

Alcoholics Anonymous Today
A Report On The Condition Of The Fellowship

NERAASA – February 2010

J.K. – North East Regional Trustee

(This report has been edited for the Internet.)

The North East Region of Alcoholics Anonymous consists of eleven states and the District of Columbia who are structured into 18 Delegate Areas. The states are Connecticut (Area 11), Delaware (Area 12), District of Columbia (Area 13), Maine (Area 28), Maryland (Area 29), Massachusetts (Eastern Area 30, Western Area 31), New Hampshire (Area 43), New Jersey (Northern Area 44, Southern Area 45), New York (Central Area 47, Hudson-Mohawk-Berkshire Area 48, South Eastern Area 49, Western Area 50), Pennsylvania (Eastern Area 59, Western Area 60), Rhode Island (Area 61), and Vermont (Area 70).

I have the high honor and distinct privilege to have been elected by this region to serve our Fellowship as a whole as a member of the General Service Board. The General Service Board functions on an annual basis from General Service Conference to Conference. The duties are assigned to each member by the Chairman of the General Service Board based on qualifications, custom and New York law. I currently serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. The members of that Board are J.L., Trustee-at-Large, Canada; V.P. and me, regional Trustees; G.M., general service Trustee; B.N., R.L. and A.B., non-Trustee Directors; D.R., GSO staff and P.H., the General Manager. It is a talented Board committed to AA service. We lost J.S. just before last year's Conference and he was missed.

I also serve on the Audit Committee, the Compensation Committee, the Pension Committee, the Legal Affairs Committee, the Trustee's Finance and Budgetary Committee and the Trustee's Committee for the International Conventions and Regional Forums. You've given me enough to do to keep me out of bars and saloons. Thank you.

I've given the information above so that you might see that we are charged with the duty of operating a business in accordance with the law without disturbing the spiritual character which is at the core of our existence as a society. We are all charged to follow the dictates of our consciences when we cast our votes to select what we believe is best for A.A. as a whole. When the votes on an issue are supported by 2/3 or more of those voting, and the non-prevailing position has taken the opportunity to be heard, we should support the decision.

A.A. today is in good shape, largely because of the terrific performance of the General Service Board, and the staff, with special recognition for the efforts of our General Manager who exhibits in a very special way that love and tolerance of others is our code. Here is what is planned for the near future.

- 1. Initiate Strategic planning to develop Mission statement, vision and values.** Reaffirm our mission and assess how best to integrate our 3 Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service in a "logo", statement or other manner. Develop vision and value statements for our General Service Office in preparation for goals and initiatives development *October of 2010*.
- 2. On-line Contributions:** Implement on-line contributions for use on our www.aa.org website. Project timeline to include:
 - a. Communication plan to the A.A. Fellowship- ongoing
 - b. Interim check points for Staff reviews
 - c. Demonstrations and reviews to:
 - i. The A.A.W.S. Board - December 2009
 - ii. The General Service Board of Trustees - January 2010
 - iii. The General Service Conference- April 2010
 - d. On-line services to begin directly following the Conference - May 2010
- 3. Literature Sales on-line:** Confirm system selection for testing and reviews beginning fall 2010. Prepare timeline for implementation mid-year of 2011. Completed by: *December 2010*.
- 4. Technological/Electronic Media Options:** Establish E-delivery committee in coordination with AAWS Publications for the purpose of researching technologies, identifying needs of the Fellowship for adaptation of new technological programs and hardware that provide "real time" services to a broader membership. Project timeline to include:

- a. Form short-term ad-hoc committee of media technology professionals whose objective will be to identify current trends, products and viable application options.
 - b. Determine feasibility and software requirements of downloadable publications from our website.
 - c. Develop communication plan to the Fellowship to include opportunities for feedback.
- 5. Copyrights:** Gather historical data and legal opinions that will assist in redefining A.A.W.S. Board policy on copyrights. This may include a broader discussion by members of the General Service Board, the General Service Conference and our Fellowship.
- 6. Conduct review of current organizational structure for potential revisions.** Review overall operations and departments for work re distribution, establishing back-ups and staffing levels for reorganization.
- 7. Prepare for succession planning and critical back-up positions for key management positions.** Completion: *December 2010.*
 - a. Establish new "executive management" position whose role will be to assist the General Manager and provide supervisory responsibility for designated staff.
- 8. New Group Registration on line.** Establish a link on our www.aa.org website, designed as a portal, that will provide vital group information welcoming new meetings/groups, (what is an A.A. group, how to connect with AA as a whole, to register/list with AA using interactive form.) Publications will partner with Information Services and Records to complete this project by *December 2010.*
- 9. Examine feasibility of an intranet website.** The review will include considerations such as off-the-shelf software product selection that would support local and remote access to document repositories and other tools that would enhance internal GSO communications and effectiveness; demands on this website will be compatibility with Laser fiche document management, a replacement for the Dashboard and a platform to enable possible future initiatives such as workflow and process automation/improvement. Completed by: *September 2010.*
- 10. Employee Recognition Team.** The objective of this cross-organizational team will be to develop a recognition policy that includes both formal and informal methods of recognizing and rewarding employees. This may be

accomplished in different phases and implementation strategies. Full policy development by *December 2010*.

- 11. 2010 International Convention.** Oversee convention program, planning, budget and registration with anticipated 41,000 participants. This includes planned trips to San Antonio for pre- convention on-site coordination and during the week of the convention, *June 28 - July 4, 2010*.
- 12. World Service Meeting** Oversee planning and coordination with GSO staff and WSM delegates and join in participating in the 21st World service Meeting in Mexico City the week of *October 17, 2010*.
- 13. Revisit Pension Plan** Review background material and current resources to assist in determining best available options.

Your General Office Staff will have a busy and very productive 2010.

The main concerns of today are membership and self support. I would first like to suggest that an increase in membership would provide the means to achieve the goal of self support, assuming that increased membership would lead to increased contributions to the General Service Office and increased subscriptions to the Grapevine. All other A.A. entities are self supporting.

The Grapevine is seeking increased support as indicated by the attached memo from the AAGV Treasurer to the Trustees Budget & Finance Committee. Reported at the last Board weekend was the fact that only 5% of the Fellowship subscribes and that those subscriptions are falling. The Fellowship has to decide to support the Grapevine or it will die a slow death in the next two years, according to its Board.

We share membership in a Fellowship which allows us to become a member by simply saying so. When I walked into my first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, it felt like my life was ending. I was filled with self pity and fear even though I had nowhere else to go. I was greeted with warmth and genuine concern. I became a member during that meeting and my gloom vanished.

In the economy of today there is worldwide trouble. One of the industries hardest hit is publishing. The two corporations of A.A. are both publishing companies and one has been hit hard by the recession and dwindling subscriptions. Although A.A.W.S. is fine at present, we must be aware of the fact that 50% of its success is based on Big Book sales. From 1939 to 1973, we sold one million Big Books. Since 1973 to the present we've sold 29 million copies. In the year just past, we sold 1-1/4 million copies. There is a great hue and cry to be self

supporting through our own contributions. We needn't worry about literature sales if we focus on contributions.

We who have found freedom in the Fellowship realize that to keep it, we have to give it away. In his last speech, Dr. Bob said that our program boils down to love and service. Service requires sacrifice in order to generate the funds necessary to carry our message of hope throughout the world. Sacrifice is often difficult and irksome. Love can make it easy and perfect love can make it a joy. The joy of living is the theme of the Twelfth Step. Will you please consider subscribing to Alcoholics Anonymous Grapevine? Will you please consider increasing your contribution to Alcoholics Anonymous? Experience the joy. Feel the love! Pass it on.

Encl: A & B

Attachment A

Northeast Regional Contributions 2009

Area	Contributions	Membership	Per Member
CT-II	\$162,765.08	38,989	\$4.17
DE-12	\$37,345.12	3,521	\$10.61
DC-13	\$59,174.66	14,503	\$4.08
ME-28	\$25,588.05	8,353	\$3.06
MD-29	\$91,679.76	16,108	\$5.69
MA e-30	\$136,235.91	46,858	\$2.81
MA w-31	\$22,267.29	5,327	\$4.18
NH-43	\$38,713.36	11,283	\$3.43
NJ n-44	\$145,314.14	31,080	\$4.68
NJ s-45	\$82,921.19	8,780	\$9.64
NY c-47	\$51,038.14	12,193	\$4.19
NY hmb-48	\$32,760.13	11,244	\$2.91
NY se-49	\$242,203.09	56,310	\$4.30
NY w-50	\$14,750.74	5,827	\$2.53
PA e- 59	\$198,070.56	37,180	\$5.30
PA w-60	\$58,450.68	11,937	\$4.30
RI-61	\$34,947.18	5,450	\$6.41
VT-70	\$28,466.73	4,633	\$6.14
Region	\$1,462,691.81	329,576	\$ 4.44

Attachment B

MEMORANDUM

To: T.B., Chair Trustees' Finance Committee

cc: D.M., Secretary to Committee

From: K.B., Treasurer AA Grapevine Board

Date: January 28, 2010

Re: AA Grapevine, Inc. working capital level and Request for Transfer
of Cash from the Reserve Fund

The board of AAGV, Inc., has asked our auditor, Kevin Sunkel to calculate the level of cash needed for working capital for the AAGV as of December 31, 2009, the most recent period for which there are full financial statements, as well as evaluate the possible effect that the 2010 budget might have on working capital cash requirements. Kevin responded to the board in a memo dated 1/25/2010 in which he wrote that at December 31, 2009 AAGV, Inc.'s cash level needed was \$375,000. The actual cash balance was only \$237,000. In the memo Kevin suggests that to restore working capital the AAGV could request \$138,000 to be transferred from the Reserve Fund, as well as request that the previous \$50,000 advance be made a permanent withdrawal. Kevin explained that it is not possible to determine with absolute precision how much working capital would be depleted if for 2010, a deficit budget of \$246,000 was adopted, but it is clear that such loss would deplete working capital and would most likely require equivalent funding (\$246,000) from the Reserve Fund to maintain working capital at the level needed to fund operations.

AA Grapevine, Inc., requests \$138,000 permanent withdrawal from the Reserve Fund to restore working capital levels to \$375,000 and also make the \$50,000 cash advance that was taken in October 2009 a permanent withdrawal. AA Grapevine, Inc. also wishes to inform the Trustees' Finance Committee that the 2010 proposed budget deficit will probably require AA Grapevine, Inc. to withdraw another \$246,000 in 2010.