a gorgeous state with old mountains. Come visit any time. — *Susan V.*

**Wisconsin (Southern):** Geographically, Area 75 covers southern Wisconsin south of Green Bay, west to La Crosse and the Mississippi River, and south to the Illinois state line. It is diversely populated, with many large cities, small towns and rural communities. We have 955 active registered groups served by 30 districts, including one Spanish-speaking district, which hosted the 18th Wisconsin Hispanic Convention this past October. Five intergroup offices serve Area 75, often “taking the show on the road,”

displaying literature and various items for sale at conferences, district workshops and events. W.I.C.Y.P.A.A., the Wisconsin Conference of Young People in A.A., is also an active and growing presence in our area. Five assemblies for area business are held annually. January and June assemblies include a G.S.R. school, D.C.M. sharing session and service committee meetings. Our area archives have recently been relocated, and the committee is busy transitioning while welcoming a new non-rotating archivist. The Corrections Committee presents the annual State Corrections Workshop in conjunction with our northern neighbor, Area 74. Treatment, P.I. and C.P.C. committees actively participate in “A.A. at the V.A.,” an annual workshop at the Veterans Hospital in Milwaukee. Our Delegate’s Workshop, a roundtable discussion held in March, offers the Fellowship an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the upcoming General Service Conference agenda items. The fifth and final assembly takes place at our fall conference. It is devoted to an area inventory in odd-numbered years and to area elections in even years. This year’s fall conference (October 18-20 in Milwaukee) will also host the East Central Regional Conference. Program chairs are working with Area 75 members and E.C.R. delegates to create interesting, informative panels and presentations for the event. I am extremely grateful and honored to represent Area 75 as a Panel 69 delegate. Thank you for this opportunity to serve Alcoholics Anonymous. — *Kris K.*