

Delegate's Report - Winter Assembly – January 21, 2023

My name is Doug S. & I'm an alcoholic. It's an honor & privilege to serve you as Southern California Area 5 Delegate for Panel 73. It's an exciting day!

Introductions & welcome:

I am excited to welcome you to our first Area Assembly of Panel 73. Thank you, especially to our DCMs/DCMCs, GSRs, Committee Chairs and Alternates, for making yourself available. You are the vital link in the communication chain of general service in AA. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

I'd like to thank District 3 for hosting the Assembly this morning! We really appreciate your service & the hard work.

Before we get started, I'd also like to thank my predecessor, Past Delegate Panel 71, Lauren A. She's been a wonderful mentor & friend that I truly appreciate. Thanks again for your service to the Area!

Theme – Participation: I've been thinking about this panel a lot & how best to describe the action that I believe is needed this year.

I chose "participation" as the theme this year because it's all about being present. Showing up. Communication. You are the conduit between your Group & Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. Sharing information you hear here, receive in the many emails sent by me, and forwarded by your DCMs, that come from the General Service Office, Grapevine & La Vina, and other parts of A.A.

Read: Service Manual, Appendix V: (page 165)

STIMULATING INTEREST IN GENERAL SERVICE

Most A.A. members are primarily interested in their groups, in their own sobriety, and in helping other drunks one-on-one. And that is as it should be. While the work of general service has precisely the same objective — carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — the connection is not always direct or obvious. Some stimulators are usually needed to get the attention of A.A. members — to show them that service can add a rich dimension to their sober lives and Twelfth Step work, and that their participation is vital to the future of A.A.

Good communication is of vital importance. In personal Twelfth Step work, there is no end to communication. The sponsor talks with the drunk; speakers share their experience; we share with each other. But when it comes to general service work, communication has a tendency to break down. It can take hard work to get the attention of alcoholics, but with a creative approach, they can be encouraged to take time out from the nuts and bolts of recovery to think about another phase of their new lives. Once A.A. members are well informed about service, they often want to become involved and to take on their own service responsibilities.

Why the GSR is important: (Member Story): Last year one of our long-time members shared with me that she was upset about some changes that had happened at the 71st GSC. She was worried

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A.A. is going to change the Big Book. She expressed her concern changes happened without her knowledge and that people were railroading things through that members didn't want.

I asked, "Who's your GSR?" She didn't know & hadn't heard anything about the changes. We discussed the importance of the GSR.

(From Chapter 1 of the A.A. Service Manual, page 7):

THE GROUP AND ITS GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

So what is the role of a GSR?

The GSR is the link between the group and "A.A. as a whole." This link becomes a channel through which news, information, opinions and ideas can flow back and forth. Importantly, this also gives the group a voice in the affairs of the Fellowship. The GSR is that voice.

- When the GSR is **present** at assemblies, the group's voice is heard.
- When the GSR **participates**, the group's voice is heard.
- When the GSR **votes**, the group's voice is heard.

So, it boils down to communication & participation!

GSR's, DCMs/DCMCs: I'd like to encourage you to read the A.A. Service Manual for your respective positions. There are only a few pages for each position. Please take the time to review those pages. It'll help you better understand your job.

Our job in General Service is to enable 12th Step work – if the drunk gets to us, we can help them!

73rd General Service Conference – This is why we're all here!

The 73rd General Service Conference will be April 23-29, 2023, in Brooklyn, New York, with the theme being "AA's Three Legacies of Service – Our Common Solution." In addition to voting on business items, there are presentations and workshop for the Delegates.

Agenda Items: New members may be wondering what IS an agenda item. Agenda items are basically motions that are voted on at the conference, such as, the preamble change passed at the 71st G.S.C., and agreeing on the theme for this year's conference.

The General Service Board will meet late January where the agenda will be finalized. We should receive the Final Conference Agenda soon after and Conference Background material around February 15th. As many of you know, we will receive all three (3) languages of the background materials at the same time. This is especially exciting for our Spanish-speaking members.

Getting Items on the Conference Agenda: Does anyone have anything you'd like to see discussed at next year's conference? (That would be the 74th G.S.C.). If so, please be aware there's a 9/15 deadline to submit for consideration.

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More details can be found on page 164 in the S.M., THE PATH FOR AN IDEA TO BECOME AN AGENDA ITEM.

What this means, from a timing perspective, and one wishing to have the Area's support, is a proposed agenda item would need to be developed & presented to the Area at our May Assembly (5/21), voted on at the June Area Committee Meeting (ACM 6/24) and then approved at our July Assembly (7/22).

My Committee Assignment: I am excited to announce that I have been assigned to the **Treatment & Accessibilities Committee** - I'm very pleased with my assignment. Having supported SoCal H&I last panel - I am invested in their work.

I have been reviewing past materials and I look forward to many meetings with the other delegates in my committees before the Conference.

What am I doing? → You may be asking, "What's your Delegate doing?"

Conference Dashboard: I was given access to the Conference Dashboard last week. The dashboard is the mechanism used by GSO to communicate with Delegates. I've been poking around the dashboard to become familiar with the portal & reading materials related to the conference.

Buddy: I have been assigned a "buddy" to help me as a new Delegate. His name is Normand P. from North West Quebec Area 90. A French-speaking bilingual Delegate. We've been exchanging emails & have scheduled a telephone call next week to get acquainted.

Final Conference Reports: I've been rereading the Final Conference Reports from 2022 & 2021 to refresh my memory on business conducted during those conferences. I have printed copies of the final **2022 FINAL Conference Report** at the back table. A digital, anonymity protected version is available on our website: area05aa.org

Monthly Delegates Meeting: I'm meeting with my peers across the Pacific Region & listening to advice from the Panel 72's. We have a very active & vibrant region. You'll have the opportunity to meet them at PRAASA in March, 3-5, 2023.

I have also been reviewing the A.A. Service Manual & 12 Concepts for World Service.

PRAASA: The Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly is scheduled March 3-5, 2023, at the LAX Airport Marriott!

PRAASA is an annual conference hosted by one of the 15 areas in the Pacific Region of A.A. on a rotating basis. This means that each area has the opportunity to host PRAASA roughly every 15 years. The last time Area 5 hosted was in 2010.

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The purpose of PRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups, and areas of the Pacific Region; to encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences; and to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of AA.

For online registration, please visit praasa.org

How many of you have registered already?

You'll hear more about PRAASA from Thomas B., Past Delegate & Chair of the PRAASA 2023 Host Committee, before lunch today.

It's very exciting to host PRAASA in our Area! My personal experience is that PRAASA really motivated me in General Service & added an element of service I hadn't experienced. The topics & discussion during PRAASA is amazing – to hear others across the Pacific Region share their opinions on important matters affecting all A.A. You do not want to miss this year's PRAASA!

Volunteers: The website has more information on volunteer opportunities. This is a way to have members of your Group & your friends join in on the fun.

Area Dinner: It a tradition for Area 5 to meet Friday evening over dinner to fellowship & share in the excitement. Plan to join us! More details will be shared soon.

Names from each Area: All Delegates were asked to submit names of members for readers, timers, moderators & presenters. You may be asked to be part of this year's program! Embrace the opportunity.

Scholarships: The PRAASA 2023 Committee is suggesting that districts and groups purchase scholarships for their GSR's. I emailed a flyer DCMs can use at your District meetings or GSRs at your Group. GSR's may consider asking your home group to help fund your attendance. Many people are sharing rooms to reduce the overall cost of attendance.

I look forward to seeing you at PRAASA!

After PRAASA we will hold our Pre-Conference Workshop: The Area 5 Pre-Conference Workshop is a two-day meeting that is held in March/April each year. This year's pre-conference is scheduled April 1st & 2nd at the Rosemead Community Center. Please add that to your calendar!

The Delegate & Alternate Delegate communicates with the GSRs (and through them the Group) about agenda items that will be addressed at the General Service Conference. The GSRs inform the Delegate about their groups' conscience on the issues so that the Delegate has a sense of Area 5 while attending the General Service Conference.

Prep work is underway. Our Alternate Delegate works with the Delegate to prepare the Pre-Conference questionnaires and the annual Pre-Conference Assembly program; and Nikki will chair the annual Pre-Conference Assembly program.

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Online Surveys: we will have a website where members & GSRs can submit responses to questionnaires. Last year we had close to 400 submittals online. The data submitted is used to generate a report that compiles all responses & comments that I will study before the General Service Conference. We will incorporate suggestions made last year to improve the survey experience. Hopefully making it easier to submit your Group's comments.

News from G.S.O., Box 4.5.9., Grapevine & La Vina, SoCal H&I Intergroup & Bridging the Gap:

Group Services: On October 5th the General Service Office reopened with 46 visitors, several of whom were international guests. As of September 12th, each department went back to the office three days a week or more.

Visitors are welcome to the General Service Office Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tours are scheduled at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., and 2 p.m., and last about 45 minutes. On Fridays, G.S.O. hosts an open A.A. meeting at 11 a.m. There is also a guided tour offered after the meeting at 12:15 p.m. (Please contact GSO before you visit).

G.S.O.: The General Service Office (GSO) has made some recent changes. Mainly in the Publications Department, which produces, distributes, and updates our life-saving literature. As the world has changed, many of these services have grown in complexity—specifically, the licensing of our literature to A.A. structures around the world, new translations of our books and pamphlets.

They have established two separate departments:

Legal, Licensing and Intellectual Property: This new department has assumed the responsibility for coordinating all legal matters administered at G.S.O. ~~This department is staffed by leadership with strong legal background and others with deep experience in licensing and IP.~~

Language Services: This department has centralized the function of translation of our literature and thousands of documents into several languages each year. It also coordinates essential interpretation services that allow for direct interaction and communication with other A.A. structures around the world.

Contributions Address: G.S.O.'s CONTRIBUTIONS ADDRESS HAS CHANGED

GSO now has a separate post office box that was established for Seventh Tradition contributions only. Please send contribution checks payable to "General Service Board" to:

Post Office Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

This dedicated PO box enables us to process contributions much more efficiently and at a significant savings to the Fellowship. You also can continue to make contributions online at www.contribution.aa.org using a major credit card or PayPal.

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For more information or assistance, contact our Member Services team at memberservices@aa.org or 212-870-3023.

Grapevine & La Vina: I emailed newsletters this past week. If you did not get them, contact me & I'll send to you directly. You may also ask your DCM or DCMC whether they received the emails as well.

Our Registrar & Webmaster is working hard to ensure our email forwarding is sending to the correct addresses. We may be missing some addresses & a few positions are still vacant.

GV/LV Apps: Work has started on Grapevine and La Viña apps, researching distribution channel logistics and costs. The apps will include all things Grapevine and all things La Viña, including the current magazine, all archived stories, access to the podcast, daily quote, sobriety calculator, meeting guide, and store. Subscribers will be able to personalize the app so it provides a daily sobriety checklist, and a morning pop-up that tells the user their daily count and their favorite meeting of the day. The one-year anniversary of the podcast was in October and a milestone was reached of ¼ million downloads!

Cost Increases: Grapevine has added a \$2.49 increase to all books. The top 10 selling books' prices increased on January 1, 2023, and other books' prices will increase as they go to reprint. Other ancillary items prices also increased on January 1, 2023, as well.

Submit Your Story for Upcoming Issues:

1. AA in the Military — Did you ever serve in the military sober? Were you ever stationed overseas or on a ship while trying to stay sober? What were AA meetings like in the military? What were some of the challenges? Did you find AA while serving? We're also looking for Vet's stories! (stories due Feb. 15)

2. Young & Sober (ICYPAA Celebrates 65 Years!) — Did you come into AA at an early age? What was that like? What were the challenges? Do you go to Young People's AA (YPAA) meetings, dances, and Conferences? How did that help you? Share! (Stories due March 15)

La Viña Workshop: There's a weekly LV informational workshop. They review products, books, suggestions for ongoing presentations, GSO/GVLV updates. New meeting ID: 815 9593 1777

Southern California Hospitals & Institutions: For our new Corrections and Treatment Committee Chairs, Paul D. & Mark S., SoCal H&I Intergroup has a monthly meeting on the 4th Sunday of the month (that's tomorrow!). Please get the meeting information from Nikki, the Liaison to SoCal H&I. You will share activities in your respective committees with the Intergroup. And their annual Conference will be held May 5-7, 2023, at the Holiday Inn in La Mirada. See their website: <https://www.socalhandi.org/>

Bridging The Gap Workshop Weekend (BTGWW): Bridging the Gap is a program through Alcoholics Anonymous to help people leaving a correctional or treatment facility become acquainted with A.A. and attend A.A. meetings in their hometown, after they are released. The BTGWW is a full weekend

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focused on sharing experiences and developing new ideas. This year's BTGWW will be held in Houston, TX. Area 67 Southeast Texas - September 8-10, 2023.

Publishing: Our Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, is now being produced jacketless, with jacket images printed on the covers. This change is in response to supply chain disruptions and will help alleviate out-of-stock issues and help keep costs down.



2025 AA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Taking place once every five years, the A.A. International Convention marks the anniversary of Bill W.'s first meeting with Dr. Bob and the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935. A.A. members and their families and friends from around the globe attend the event. At the International Convention people attend meetings, workshops, dances, and events. A highlight is the traditional flag ceremony to celebrate sobriety worldwide. Vancouver will welcome A.A. members from around the world for the 2025 International Convention. This will mark the 90th anniversary of the beginning of our Fellowship's founding. The International Convention will take place from July 3 - 6, 2025, at the Vancouver Convention Centre and BC Place Stadium.

Please check the convention webpage at www.aa.org/international-convention for more information, the latest news, and FAQs. As the Convention approaches, the page will be updated with registration information.

That's it for me! Thanks for letting me be of service.

-Doug S.

Delegate

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