
Special Report on the 2016 General Service Conference

Delegate's Report to the Area Committee

May 19, 2016

2017 General Service Conference (GSC) Theme is Supporting Our Future

This report provides the post conference standing of the nine GSC agenda items discussed at the San Diego-Imperial Area's (SDIA) Pre-Conference Assembly. For each item, I detail the Conference actions and make suggestions for how our area can participate in **Supporting Our Future**.

To help GSRs communicate with group members, I will send a "newsletter" version of this report to all DCMs. The newsletter will hold only the info on the 2017 GSC theme and the nine items discussed at the Pre-Conference Workshop/Assembly. Please know I hope you will be inspired to ask your groups members for more ideas. Taking this information to your group and encouraging their action is the practice of the spiritual principle of leadership (Concept IX).

GSRs, DCMs and Standing Committee Members, in many of the items in this report I have inserted ideas on how you can work within your service position to contribute to our groups and A.A. as a whole. Here's how I have designated the remarks:

GSRs for your attention, I define specific action(s) you may take to lead your group members in participating in **Supporting Our Future**. Don't feel you must relay all this information at one time.

DCMs: Please participate in **Supporting Our Future** by leading others in discussing the items and urging them to work with SDIA's standing committees to develop and submit 2017 GSC agenda items. Please consider inviting members of our standing committees to inform your GSRs at district meetings. Encourage the GSRs to invite their group members to the district meeting to hear more about participating on a committee of their interest.

Standing Committee Members: Please review the suggestions included for committee participation both locally and in A.A. as a whole.

Why Attend the Post-Conference Assembly?

1. There is a final vote on three new San Diego-Imperial Area (SDIA) guideline motions. Please participate in these decisions to insure our area's guidelines allow us the best opportunities in **Supporting Our Future**.
2. Learn if AA has the ability to gain relevance in today's world. Consider the idea that A.A. either grows or it goes.
3. Learn the specific leadership actions you can take to insure local participation with A.A. as a whole in **Supporting Our Future**.

A.A. is strengthened by the application of Concept IV – The Right of Participation

Please take the opportunity to remind your group members all A.A. members are welcome to attend any general service meeting. I promise, this is an important report on the status of A.A.'s future.

The 66th General Service Conference Made A.A. History by editing Concept XI in "Twelve Concepts for World Service" (BM-31)

With substantial unanimity, the Conference approved the removal of two paragraphs from page 58 that refer to male/female relationships. The action is a historic as it is the first time the Conference has edited Bill's writings. The footnote associated to the paragraphs will also be removed and replaced with information on how to request a copy of the extracted text from the Archives.

GSRs: Informing your groups about the removed paragraphs will serve to inform your group members about the Conference's service in considering A.A. as a whole and its attractiveness to the outside world. Consideration of A.A. as a whole is an important step in the personal recovery of each member. It is part of the spiritual growth offered in service work.

Archives Committee

Archives may be our most under-utilized service work. Think about the introductory information below regarding the origin of "The Akron Pamphlets." Would knowing Dr. Bob's thoughts have changed your mind during the development of our informed group conscience? A.A. is facing many changes. Our history can be a source of courage in taking actions that preserve our Fellowship.

Regarding the collection of group histories:

"We are trying to build up extensive records which will be of value to a future historian..."

"It is highly important that the factual material be placed in our files in such a way that there can be no substantial distortion..."

"We want to keep enlarging on this idea for the sake of the full length history to come..."

— **Bill W., 1957**

The Akron Pamphlets

This historical literature was written by Evan W. at the request of Dr. Bob. He felt that the newly written Big Book was too difficult for the blue-collar worker to read. Evan was a former writer for the newspaper and wrote "A Manual for Alcoholics Anonymous" in 1941, followed by "A Second Reader for Alcoholics Anonymous." These pamphlets were completed by 1950 and reflected the early mindset of Akron's earliest members.

This literature is pre-conference and is still serving members of AA around the world.

Plain Language Big Book

The 2016 Conference Committee on Literature took no action on the consideration for a Plain Language version of the Big Book. Since no Conference member made a Floor Motion, this item was not discussed at this year's Conference. However, the committee did submit an Additional Consideration to the trustees' Literature Committee to explore the need for expanding the availability of recovery literature in "plain language."

This is an opportunity for all local area Literature Committees to engage members and groups to learn more about the need for Plain Language. It also gives us additional opportunity to gather, consider and share new information. For example, Dr. Bob's motivation to support the writing of the Akron Pamphlets, was new information to me!

If there is a need and interest for Plain Language literature, another agenda item can be generated. The best way to insure agenda items are given attention by the Conference is to gain the support of the area. Please attend the June 4 Post-Conference Assembly to learn more about how to submit GSC agenda items.

GSRs: Please ask your group members if they have any suggestions for any A.A. recovery literature that could be of better use if written in Plain Language.

Three Talks to Medical Societies (P-6)

The committee took no action on this pamphlet. Their Additional Consideration to the trustees' Literature Committee states the piece: contains outdated medical information; details an inaccurate description of the A.A. recovery program; and does not support the work of the Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee. The committee added the idea the pamphlet may have value to some A.A. members. Without a Conference action, there is no change to pamphlet's position in A.A. literature.

GSRs: This is a great opportunity to contribute to A.A. as a whole by suggesting an agenda item to redefine this pamphlet's place in A.A. literature. Please ask your group members for their ideas on what to do with the pamphlet. Remind them of their ability to work with the area's Archives Committee.

Archives Committee: Perhaps our area's Archives Committee will consider leading us in defining a new home for this piece of A.A. history and generating a 2017 GSC agenda item.

"If You are a Professional" (P-46)

The following is a new section to be added to the pamphlet:

A.A. Members and Medications

A.A. does not provide medical advice; all medical advice and treatment should come from a qualified health care professional. The suggestions provided in the pamphlet "The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs" may help A.A. members minimize the risk of relapse.

GSRs: Reporting on this item is a great opportunity to educate and remind your group members to be mindful of their communications in working with others.

"How A.A. Members Cooperate with Professionals" (P-29)

Approval was made to update the language in this pamphlet.

GSRs: Please inform your group members about the update and be sure to review it after it is submitted to the 2017 GSC!

"Young People and A.A." (P-4)

This pamphlet will be revitalized by the trustees' Literature Committee to include information about young people's conferences and updated stories that better reflect the experiences of young people in A.A. today. The proposed text will be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee for review.

GSRs: Please inform your group members about the effort to improve this pamphlet. Your group members can submit their ideas and experiences to the area's Literature Committee for discussion and submission to the trustees' Literature Committee.

Literature Committee: This may be a good opportunity for a Young People's Workshop.

"The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" (P-43)

The trustees' Literature Committee will revise both the text and illustrations of this pamphlet to reflect a contemporary A.A. experience. The Conference Literature Committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee.

GSRs: Please inform your group members about the revision of this pamphlet. A review of this pamphlet allows opportunity for participating group members to think about how to explain A.A. Tradition.

The Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet (P-203) and the Self-Support Packet (F-19)

The Conference Finance Committee received and discussed format and use of the flyer and packet. The committee suggests that GSO consider additional ways to convey the financial message using technology. One suggestion was to create and make available for download a PowerPoint presentation of the flyer "The Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet" (F-203). Another suggestion was to revise the **Self-Support Packet** (F-19) by removing the eight-page document entitled "Services Provided by G.S.O./A.A.W.S." and the "Historical Background of Self-Support," and replacing them with the F-203 piece and the Birthday Plan Envelope.

GSRs: Has your group reviewed "The Seventh Tradition Fact Sheet" (F-203) and the **Self-Support Packet** (F-19)? Do they have suggestions for their improvement and/or use of technology? If so, these ideas can be helpful to forming agenda items in **Supporting Our Future**.

Finance Committee: Please participate in A.A. as a whole and review these materials. Please make suggestions as appropriate.

Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or Its Affiliates

The Conference Public Information Committee took no action on the reconsideration noting the current policy on the use of full-face videos is adequate. The committee also noted the policy is interpreted as offering the ability to request permission to be allowed to show full faces when appropriate. The committee gave thoughtful discussion to the effectiveness of PSAs in carrying the message to the deaf alcoholic. Their discussion included consideration of an inset of an American Sign Language interpreter, but they ultimately decided to take no action.

Please see the Minutes of our area's May 2, 2016 Pre-Conference Assembly when a deaf member of our area's Accessibilities Committee spoke on this agenda item. The Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums reported the number of deaf A.A. members attending the 2015 International Convention was over 700.

GSRs: Please speak with your groups to raise their awareness of the variety of needs of current and potential members. Please give the reminder that group contributions to the area support the work of the Accessibilities Committee to our local area.

Standing Committees: I ask our area's Accessibilities Committee and the Public Information Committee to review this item and the PSAs on the A.A. website in view of extending the hand of A.A. to the deaf community. I urge them to take action if they find deficient outreach to people of a diverse range of abilities and create agenda items that seek to remedy our ability to 12-Step the still suffering alcoholic.