

Area 29, Panel 72

February 2023

Delegate Report



Welcome to our February Area Committee meeting, our first of 2023. I'd particularly like to welcome those new to Area Service. We need you! As the Chair of a Conference Committee, last month I had the privilege of attending the January General Service Board weekend, participating in many of the meetings and discussions. It was a wonderful and enlightening weekend, a rare opportunity to see our service structure in action at the lowest level. I traveled up to New York a day early, and had the opportunity to visit our General Service Office, perusing the archives. Pictured is the typewriter the manuscript for the first edition of our Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous was typed on.



New & Exciting

Planning for the 73rd General Service Conference is well underway. The list of Agenda Items has been released to our fellowship. **As of this report's finalization background material has not been released.** Translation into Spanish and French is complete, but GSO had some difficulties with links and uploading onto the dashboard. Our General Service Office (GSO) deserves great credit for implementing improved processes and obtaining the necessary resources to get the translations done in a much more timely manner than past years, and should have the background in time for our pre-conference planning.

Our Area proposed, *"In the planning of future General Service Conferences, Regional Forums, General Service Board meetings, and such, prepare a back-up plan allowing for full hybrid participation, including the ability to debate and vote in all meetings and general sessions for all participant members who may require quarantine from all or any portion of the gathering."* The Trustee's General Service Conference Committee is already acting on this matter with a plan for the Conference being finalized. Of note, a plan was in place should there have been a Covid outbreak at the General Service Board (GSB) weekend. Fortunately, there was no outbreak necessitating a test of the plan.

Our proposed agenda item regarding the GSR pamphlet, to remove any misperception that only the "most qualified" AA member be chosen as the group's GSR, was not selected for the Conference agenda. The committee noted that there is not a widely expressed need.

Printed copies of the 72nd General Service Conference Final Report remain available. I brought some with me, and still have a few in reserve at home. These may be useful as we prepare for this year's Conference. Instead of the 400 English copies I ordered in 2022, I ordered 350 for 2023, as it appears many are content to receive digital copies and they are costly to produce. I also ordered 25 Spanish language copies for 2023, as in 2022.

The 2022 Membership Survey data is in the final stages of analysis. Online groups were over-sampled, and weighting calculations need to be performed to finalize. Pamphlet and website layouts are complete, awaiting final numbers to be plugged in. The pamphlet will contain general data and a QR code to a website where more extensive data will be available. GSO will be surveying Delegates as part of a “Lessons Learned” exercise after the survey process is complete.

Fellowship feedback on closing Big Meetings at the 2025 International Convention: Survey result responses did not reflect a desire to change the current practice wherein the chairs of the Big Meetings close in the manner of their choice, with some closing with the Lord’s Prayer, some closing with the Serenity Prayer, and some closing with the Responsibility Statement. Calculating the English, French, and Spanish responses in total, over 50% responded favorably to the current practice.

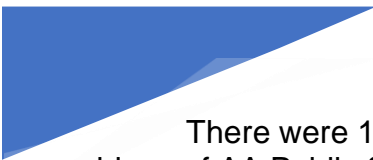
General Service Board (GSB) & General Service Office (GSO)

During Board Weekend our GSB Chair, Linda Chezem, a Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustee was asked to step down, which she did. I thanked her for her service, and wish her well going forward.

GSO has reorganized their operations to improve effectiveness and efficiency, creating two new departments. Legal, Licensing and Intellectual Property will be responsible for all legal matters, including international literature licensing and intellectual property. Language Services coordinates translation of literature and other documents and provides needed translation services. These changes are intended to remove some of the burden from Publications so they can focus on their core responsibility of making sure literature is available, as well as to respond to last year’s Conference Advisory Action that all documents be available in French, Spanish and English simultaneously.

Doctor: I can’t find out what your problem is. It could be due to excess alcohol consumption.

Me: It’s okay. I can come back when you’re sober.



There were 125,192 airings of AA Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) tracked by GSO in 2022.

Plain Language Big Book PAIs: A plan is in place to allow Conference Members to review completed portions of the Plain Language Big Book at the General Service Conference. Six chapters will be ready for review and each Delegate will be given one hour to read them in a monitored, “closed” reading room. Literature Committee members will be given first viewing of draft chapters in a moderated environment. I plan on taking advantage of this opportunity and will report on my impressions during my Report Back

Young People’s Video Project – In Oct. 2022 I reported that the Public Information (PI) Desk was looking for videos for their Young People’s Project. Deadline was Nov. 2, 2022. There were 7 submissions. 2 videos have been edited and were viewed during the GSB weekend. I thought they looked very good. We have some talented young people in our fellowship.

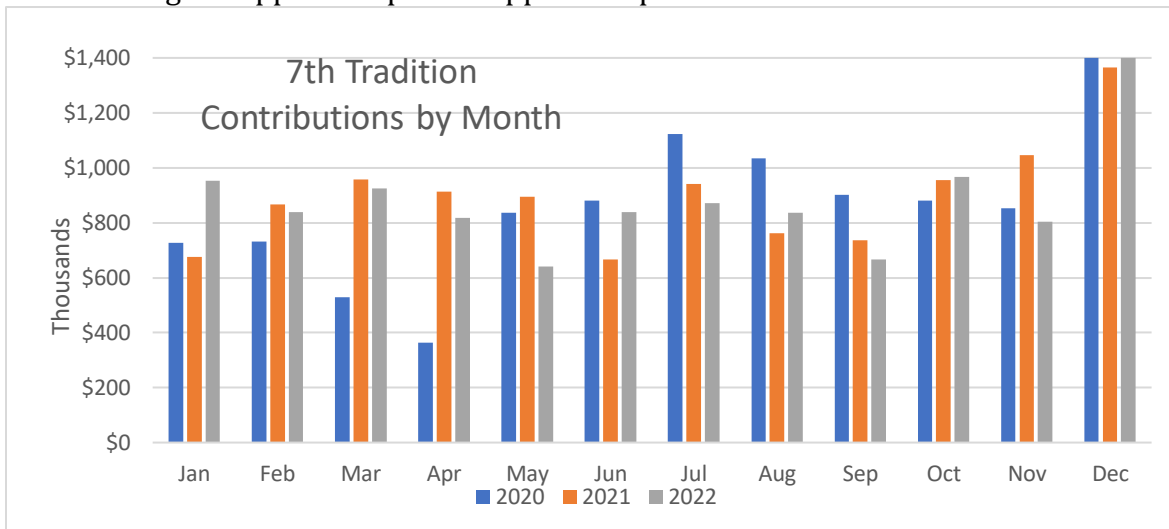
Financial Update

This information (unaudited) is as of Dec. 31, 2022:

- Contributions: \$10.55 million (96% of budget)
 - \$227,000 less than 2021
- Literature Sales: \$12.0 million (109% of budget)
- Literature Margin: \$4.89 million (91% of budget)
 - Cost of Goods Sold: 57.5% (49% budgeted)
- Overall Expenses: \$17.5 million (99% of budget)
 - Payroll & Benefits: \$9.7 million (99% of budget)
- 2022 Deficit: \$1.56 million (\$855,032 budgeted)
- Grapevine Lost: \$420,000 (\$19,234 surplus budgeted)
- Prudent Reserve: 12.95 million. Approx. 7.35 months.



Emergency withdrawal of \$200,000 in Dec. 2022 to support Grapevine operations. (The transition to a different fulfillment center required Grapevine to settle all invoices from the departing company to transition operations to the new vendor. This depleted most of their operating cash and didn't leave enough to cover payroll and payables). Another \$500,000 withdrawal was approved at the Jan. 2023 GSB meeting to support Grapevine App development.



The mailing address for sending 7th Tradition Contributions to GSO:

Post Office Box 2407
James A. Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

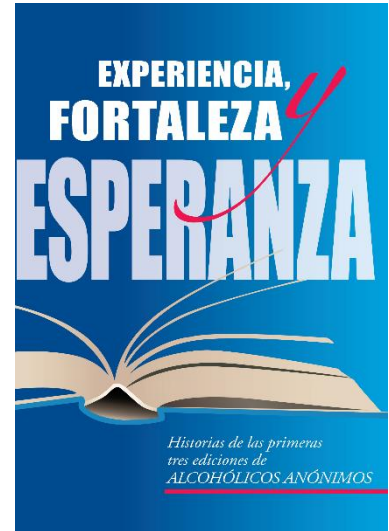
Online contributions can be made [here](#).

Publishing & Grapevine

Effective April 3, 2023 book prices will increase 20%. Pamphlets will increase 30%. Historically the cost of goods sold was 30-34%. During 2022 the costs increased to 57.5%. The last two prices increases were in 2009 and 2014 (33.3% and 18.75%).

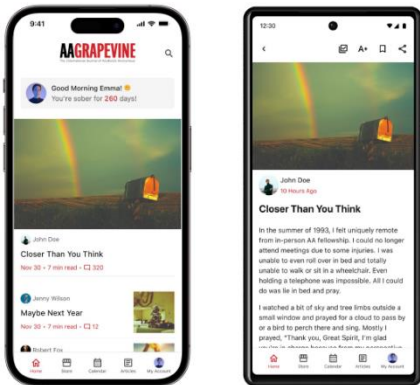
The Mixed-Title Quantity Discount will continue. The Pilot Test results from the final 9 months of 2022 were favorable. Overwhelming appreciation was expressed from much of our Fellowship -- particularly from smaller groups, districts, and areas; as well as from Intergroups and Central Offices of all sizes who communicated that this discount helps them better manage their literature inventory and purchases.

The new Spanish translation of the book *Experience, Strength and Hope*, which is titled *Experiencia, fortaleza y esperanza*, is now posted on aa.org. This book includes 56 stories that have been retired from the first three editions of the English-language editions of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and for the first time are translated into Spanish and collected in this anthology. The digital edition is now available for reading at no charge. To access this new Spanish translation, [click here](#). Print version is in the print production process.



Fifth Edition Big Book: In response to the 2021 General Service Conference Advisory Action requesting the development of a Fifth edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Trustees' Literature Committee sought a wide range of AA recovery experience of members in the Fellowship. Approximately **2,800** individual stories were submitted by the due date. Interestingly, the call for stories for the Fourth Edition drew **1,200** stories.

Spanish Fourth Edition Big Book: The call for stories for the Spanish edition *Big Book* drew over 100 with signed publishing rights and another 50 or so with pending publishing rights. Interestingly, there were 3 stories (so far) submitted in English and even 1 story submitted in French.



Grapevine and LaVina Apps: With Grapevine printed magazine circulation projected to continue falling, to remain viable, Grapevine plans to develop an interactive App available for subscription (\$2.99 a month). This will require a significant initial investment of \$300,000 - \$400,000. Content will include:

- Access to Articles not available in printed magazine
- Ability to Comment on and Share Articles
- Personalization with Sobriety Date, Favorite Meetings and Spiritual Maintenance Checklist
- More Opportunities to Publish Your Stories

Beta testing is scheduled to begin in July 2023, with App Release scheduled for Sep. 2023

AA Grapevine Upcoming Magazine Topics:

- March: *Getting Involved in AA Service*
- April: *AA and Families*
- May: *Why I Love My Home Group*
- June: *Celebrating our "Twelve & Twelve" – 70 Wonderful Years.*

Upcoming Grapevine Books, Planned for 2023:

1. *30th Anniversary Home Group Book*

AA La Viña Upcoming Magazine Topics:

- Mar – Apr: *People who Ordinarily Would Not Mix*
- May – Jun: *Relapse Prevention*
- July – Aug: *Prison issue*

New La Viña Book, Now Available:

1. *Sobriedad emocional: Más allá del horizonte*

Upcoming La Viña Books, Planned for 2023 (or later)

1. *Best of La Viña*
2. *Prayer and Meditation*

Northeast Region Update & NERD Happenings

The Northeast Region AA Service Assembly (NERAASA) 2023 will be hosted by Area 48 Northeast New York (NENY) in Albany NY, Feb. 24-26, 2023. Register at: neraasa.org/register/2023. An online option has recently been added. There will also be a NERAASA First Timers Orientation Committee located near the registration tables. Registration is brisk, with hotels, including the “overflow” hotels, nearly fully booked.

NERAASA 2024 will be hosted by Area 59 Eastern PA in Hershey PA. Feb. 23-25, 2024

The Northeast Region Delegates (NERD) Get-Together 2023 will be hosted by Area 12 Delaware in Wilmington Mar. 10-12, 2023. Registration is now open, and all Past Delegates should have received an email from the Secretary, Nikki.

The Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) 2023 will be hosted by Area 30 Eastern MA in Burlington MA June 2-4, 2023

Area 49 Southeast New York (SENY) will be hosting their 55th State Convention Mar. 23-26, 2023 at the Westchester Marriott. For more information visit aaseny.org/2023-seny-convention.

Area 43 New Hampshire will be hosting their 56th State Convention Mar.31 – Apr 2. Link for more info. is [here](#).

I encourage all to visit websites of neighboring Areas for more information on upcoming virtual and live events.

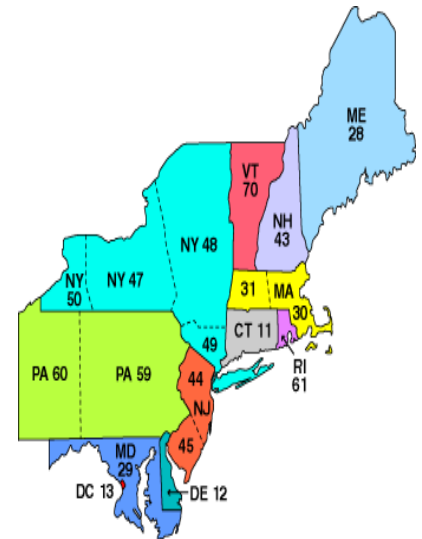
Outside our Region

The London International Convention, sponsored by the London Regions of Alcoholics Anonymous, will be held in London, England April 28-30, 2023. For more information visit <https://londonaaconvention.com/>.

The West Central Region Service Conference, sponsored by Area 41 Nebraska, will be held March 3-5, 2023 in Omaha (with participation on Zoom). For more information see <https://westcentralregion.org/west-central-regional-service-conference/>.

Conference Agenda Review Committee's (CARC's)

Our Conference Agenda Review Committee's will begin meeting in the next few weeks. This is your opportunity to help ensure I am an informed Delegate at our General Service Conference, and that I know the group conscience of Area 29, Maryland.



Did You Know?

Our General Service Office manages an International Literature Fund, contributed to by service structures around the world, including ours.

Most recently the fund was used to buy literature from the Mexican GSO to be shipped to Cuba, as shipments from the USA are restricted.

All four of our CARC's have scheduled pre-conference meetings.

- CARC 1 - Feb. 28
- CARC 2 - March 7 & 21
- CARC 3 - March 18
- CARC 4 - April 1

I am grateful for the efforts of all the CARC Leaders and Mentors involved. And much thanks to our Alternate Delegate, Terry, for coordinating this activity.

Travels & Activities

Jan 7 - DCM's and Alternate's Mtg
Jan 9 – Baltimore IG Mtg
Jan 13 – Bowie Speakers Bus. Mtg
Jan 20 – Conf. Committee Chair Orientation
Jan 24 – Northeast MD IG Mtg
Jan 27–30 – General Service Board Weekend
Feb 3 – Northeast NY Corrections Workshop
Feb 4 – DCM's and Alternates Mtg
Feb 5 – Delegate Conf. Comm. Chairs Mtg
Feb 11 – CARC Prep. Mtg
Feb 13 – Conf. Corrections Comm. Mtg
Feb 17 – Modified Agenda Prep. Mtg
Feb 18 – Area Committee
Feb 19 – Delegates Meeting w/Trustee
Feb 24-26 – NERAASA
Feb 28 – CARC I

Mar 4 – DCM's and Alternates Mtg
Mar 6 - Conf. Corrections Comm. Mtg
Mar 7 – CARC 2
Mar 10-12 – NERD Get-Together
Mar 13 – Baltimore IG
Mar 15 – Conf. Corrections Comm. Mtg
Mar 18 – CARC 3
Mar 19 - Delegates Meeting w/Trustee
Mar 21 – CARC 2
Mar 25 – Area Assembly
Mar 26 - Conf. Corrections Comm. Mtg
Apr 1 - DCM's and Alternates Mtg
Apr 1 – CARC 4
Apr 8 – CARC 4
Apr 15 – Mini-Conference
Apr 21-29 – General Service Conference

If you would like a visit to your Group, District or Intergroup please contact me at: delegate@marylandaa.org.

“To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action.”
– *Alcoholics Anonymous, pg. 93*

Respectfully Submitted,

Kurt W.
Delegate, Area 29 Panel 72
Chair, Conference Corrections Committee
delegate@marylandaa.org

