



Delegate Report

Area 29 Panel 74

February, 2024



Welcome to Area 29 Panel 74. If you are a new District Committee Member or Alternate District Committee member, I want to thank you for stepping up onto this important leadership role. That also goes for all our new area committee chairs and co-chairs and panel officers. Each role we have assumed is a vital link to helping the still suffering alcoholic and all the current members of Alcoholics Anonymous who depend on this life saving program.

Panel 74

We continue to face challenges in A.A. within a diverse community which is Area 29. These challenges involve not only adapting to new forms of communication following the pandemic of 2020 but also navigating an ever-changing culture across multiple generational and technological gaps. Today's alcoholic and tomorrow's alcoholic are not the same person. We aim not only to provide services for our current members and their needs but also to address the needs of alcoholics who may be struggling nearby, just around the corner from where we sit today. Moreover, we aspire to support the newcomer of tomorrow, whom we may never know or fully understand, with their fears and inner turmoil that might hinder them from stepping into the sunlight of the spirit and recovery as we know it. This is our challenge for the next two years and beyond—to start meeting the needs of people we might never know.

With that said, I want to encourage this panel to continue diversifying Maryland General Service and inclusively bringing new people to the leadership of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our task is not merely to address the needs of today's alcoholics but to build a cadre of trusted servants who will lead A.A. into future generations. I would ask that you challenge yourselves, your districts, and home groups to bring a new GSR to the assembly. Let's work together to open the lines of communication within our area committee, area assemblies, and districts. I hope that will be the theme of our panel: ***developing future trusted servants.***

74th General Service Conference

"Connecting with Love, Unity and Service."

The General Service Board convened during the last weekend in January, with its primary focus on finalizing the agenda for the upcoming General Service Conference scheduled for April. Previously, during their October board weekend, they had already narrowed down the proposed agenda items, and this January meeting finalized the agenda ensuring inclusion in accordance with the equitable distribution plan for committees. The equitable distribution plan facilitates the sharing of items among committees, especially crucial for committees like literature and public information, which may have a larger number of items. Copies of the entire final agenda are available on the Handout table and have been distributed electronically. Please ensure you obtain a copy and bring it back to your home group. Lori, our alternate delegate, will provide details on the conference agenda review committee process and the Mini Conference the first weekend in April. Take some time to review this information and mark your schedule accordingly. These agenda items are things that the members of Alcoholics Anonymous believe will help us carry this lifesaving message to alcoholics who still suffer. It's vitally important that we hear from the fellowship in order to make these items going forward more effective in carrying our message.

Founders Writings



73rd General Service Conference, Finance Committee Apr 23-29, 2023

Discuss new proposed agenda items (PAI's) regarding the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

The committee suggested that the Trustees' Literature Committee seek input from the Fellowship (including but not limited to Area delegate feedback) regarding any possible future changes to literature written by A.A.'s founders. The committee requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2024 Conference Committee on Finance.

November, 13 2023

Letter from the Trustee's Literature Committee.

We would like to hear from you – **the top of the triangle!** (emphasis added) While we hope that the suggested questions will help to spark thoughtful sharing and discussion, please feel free to add questions that we may not have thought of that you feel may best inform the discussion. Most of all, we are grateful for and thank you for your participation.

1. Do you think that A.A. Founders would object to or embrace revisions to their writings? If yes, why? If not, why?
2. Do you think the Founders' writings are effective in reaching new members? If not, what measures do you think can be taken to resolve this issue?
3. What reasons would you consider for changing our Founders' writings?
4. How do you feel about changing A.A. Founders' writings to replace outdated references?
5. What suggestions do you have for preserving the Founders' writings, along with keeping pace with our current A.A. Society and its future?
6. Should there be a special Conference process for approval of changes to our Founders' writings? (e.g., super, or qualified majority – 75%, and/or 2-year consideration process.)
7. What additional ideas, thoughts or suggestions can you share about changing or not changing the Founders' writings?

Then things started going astray...

February 7, 2024

A TENTH STEP FROM THE TRUSTEES' LITERATURE COMMITTEE

“However, in a subsequent meeting with the delegates, it was stated that the sharing could be forwarded to the General Service Office. As a result, many in the Fellowship sent us individual letters relating their viewpoints on the matter.

We realize now that this invitation confused matters and inadvertently circumvented the Conference process wherein the Area Delegates bring to the Conference the sense of their respective Areas.”

What's what in Area 29

- What is in the scope of “Founders Writings”
 - * Published literature written by Bill W. and/or Dr. Bob. et al.(founders)
- There are **no additional changes to the Founders Writings on the agenda** for the 74th General Service Conference.
- Why are we talking about this?
 - * A large number of Proposed Agenda Items for the conference have been submitted over the past several conferences, concerning changes to the literature, specifically the 2021 changes to the 12 x 12 and the change to the preamble.
 - * The Finance committee at the 73rd GSC was given the agenda item, Discuss new proposed agenda items (PAI’s) regarding the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. That committee. The committee provided the aforementioned committee consideration, in which they proposed five questions. None of these questions were in the letter from the trustee committee, who generated a list of 7 new questions.
- What is happening now?
 - * The Maryland General Service panel, developed a variety of ways to provide sharing from the Area 29 Members. 4 Virtual Session, Online form for members to provide their feedback on the 7 questions. Additional sharing in our CARC and Mini-conference coming up.
- What happens next?
 - * Consolidating a lot of great feedback, I will bring your voices to the General Service Conference, where there is a planned sharing session for the whole conference body.
- What have members said?

From the online questionnaire.

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT THE A.A. FOUNDERS' WRITINGS?

209	15:22
Responses	Avg. Time to Complete

Would the founders Object?

- Yes 86
- No 116



Founders' writings are effective in reaching new members?

- Yes 179
- No 228



Take-aways from sharing

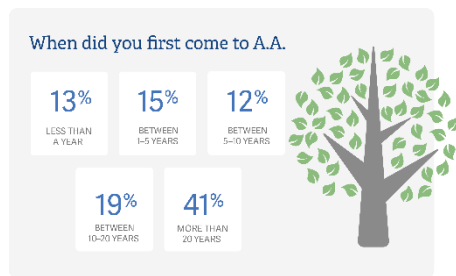
Approximately 120 members attended the online sharing sessions. Over 200 members have responded to the online questionnaire or through email.

- A majority of members want **no changes to the literature.**
- Some members see a need for *new language* which should be supplemental to the original text.
- New literature should be created to **help new members identify with recovery.**
- Any changes, if necessary, should be reviewed cautiously over several conferences and adopted only with a **super majority of conference vote** (75% or greater)

A.A. Member Survey

More than 6,000 *A.A. members* were randomly selected and surveyed in 2022 by the General Service Office for the U.S. and Canada. The Membership Survey, which has been conducted periodically since 1968, provides a snapshot of the A.A. fellowship and its members. This survey is not a census.

[2022 Membership Survey | Alcoholics Anonymous \(aa.org\)](https://www.aa.org/2022-membership-survey)



Gender of Members

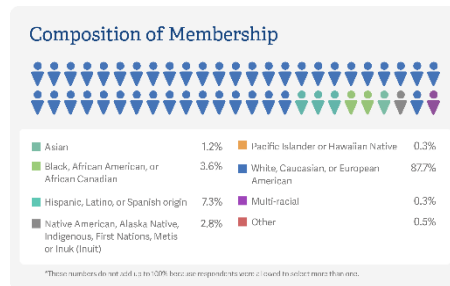


63.94% Male

35.45% Female

0.46% Non-binary, neither, both, gender fluid, non-conforming

0.15% Other



Publishing News

Supply chain disruptions throughout the worldwide paper, printing and trucking industries continue to unfavorably impact the manufacture and distribution of A.A.W.S. literature and other items. Efforts are ongoing to mitigate disruption. It is likely we will be experiencing intermittent disruptions for the foreseeable future.

Webstore and Member Services

Our Member Services and A.A.W.S. webstore teams have implemented measures to insure the following:

Those seeking to purchase items will receive all discounts earned on items that they select – including those items on backorder.

Individuals ordering can “add to cart” and place orders for these items as they normally would. The items will ship when they are back in stock.

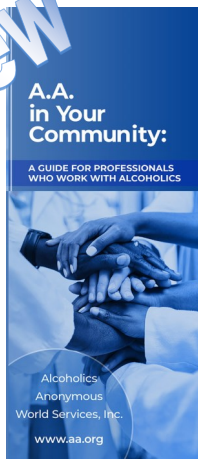
Purchasers will receive emails informing them of any backorders.

The product detail pages of the webstore will state when an item is “out of stock,” provide an estimated “back in stock” date and display related items available for purchase now (the same content in different formats, for example).

A notice on the detail pages for out-of-stock items will reiterate that purchasers seeking to order our literature may check with their local Intergroups and Central Offices, which may have the items in stock.

As always, it is encouraged to order the Big Book and all literature items from local groups, districts, areas, Intergroups and Central Offices, as they play a vital role in local Twelfth Step activities.

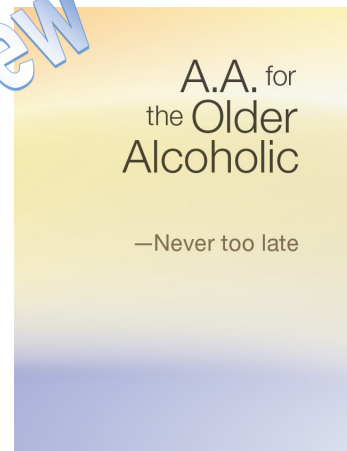
New



New



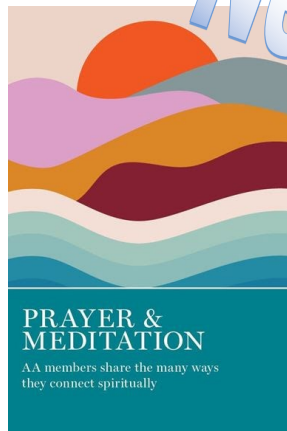
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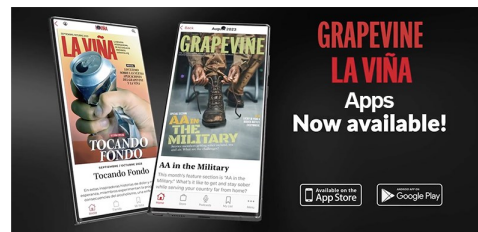
"Young People in AA," distributed an impressive 33,000 copies since its debut.

Grapevine

New



Audio Book (MP3)



General Service Office Letter of Gratitude, 25 Jan 2024

The General Service Office's General Manager, Bob W., expresses gratitude for the generous contributions received by the General Service Board from the Fellowship. Responding to challenges outlined in his November 2023 letter, Bob notes that December contributions set a record with over 9000 groups and members participating. In December the General Service Board typically receives just under 7000 contributions. This surplus allowed the General Service Board to surpass its annual budget. Bob highlights *cost-cutting efforts*, deferred work affecting the 2024 budget, and emphasizes the importance of supporting Alcoholics Anonymous' primary purpose. Despite a reduction in publishing dollars, Bob stresses the vital role of financial contributions in sustaining the life-saving mission of Alcoholics Anonymous.

December contributions set a record with over 9000 groups and members participating.

General Service Board Finances

Highlights of 2023 Revenues are:

- Contributions – Budget of \$10,500,000 actual \$10,872,239. This is the greatest amount of contributions ever received.
- Contributions – Number of groups contributing. Pre-pandemic approximately 28,000. In 2021 a low of 18,558, 2022 saw 19,572, 2023 reached 20,497.
- Gross Literature Sales - \$14,489,002 versus 2022 of \$11,795,264 and budget of 15,582,000.
- Net Literature Sales - \$7,191,125 versus 2022 of \$4,894,113 and budget of \$7,950,000. Gross Margin Percentage of 49.6% versus 2022 of 41.4% and Budget of 50%
- Grapevine - total revenue of \$2,562,978 versus 2022 of \$2,646,860 and budget of \$2,512,000

Highlights of 2024 AAWS/GSB Budget:

- Slight positive margin (\$47k) before depreciation of \$1.02 million. Positive Cash Flow of \$1.1 million expected.
- Literature gross sales assumed at same unit volume as 2023 – No revenue is assumed from titles still under discussion by the Conference. Gross margin budgeted at 50%
- Contributions budgeted flat from 2023 budget (\$10,500,000) and less than 2023 actuals (\$10,872,239)

Highlights of the 2024 AAGV Budget:

- Revenues and overall net loss (\$582k) in line with the 5-year plan (2022 – 2026) which was reviewed by Trustees Finance in January 2023. Per the 5-year plan, Grapevine should be cash flow positive starting in 2025.
- LaViña shortfall covered by GSB reduced from 2023 Reforecast of \$872k to \$582 I 2024

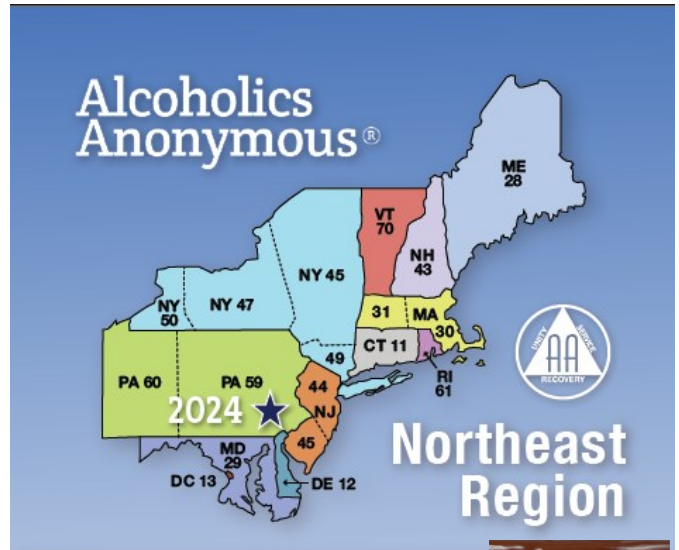
Reserve Fund:

- Draw of \$564,652 to fund year three of the Grapevine 5-year Plan
- Draw of \$500,000 to the General Service Board to ensure sufficient cash on hand to meet liquidity requirements in the second quarter of 2024, which includes \$1.1 million of Conference expenses. This is in response to the cash on hand deficiency carried over since the end of 2022 that was not fully mitigated by positive cash flow results in 2023 that resulted from the generous commitment to self-support from the Fellowship that exceeded both the previous annual record and 2023 reforecast budget for contributions, close management of expenses, and collections of receivables. **This draw plus expected positive cash flow in the first quarter of 2024 will fully fund the expenses expected to be paid in the second quarter of 2024.**
- Barring unforeseen circumstances, *rebuilding of the Reserve Fund could begin as soon as the fourth quarter of 2024.*

NERAASA Northeast Region A.A. Service Assembly

February 22-25 Hershey, Pennsylvania

- Panel 1: Participation of Online Groups
- Panel 2: Is our literature still relevant today?
- Panel 3: Money and Spirituality
- Panel 4: The Words of Our Founders
- Panel 5: Are we communicating effectively within A.A.?
- Panel 6: Safety in A.A., Belonging in A.A.



Delegate Activity

Recent		Upcoming	
Jan 6	DCM/ADCM	Third Sunday ea. Mon	NERD Zoom with Trustee
Jan 11	District 7	Feb 22-25	NERAASA (Hershey, Pa.)
Jan 14	Delegate Dinner	Mar 2 (1st Sat ea, Mon)	Monthly DCM/ADCM
Jan 17	MGS Panel Meeting	Mar 2	CARC I / CARC II
Jan 17	NERAASA Inventory Committee	Mar 8-10	NERD Weekend (Albany, Ny.)
Jan 20	Area Committee Strategic Planning Meeting	Mar 23	CARC II / CARC III
Jan 21	PI/CPC Committee	Mar 30	CARC IV
Jan 21	NERT Meeting	Apr 3	GSC Delegates Meeting
Jan 22	NERAASA Archives Ad-Hoc Committee	Apr 6	Mini Conference
Jan 22	Literature Conference Committee	Apr 12-20	General Service Conference
Jan 24	Founders Writing Virtual Sharing		
Jan 28	Founders Writing Virtual Sharing		
Jan 31	MGS Panel Meeting		
Feb 3	DCM/ADCM		
Feb 3	Founders Writing Virtual Sharing		
Feb 12	NERAASA Archives Ad-Hoc Committee		
Feb 15	GSC Delegates Meeting		

Respectfully submitted,

Terry P.
 Delegate Are 29, Panel 74
 Literature Committee
 delegate@marylandaa.org



Always available to come to your District meeting, Committee meeting, Home group or anywhere I can be of service.