

San Diego-Imperial Area 08
Delegate's Report
April 21, 2016

ENGAGE THE A.A. MEMBER AT LARGE

I received the Feasibility Study paper after the start of the Pre-Conference Workshop presentations. Reading it changed my perspective of the 2016 General Service Conference (GSC) Agenda. The paper presented A.A.'s struggle to meet increasing expenses because of a 20-year trend in flat-lining membership numbers and a decreasing number of registered groups contributing to GSO (now 41%). The paper informed the Delegates they will be asked only to generate ideas on how to remedy revenue shortfalls. They will make no decisions on feasibility as that is the responsibility of the trustees. My changing view of the agenda leads me to question if enough members of our Fellowship are engaged in the practice of all three of our legacies. If our membership was actively engaged in their Right of Participation, the 2016 GSC agenda items would probably be very different.

This year's agenda includes the pamphlet, **P-29 –“How A.A. Members Cooperate With Professionals,”** which was published in 1974 and was last revised in 1994. This information piece for professionals holds phrases such as “rest homes,” and “A.A. Farms.” This pamphlet may not be making A.A. relevant to today's highly-educated professional researchers and practitioners. Another agenda item serving the public level is the **“Twelve Concepts for World Service.”** We are considering the removal of the paragraphs from **Concept XI** that outline a view on the dynamics of male/female work relationships. This item was submitted with the thought the message in those paragraphs does not serve in recruiting today's talented professionals. Our agenda also holds items that are foundational to our spiritual way of life.

We are considering the revision of the illustrations in the pamphlet, **P-43 “Twelve Traditions Illustrated,”** which was created 45 years ago. Finally, the consideration to explore a Plain Language version of the big book has ignited an emotionally-charged discussion within the Fellowship. During the series of our Pre-Conference workshops, our Alternate Delegate and I were informed a version of the big book in Plain Language has already been published outside of AAWS. When I think the project has already been done AND the Fellowship's financial projections may not accommodate the project, I wonder if discussion of this emotionally-charged item serves us in keeping our Fellowship united.

It could be that these issues have gone unattended because the larger portion of our membership is disengaged from our self-sustaining practices of Self-Support, Leadership, and Participation. How we as trusted servants of this Fellowship move into action now may be every bit as important as it was when A.A. first began. Taking the suggestion to brainstorm how to engage the A.A. member at large into service, I have come up with a couple ideas for increasing participation in service that I have turned over to our area's standing committees. I hope you and your GSRs will begin to generate more ideas and develop communication with all groups in your districts about the need to invite all members to participate in service to keep our Fellowship united.

AGENDA COMMITTEE

I have asked our area's Agenda Committee to review the 300+ page background regarding the process of how GSC agenda items are selected. I have also provided the committee chair with a flowchart showing the various ways agenda items can be directed to the attention of the Conference. Our area's Agenda Committee can do a great deal of service in educating the GSRs of each district on how to participate in building the GSC agenda. Providing each district with knowledge of how to submit GSC agenda items will support thought and action within our membership as they read our literature and identify any need for a change in verbiage. We must raise the awareness each A.A. member is responsible for our public relations of attraction. Of course, we will need to get them to read our literature; so, I contacted the Chair of our Literature Committee with a different idea.

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

I contacted our Literature Chair with the idea of establishing a New Literature Person Orientation, which will be discussed with the committee. This effort can be expanded by DCMs who ask A.A. members at large to attend the Literature Committee meetings and act as liaison to their district's meeting.

I thought about suggesting the New Literature Person Orientation when a GSR at the Pre-Conference assembly did not know aa.org offers online access to print a PDF of each pamphlet. Understanding what information our groups do not know but need to know offers greater service opportunities. Every AA member should know they can print a PDF of any piece of literature. Each group should understand there is a wide variety of A.A. literature, which is paid for through group contributions. Knowing more about what specific information is available in A.A. literature will help group members connect to the newcomer, enlarge their own sobriety, and raise awareness of agenda items to improve and update our literature.

Other ideas for Literature Committee are:

Feature a "Pamphlet of the Month" in the same manner the San Diego Central Office offers a book of the month. Bring copies of the pamphlet to the Area Committee Meeting and distribute them to the DCMs. The DCM can report on it to their GSRs who can then report on it to their district literature person. Or the groups can invite group literature persons to attend the district meeting to get the pamphlet of the month.

This will require the Literature Committee to budget for copies of the selected pamphlets in order to offer this service to the groups. The Literature Committee could make a call for volunteers from groups to make a review of specific pamphlets that are old and do not get high rate of purchase. You would have to ask GSO to give you a list of pamphlets that are not frequently ordered.

***FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Please see District 15 for the background on this suggestion that has not yet been delivered to the Finance Committee. The request from District 15 for visit by the Area Treasurer reminds me of a discussion I and a couple other area officers had with one of our Past Delegates. He said the members of the Finance Committee used to pay visits to the district meetings to report on the progress toward collecting the contributions that fund the work we have planned.

Of course, we will need to be sure we don't get too much money too fast when we set a lower and lower budget. Due to our 25% GSO send-off guideline, the lower the amount of our annual budget, the lower the amount of money we can retain in the checking account. Getting too much money too fast will cause us to need to send off money to GSO. Sending off money that simply arrives too early in the year means it may not be available at the time when some 12-Step work is scheduled. That means even though it was planned and budgeted, the work will not be done because we will have sent the funds off to GSO.

DELEGATE'S VISITS

District 19:

This group has strong enthusiasm! One GSR, who is ready to rotate out, shared the idea to volunteer to be the GSR for a currently unrepresented group. She mentioned she now understands the job and that moving to an unrepresented group may help to understand how their participation benefits each member, the entire group, and A.A. as a whole.

Another GSR asked, "What is A.A. doing for young people?" I made contact with the GSR to learn more about what he sees and develop actions we can take.

There were a few 7th Tradition stories about how a group benefits from making a review of their pie charts. One group found it was duplicating its contributions to H&I. Another group discovered it was not making any contributions to the area.

District 15: I visited District 15 on April 8 to start a discussion on the Feasibility Study. District 18's DCM and a couple of their GSRs also graciously attended. I will type up a full report on the visit and send it along with the notes from the March 19 meeting that was held for the English-speaking districts. *There was a request for the Area Treasurer to visit the districts and speak about the funding the area needs in order to do the work it wants to do for the groups and AA as a whole.

I urge us all to pay close attention to the examples set by the Spanish districts and H&I that consistently inform the groups of the work they have to do and that funds are needed for the expenses of 12-Step work.

District 12: This district is growing in the number of GSRs. The meeting was efficient and the reports were detailed. I am highly impressed by the discussions and conscientious effort to insure they call on all unrepresented groups.