

Hawaii Area 17 / Panel 73  
Jeannie G., Area Chair  
Report Back:  
Pacific Regional Forum  
Las Vegas, NV  
July 12-14, 2024

*Aloha everyone,*

*First, I want to express my gratitude to all our groups and members whose contributions enabled me to attend the 2024 Pacific Regional Forum. I was taught that when funded by an entity like our Area 17, I am responsible for arriving early, staying for the entire event, and reporting back to the area body, so here goes!*

*I arrived in Las Vegas late Thursday afternoon. The temperature was 115 degrees when we landed! Some of us walked quite a distance in the heat to catch an Uber. (In that kind of heat, any distance is quite a distance!) We realized it was so hot that we were all breathing through our mouths because it hurt to breathe through our noses! After that, I did not leave the hotel until it was time to go home!*

*So, with that said, here is what I heard from our trusted servants. (Anything in italics is my thoughts):*

**Scott H: General Service Board (GSB) Chair:** reminded us he was just a member among members. He talked about:

- Responsibility and the composition of the General Service Board.
- Class A Non-alcoholic Trustees are better to recommend us. They lend credibility to AA and can capture the interest of "Friends of AA" (other professionals).
- Trustees serve on three committees.

**Bob W: General Manager (GM) of the General Service Office (GSO):** *He loves crazy socks and shared a few pairs with us over the weekend. It was amusing to see his more human side.* He shared:

- The General Service Office will move from the 8th floor to the 11th floor.
- The 8th floor is our seventh location, but it is the longest one we've occupied.
- The 11th floor is 10,000 sq. ft. smaller than the 8th floor, saving 25 dollars a square foot.
- The New York building offers nonprofit status to all renters, resulting in a 25% reduction in rent.
- We take great care to verify contributions are from an A.A. member.
- Some of his duties:
  - Provide leadership and management.
  - Spends time with the fellowship.
  - Oversees 87 employees with 14 direct reports.
  - He meets weekly with Scott H, the General Service Board Chair.
  - He talked about servant leadership based on empathy, care, and kindness. It's not what we do, it's how we do it.

**Marita R US Trustee-at-Large/US, (We also have a Trustee-at-Large from Canada):**

- Travels overseas to find out what's happening.
- Allocates 10% of our budget to help establish other General Service structures (advisors).
- A.A. in Cuba is now able to operate freely. They are on fire and recently had a 3-day health conference where A.A. engaged with healthcare workers. They also had a countdown with lights off and lightsabers. How cool is that!
- The Big Book has been translated into 73 languages, recently, one in Arabic and other items into 110 languages.

## **Kevin P: Class A Trustee General Service Board Treasurer**

- In 2023, contributions to the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition totaled 10.84 million dollars, a 2.8% increase from 10.55 million in 2022.
- Self-support covered 62% of operating expenses.
- The cost of program services per individual member was \$6.43.
- AAWS Publishing's gross profits in 2023 were 6.76 million dollars, a significant increase of 38.22% from 4.89 million dollars in 2022.
- The GSB Treasurer is always a Class A (Non-alcoholic) Trustee, is on the Finance Board, and serves as the primary interface to the general public.
- There were 57,222 active contributing groups.
- Millions of dollars from individual contributions: The two highest categories were \$0-\$50 and \$50-\$100.
- The General Service Office prudent reserve is currently at 6.3 months and should ideally be maintained at 9-12 months.

### **2024 General Service Office Budget**

- Operating revenue increased due to price hikes on certain literature and everyone stocking up.
- Treasurer Reports should be password-protected on websites.
- We are current on all bills.
- The Grapevine should cover costs by next year.
- Processing mail-in contributions costs \$5.60, while processing online contributions costs \$2.93, resulting in a savings of \$2.67.

## **A.A. World Service (A.A.WS) Corporate Board: Vera F., Non-Trustee Director:**

- We are currently seeking two trustees to fill vacancies for 2025.
- We are considering discontinuing the production of display racks and exploring alternative options.
- We will provide year-to-date contribution totals.
- We will continue to ensure cyber security.
- We are requesting stories about how money in the basket impacts your community.
- What we do matters.

## **Racey J. General Service Office Staff Coordinator: Special Worker:**

- There are 12 GSO Staff Standing Committee desks in the office.
- The GSO Staff Coordinator serves as secretary to a trustee.
- The Public Information sends out the "Anonymity Letter To Media" when requested.
- Currently working on:
  - Having PSAs on TVs in doctor offices.
  - AA Young People in AA video project.
  - Judge & lawyer presenting at correction convention.
- There are 1500 meetings in jails & prisons.
- Fun fact: In 1966, the first public service announcements (PSAs) were made on 45 vinyl LPs (*that's records for our younger crowd*).

## **Presentations:**

- **Working Together; Increasing Trust:** (the 2025 75th General Service Conference theme.) The resignation of one of our Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustees last year was revisited. Here are some of the things they learned through an inventory of the situation:
  - Communication is key up and down the triangle. Here are a few things to help ensure this happens:
    - Giving a timely explanation and having a single cohesive voice.
    - Being transparent and giving a report back.
    - Meet for general sharing sessions.
    - We found that social media escalated tensions. Don't trust secret Facebook groups.
    - We should always work together and don't jump to conclusions.

- **Three Sides of the Triangle:** Is your triangle equal on all three sides?
  - Most of us have heard the simile about the three-legged stool representing the three sides of our triangle. If one leg is broken or removed, the stool will not stand.
- **Service Leadership:**
  - What motivates you to continue in service?
  - Never be arrogant. People are always watching.
  - Many don't serve because of fear, but many serve even though they are fearful.
  - Service is the best example of gratitude. AA can only carry on through service.

#### **Safety Workshop: Common Problems and Possible Solutions:**

- Anonymity is not a cloak protecting criminal behavior.
- If you see something, say something or, better yet, do something.
- Safety In A.A. Forum: Oct 19, Saturday, 10 am-4:30 pm. I have a flyer; please see me for details.
- Never use the “13th Step” term. It seems like part of the steps. Use the term “preditorial behavior”.
- Distribute safety cards and safety starts in the group.

#### **Plain Language Big Book:**

- The "Plain Language Big Book: A Tool for Reading Alcoholics Anonymous" will go on sale on November 1, 2024, earlier than expected. *So exciting.*
- Plain Language Big Book is helpful to the deaf and/or blind community.
- There has been a rumor of a class action to stop the plain language edition, but until it happens, we do not engage.

#### **Grapevine/La vina Board: Paz P: Non-Trustee Director:** Provides leadership, oversight, and direction for magazines, ensuring adherence to AA principles with the mission of sharing recovering experiences.

- Two magazines, 52 books, 40 ebooks, 49 audiobooks, apps, podcasts, and websites.
- Buying Grapevine books as much as magazine subscriptions is important, but books generate a higher profit percentage and larger gross margin on each sale. The #1 book sold is “Language of the Heart.”
- Grapevine had a down year.
- The Grapevine's recent price increase is the first in over twelve years.
- LA Vina will present a 5-year plan to increase profits at the 2025 Conference Committee on Grapevine & La Vina.
- WhatsApp is your best friend!
- We have 69,000 groups. If only 10% of groups were to purchase a subscription, it would pay for itself.
- Prisons use tablets, and those incarcerated would rather listen to Grapevine Magazine than read it.
- Did you know you can record your story for 7 minutes and send it to Grapevine?
- Place a box in the Intergroup/Central Offices to collect Grapevines and give them to members at events.
- AAgrapevine.org/podcast is in the top 1.5% of all podcasts worldwide!
- Buy your Grapevine subscription through the Grapevine, not Google or Apple.
- Grapevine Apps Digital Subscriptions get you everything.

#### **Past Trustees Talks:**

- Is there a deep understanding and acceptance of the group's conscience in your group?
- The 5-year plan is always changing because times change.
- A heartfelt share about a sponsor who committed suicide because he felt he wasn't sober if taking meds.
- Being a trusted servant is not a popularity contest. *Elections are coming; I've always heard politicking has no place in AA.*
- Since 1978 we have been losing groups. Too many meetings and not enough groups. We pay our way.
- Do you know the difference between meetings & groups? Fear rigidity; we don't have laws.
- A 4-minute talk is elder abuse! *Said a long-timer with over 50 years of sobriety. It was so funny.*

## More Information:

- The Correction Desk receives 400 letters monthly from facilities.
- Accepting contributions through the Meeting Guide App is part of the plan and is a committee recommendation.
- A comprehensive social media plan is exploring this option to include Spotify.
- Why is AA not growing?
- Pamphlets are evaluated periodically by the conference. Corrections review pamphlets relating to corrections, etc.
- Only 30% of groups participate in the structure, so we must increase communication.
- On July 31, 2024, AA.com and Sober.com will be redirected to our website, AA.org. We did not pay for their domains; our attorneys helped persuade them, and we own the name "Alcoholics Anonymous."
- In 1975 we started bringing the GSO to the fellowship through traveling forums.
- This year's 2024 Forum had 918 attendees and 588 first-timers. *How amazing is that!*

**Reilly, our Pacific Regional Trustee**, ended her talk by saying, "GSO feels the weight of the triangle. We serve you."

*And serve, they do! So many members behind the scenes carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. Seeing and hearing them share their experience, strength, and hope while serving in General Service was inspiring.*

*I was grateful throughout the weekend and held back tears many times. It was a gift to witness the compassion displayed by so many members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Hispanic community showed up in large numbers and participated enthusiastically, and it was touching to hear about some of their struggles.*

*The skit on Saturday night was about the 2025 International Convention and was based on the TV show "The Addams Family." I'll leave the details to your imagination, but it was very funny!*

*Having lived in California for 25 years, I had only visited Vegas twice. During this visit, I gambled a bit with Deborah L., Julie, and Marianne, even though I'd never been a fan of gambling. I wasn't too happy about losing a mere \$100 so quickly, but the fellowship and laughter made up for it. Still, a hundred dollars could have bought me a new dress or two!*

*We shared delicious meals, had great conversations, and even had a late-night snack of a big slice of delicious cake from a vending machine. What more could a girl ask for?*

*Lastly, I was hooked after attending a forum in Waikoloa on the Big Island 8 years ago. Shortly after, I started my journey as a GSR, which led me here today, and for that, I am truly grateful. I owe Alcoholics Anonymous my life, and as long as I put sobriety first, everything else becomes first class. I am blessed beyond words.*

*Thank you all for the opportunity to serve!  
Jeannie G.*