**November 2019 ACM**

**Delegate’s Report**

I planted my first garden when I was 27 years sober. I talked my husband into building me 2, 24” high, wooden garden beds which I painted Chinese Red. The garden beds have since faded to a lovely pink, but what has grown in these beds is the never-ending miracle of life.

To achieve this end, I first drew lines in the “amended” soil, (I liked that the soil had been dealt with,) then I proceeded to poke small holes in the dirt to plant my seeds. I knew nothing about what would grow or when it would grow. I just planted seeds I liked.

Once sowed, I began to take a deep and personal interest in my beginner’s project. I wanted contact with my garden every day. I often meditated with my garden. I sometimes fed my crisp, new seedlings healthy mixtures of fertilizers that someone shared they used. I watered and watched those tender shoots unfurl into vines, and stalks that surpassed all understanding.

There came the day when the first evidence of fruit appeared. A beautiful flower or a tight cluster of leaves was clearly a sign of things to come. I kept up consistent care and there were some mornings it was all I could do to keep from bursting into tears over the growth that had happened, seemingly overnight. It took my breath away.

A watchful eye and sometimes even some defensive measures were sure to bode well for the garden. Low and behold, the garden began to deliver the bounty of good stewardship and love. I was harvesting zucchini and eggplant and tomatoes and jalapeño peppers—each with their own story and taste. These were the results that came from the promise of what it would mean to be a part of something bigger than me.

My garden still helps keep me sober today and through it I’ve learned to nurture everything without expectations but when the unexpected happens, I am so pleased to be the gardener I’ve become through the program called Alcoholics Anonymous.

This is a 6 paragraph, 340-word story I wrote for the Grapevine last Saturday at the Grapevine Writer’s Workshop which was an excellent way to spend a Saturday afternoon. Prior to this delightful workshop I was at the Digital Anonymity Workshop Sponsored by Districts 8 and 14. I found the panels to be diverse and interesting and there was some great discussion through this format. If you haven’t been attending any of the district or committee sponsored workshops supported by our area, you have been missing out.

The Trustees report from Board Weekend is in and I have attached it to this report.  I had my conference call with all the other Delegates from our Region this week and I was able to ask her questions I had about GSR Kits and the current status of the Plain Language Big Book. Here are some questions I had about the last board meeting:

-- Q: If eight (8) temporary employees were hired by the Finance department to handle the influx of contributions, does this mean our $8.06 challenge was successful?  A: Yes and no. The contributions that come in online are easier and cheaper to post. These were mostly the mail-in contributions.

-- Q: How many Agenda Items have come in to GSO as of 11/19?  A: 29 (Attached) These do not automatically make it to the committees.

-- Q: People are complaining about there not being any rooms left in Detroit for the International. What is the status?  A: There are plenty of rooms left but nothing downtown. People have to search all the areas designated as part of the Convention. If all else fails, they can book by telephone.

-- Q: How much is the “survey professional” from Duke costing and what is our end goal?  The professional from Duke University is not only looking at our current methodology, but some additional ideas as well. There will likely be a report to the PI Conference Committee at the Conference which will include the cost. Our goal is to have a reliable membership survey but there is no timeline at this point.

-- Q: Is the new ASL Video Big Book considered a translation?  A: Yes, but this translation is already included as one of the 71 languages. This was actually a re-translation.

-- Q: How do we get over-spending $433K over any budgeted amount? (In reference to the current ERP costs.) A: Nothing was taken from the reserves. This money came out of the general fund. Because of current contribution trends and salaries coming in under budget, AAWS projects that there will still be a net profit of $25K at year-end. It is the legal department which is doing continuous contract reviews for ERP technology that has the costs so high.

-- Q: What is the reason LaVina has had a spike in subscriptions?  A: The La Vina Anniversary Conference had a registration fee that included a subscription to La Vina.  Brilliant.

-- Q:  What about the renovations being done at GSO to add space?  Are they done and how much did it cost? A: The renovations have just started but they should be done by year end.  The cost was budgeted for $1 million but it looks like it will only be $700K.

-- Q:  What is going on in Venezuela and how can we help?  A: Venezuela is experiencing political upheaval and the economy is in ruins. Many people, including AA members, are fleeing the country, causing AA to be unstable at best. Some South American countries are taking in hundreds of refugees. Our international literature fund is helping to get literature into the hands of the people who need it. Steady contributions ensure this fund can be utilized by any country who needs it.

-- Q: What about the Plain Language Big Book?  Where is the committee on moving this forward to the Conference?  A: I have had email contact with the subcommittee, established this year, for this agenda item.  I have also had a teleconference call with one of the trustees on that subcommittee. They are aware that another proposal has been drafted out of our area Accessibilities Committee. It is paramount that we get this proposal sent to GSO by the December 15 deadline so that it can be included in/with our original proposal and forwarded to the Literature Committee. If our Assembly votes to support it in January, coupled with a letter from the new Delegate, then that can be attached prior to the January Board Meeting. The item appears among the 29 agenda Items for the conference.

-- Q:  Will the new Communications Department cost us more in salaries and will they be a rotating staff desk?  Currently the staff is being made up of existing staff members being integrated into the new department and this staff will not rotate as all the other desks rotate.

-- Q: Why haven’t we been receiving the New GSR kits?  Have they been discontinued? A: The first response to this question was that there was some delay, but kits are going out now.  Later it was explained that the new ERP system was slowing down every area of GSO and the GSR kits were back in line to be distributed after a substantial delay.  Please reassure your new GSRs their kits are coming.

As my “delegateship” winds down, please remember that I continue to be available for districts and workshops, as I am still committed to serving the area.  I marvel at your love and support of general service. It has been a journey I could have missed, had I not listened to your own journeys in sobriety. I look forward to next month’s rotation dinner at Jerry’s and the Annual Potluck at ACM. Thank you for allowing me to serve Area 08.

Roxane Rollins

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