Hawaii Area 17, Panel 65

February Committee Meeting

Delegate Report 2.28.15

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Aloha,

Mahalo for allowing me to serve as your panel 65, area 17 delegate. I am truly honored.

GSO has been busy preparing for the upcoming General Service Conference in April. The General Service Conference weekend was held late January with trustees (Class A and Class B), non-trustee directors and general service conference committee chairs (always delegates.) Highlights of the weekend:

* **AAWS** 
  + Total gross sales for 2014 were $17,128,000, which was $2,152,100 over budget. 1,140,000 print copies of the Big Book were distributed in 2014, plus 20,000 in ebook format. The next titles planned for the conversion of all titles to ebooks are *Pass It On*, *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, and *Experience, Strength, and Hope*.
  + An early reorder of the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Big Book resulted in a surplus of books. The 75th Anniversary edition was still profitable. A special booklet, “A Brief History of the Big Book” is being offered free of charge with each commemorative Big Book sold. In addition, a brochure entitled, “They Needed a Book,” is being prepared.
* **AA Grapevine, Inc.**
  + Circulation of the print Grapevine magazine averaged 74,000 in 2014; La Vina, 10,379. Gross profit for the Grapevine magazine was $1,529,063, $146,945 ahead of budget. Net profit on Grapevine was $325,827.
  + Gross profit on La Viña was $59,447, which is $2,180 ahead of budget. La Viña expenses exceeded revenue by ($132,026), which is less than the budgeted amount by $9,548.
  + The subscription challenge kicked off on Feb. 1. New subscriptions are going to be essential to keep Grapevine from slipping into the red in the next few years, so let’s pass the word and encourage new subscriptions by members, groups, etc.
  + Planning continues for the development of a version of the Grapevine for mobile devices. The audio book of The Language of the Heart is planned to be made available in the first quarter of 2015.
* **Archives**
  + In 2014 the Archives staff responded to approximately 1,480 requests for information and research. The archives staff also assisted many on-site researchers with their research projects.
* **Conference**
  + The Trustees’ Conference committee forwarded an item to the Conference Report and Charter committee to consider including on page S41 or S42 in the Service Manual a flow chart similar to that on page S37 with a dashed line to the side of “AA Groups” leading to a box reading “Intergroups/Central Offices.”
  + They also forwarded an item to Report and Charter to restore the “contents” page (as it was published in the 1978 Service Manual) on the page prior to the 12 Concepts Short Form.
* **CPC/Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities**
  + The Trustees’ CPC committee reviewed a suggestion to update graphics in the PowerPoint presentation, “Let’s Be Friendly with Our Friends,” and gave staff the go-ahead to take the initiative on this project. This PowerPoint is often emailed to local CPC committees for their use, so this update will improve services at the local level.
* **Corrections**
  + Anew corrections video is being developed which will be built around stories shared by alcoholics behind the walls.
  + There is also a focus on developing a Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS) for Canada.
  + There continues to be an ongoing need for more male volunteers to correspond with inmates. To fill that need and to attract more members for work in corrections, the trustees committee forwarded these topics for the Conference Corrections committee.
* **Finance and Budgetary**
  + 2014 contributions were $6,898,100, which is $101,900 less than budget. Still, because of strong sales, net profit was $1,376,656, which is $1,181,200 more than budget (pretty much equal to the large Hazelden literature purchase that took place just before the literature price increase in October).
  + The 2015 GSO budget has been developed. It projects net sales of $14,570,000, contributions of $7,000,000, and a net profit of $197,125.
  + The 2015 AA Grapevine, Inc., budget has also been developed. It projects total income of $2,113,375 and a projected loss of ($14,606). The 2015 La Viña budget projects a gross profit of $56,973 on the magazine, $9,298 on related items, and a net shortfall after expenses of ($159,457).
  + As of December 31, 2014, the Reserve Fund balance was $14,094,966, which is approximately 9.7 months of operating expenses.
  + The trustees’ Finance and Budgetary committee forwarded an item to the Conference Finance committee: to increase the annual limit on contributions to GSO from individuals from $3,000 to $5,000.
* **International Conventions/Regional Forums**
  + So far, there are over 34,000 people registered for the International in Atlanta on July 4th weekend to celebrate 80 years of AA – Happy, Joyous and Free. Demographics are skewing older than last time.
  + Dorm accommodations are available making lodging much more affordable.
  + Remember this is a very large convention and facilities are large and very spread out. Planning continues for scooters and carts for those who aren’t able to walk long distances.
* **Literature**
  + The Staff report from Mary Clare L. was made more interesting with a list of inquiries she received from members of the Fellowship including.
    - “I wrote my autobiography for A.A. – do you want to use it?”
    - “I was elected the Literature Chair of my District and I do not know what I am supposed to be doing. Can you point me in the right direction?”
    - A two-page criticism of “Many Paths to Spirituality” from a Muslim perspective.
    - “I need to talk to someone because I can’t stand my sponsor.”
    - Several requests a month for a Big Book (Mary Clare noted that she always says “yes” to these requests).
  + Concern about Box 459 making it to the groups was expressed. Please remind GSRs to share Box 459 with their groups as it is primary way GSO communicates with groups about services provided on their behalf.
  + The following items were forwarded to the Conference Literature committee.
    - Add Twelve Concepts section in back of *The AA service Manual* to the current Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.
    - Update the pamphlet ‘AA and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic” to include the entire GLBT community.
    - Multiple requests for literature which focuses on the alcoholic with mental health issues.
    - Update stories in “AA for the woman.”
* **Public Information**
  + The following reports and works in progress were forwarded to the Conference Public Information committee:
    - The 2014 Annual Report on Oversight of GSO’s AA Website
    - A report from the Subcommittee on the Comprehensive Media Plan; a report from the Subcommittee on the Relevance and Usefulness of Video PSAs
    - Information from the 2014 Membership Survey
    - A draft of a video on anonymity that is being developed to accompany the annual Anonymity Letter to the Media
    - A report from the Subcommittee on the Production of a New Video PSA, along with the proposed video PSA.
  + The Comprehensive Media Plan included a proposal to begin exploring use of specific social media platforms (Twitter and Instagram) and social networking platforms (Google +) as potential channels for sharing information about Alcoholics Anonymous.
* **General Service Board Strategic Plan**
  + The General Service Board is in the process of developing its mission statement. Approved so far is “Our mission is to serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.”

**From *Box 459***

The front page of the spring, 2015 box 459 (GSO’s newsletter) is entitled “Anonymity and the 2015 International Convention.” They comment that “No doubt about it – a great deal has changed in the way many AA members communicate since 2010 when over 50,000 members gathered in San Antonio for our previous International Convention. Devices have changed. Platforms have changed.

*However, our principle of anonymity has not changed.*

Other ideas and quotes from the article –

* “Anonymity is a gift each member makes to the Fellowship. It is humility in action, a voluntary decision made by AA members to set aside personal recognitions so that AA principle and program can have center stage instead.”
* Just as *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* recommend ‘restraint of tongue and pen’ one member shared recently “I also need to practice restraint of ‘click and send!’”
* “Anonymity is so fragile you can break it with one finger!” referring to sending photos of AA members with recognizable AA signs, badges, etc. included.

Another article describes the 65th General Service Conference with the theme “Celebrating 80 Years of Recovery, Unity and Service – The Foundation for Our Future.” Besides addressing this year’s theme and many agenda items, there will be presentation/discussion sessions on such topics as

* Diversity in AA – Our Heritage of Inclusion
* Safety and Respect – Practicing the Principles Begins in our Home Group
* Safeguarding our Traditions through the Evolution of Technology.

The conference will continue its inventory process considering the topic “Inventory – Looking Back to Move Ahead.”

Mahalo for this opportunity to be of service. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions whatsoever.

Cheryl N.

Delegate

Area 17, Panel 65

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