

Good morning Area 15! My name is Kathy G. and I serve as your Panel 61 Delegate. What a delight it is to be here with all of you this weekend.

I would like to thank the committees with whom I visited yesterday for allowing me time in their busy schedule to provide a little information about the Conference actions in relation to their committee's business. I didn't quite get to every committee so if you have any questions related to the Conference actions (or non-actions) please always feel free to contact me via email, phone, or text message. I will do my best to be available quickly.

Thank you to each and every District that invited me to share the actions and results of the 62nd General Service Conference held in Rye, NY this year. The Conference was an experience that once again convinced me that Alcoholics Anonymous is alive and well in the U.S. and Canada. Visiting your Districts was a privilege and a joy. You all have a special place in my heart and in my life. Thank you for making my Delegate responsibilities such a pleasure to fulfill.

## India

We had two visitors from India at this year's General Service Conference (GSC). One of the visitors, "Lucky", recently wrote to Michelle M. our G.S.O. Archivist to inform her of a spectacular event surrounding A.A. in India.

On July 1st a popular television personality hosted a segment on his show on alcoholism in which contact details of Alcoholics Anonymous were flashed on the screen. Trustees and GSO India were in constant touch with the production team for more than six months providing information on A.A. The show was telecast in more than 152 countries and on eight channels in six regional languages simultaneously.

Following the episode there have been more than 90,000 calls, 18,000 SMS messages, 700 mails and so many unrecorded calls at GSO. In more than 1,100 groups, approx 250 meetings per day, on an average three newcomers are coming and 70% of them are coming for second meeting and are sober for two-three days. Lucky says that he will send a more detailed report to us once all the data is compiled. I provided information and article links to your District Chairs for access to additional details.

## PSA

I was informed last week that the Tengo Esperanza ("I have hope") public service announcement will be available at the end of this year. I will keep you up to date as soon as I have more information. As I mentioned to you in the reports to your Districts, please plan ahead in your Districts so that you are equipped to respond to calls from Spanish-speaking individuals who view this PSA and make that call for help. We want to be ready for the hand of A.A. to be there. This may mean that you need to find bilingual and Spanish speaking members in your Districts who are willing to take phone calls in Spanish. You may want to start a Spanish women's meeting. I would love to hear your ideas and how you are preparing to meet this need should the response to the PSA be as enthusiastic as we hope it will.

## Grapevine

In this year's 62nd General Service Conference (GSC) it was reported in the AAWS Board report that AAWS would likely be asking for input from the fellowship on some topics. You may recall that the 61st (2011) GSC GV Committee recommended the creation of an ad-hoc committee to discover actionable items from the 2010 Grapevine

Share Report, a report of the responses to the Grapevine survey. However, the committee's recommendation did not pass on the Conference floor. As many of you know, Area 15 was a large contributor to that survey's responses. At this year's Conference I spoke at the mic in a sharing session in response to the A.A.W.S. report. I explained that as a result of that GV Committee recommendation failing, some members feel that their input goes unheard and are therefore reluctant or unwilling to offer additional input to GSO, AAWS, or the A.A. Grapevine. Ami B, EEP of the Grapevine, approached me later in the week to provide information to me that indeed the A.A. Grapevine Corporation did take action on the Share Report by studying it for 1) large common themes running throughout the responses, and 2) ideas where there were varying inputs. For example, one of the common themes relates to singleness of purpose. Though all articles are about alcoholism, the GV now has a section devoted to topics of the singleness of purpose genre. So, our responses to the GV survey are being used.

#### *Grapevine "Contributions"*

In spite of the fact that the A.A. Grapevine Corporation does not accept contributions, there is an account to which you or your group can contribute to facilitate the purchase of subscriptions for people who request them, but cannot afford to pay for them. The requests are mostly from incarcerated members, but there are others as well. The subscription fund is used solely to pay for subscriptions of this type. Contributions to this fund can be sent to Grapevine, Attention: Carry the Message, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1264, New York, NY 10115-0052

#### *Daily GV Quote*

You can now receive a daily quote from past Grapevine articles in your email. Just logon to [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org) where you will see the Daily Quote and click on the "Sign up for the daily email link".

La Viña celebrates its 16th Anniversary on July 29, 2012! La Viña will continue to be provided as a service to the fellowship. Linguistic District members, I encourage you all to write an article and send it in to La Viña at the A.A. Grapevine office in NY. We need your submissions to make the magazine a reflection of our fellowship.

The new A.A. GV book, Young & Sober is available now at a price of \$10.99. The book is a collection of GV stories about the joys and challenges of getting sober at an early age.

Look for several new eBooks in the next few weeks including

#### **STEP BY STEP**

#### **EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY II**

#### **SPIRITUAL AWAKENINGS II**

#### **EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY I**

#### **YOUNG & SOBER**

### **Finance**

#### *Pension Plan*

As many of you are aware, the General Service Board of A.A. has long-term obligations for post-employment commitments to current employees and retirees, for both pension and medical benefits.

These obligations are funded out of A.A.W.S. and Grapevine operations. With regard to pension, A.A. provides a Defined Benefit Pension Program for its employees. The program was established in 1965. By law, the pension funding must nearly meet the pension obligation in about 5 years. The unfunded Pension Liability on the balance sheet is about \$10.3 million. A.A.W.S. and Grapevine have included paying down this liability into their budgets. We will need to sustain an annual level of fund payments of approximately \$1.7 million for each of the next several years. Our Pension and

postretirement health obligations now account for about 12% of the G.S.O. budget. Our benefit plans should be periodically reviewed, but remember that as long as G.S.O. remains in business, pension benefits that have already accrued cannot be changed. A Pension Review subcommittee of the General Service Board was formed in late 2011. Their objective is to coordinate the review and selection of pension plan options for transitioning from a Defined Benefit Plan to a Defined Contribution Plan for new A.A.W.S. and G.V. employees. Plan implementation is targeted for January 2013.

#### *Self Support*

During my reports to your Districts I mentioned the 9-page document that describes the services that our General Service Office provides. The document, SMF-176, is available on the Alcoholics Anonymous website at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) in the Finance section. In addition, I have requested our website committee to post a link on the Delegate's page so that you will be able to find it easily. I also printed 200 copies of the services listing for you to take back to your Districts. Please take a few moments to look over the myriad services that our G.S.O. provides to each and every A.A. group in the U.S. and Canada as requested by the groups and the General Service Conference. Here is a link to the publication: [http://www.aa.org/en\\_pdfs/smf-176\\_en.pdf](http://www.aa.org/en_pdfs/smf-176_en.pdf).

As we are keenly aware, money is always a sensitive topic in A.A., even though we know that groups, districts, areas, intergroups/central offices, and the G.S.O. all need money to function. A.A.W.S. is seeking a long range plan that our Fellowship owns and supports in achieving the spiritual ideal of self-support through member contributions. This ideal becomes even more important as the shift from print to digital media has a growing affect on our publications revenue. We will be depending less and less on our literature income in the future.

A.A.W.S / G.S.O. is asking us to share our ideas on self-support in this ongoing effort. I am asking that each of you think about how we as a Fellowship can attain the ideal of full self-support through voluntary contributions from our members. I have requested that our website committee place a link on our Area 15 website home page so that you can easily link to it to share your ideas. I will compile all the responses and return to the Trustees' Finance Committee by the middle of October. I will send information on the availability of the input form to your District Chairs or simply check the Area website in a few days to look for the link.

## **Remote Communities**

### *Dominica*

Several people have asked about the island of Dominica and whether or not Dominica is part of the Area 15 structure. I spoke with the District 14 Chairman and DCM on this topic this weekend. District 14 is providing assistance to Dominica to get literature into the country, to help the groups there connect with A.A. as a whole, and to put their meeting information on the District 14 website so that travelers can easily access the information and get to meetings in Dominica. This process is termed "sponsoring" another country. Many countries around the world participate in sponsoring smaller countries in just this same way.

## **Events**

### *68th Southeastern Conference*

This year's Southeastern Conference will be held in conjunction with the Louisiana State Convention in New Orleans, LA August 9-11, 2012. The Alternate Delegate and I will be attending for Area 15 and will report back on this event to the Area in October.

### *Southeast Regional Forum*

This year is the first time in over 30 years that South Florida has hosted a Regional Forum and it will be another 26 years before it is our turn to host again. I strongly encourage each of you to attend the Southeast Regional Forum in Boca Raton November 9-11, 2012. There you will have the opportunity to meet your G.S.O. and A.A. Grapevine staff members face to face. You can also greet all of the Delegates from our Southeast Region as they give presentations throughout the weekend. This is an opportunity right here in our Area that you will not want to miss.

### **Elections and participation**

We have our biannual elections coming up in October. At that time, we will elect eight Area Trusted servants during our Sunday afternoon assembly. Area officers, Alternate Delegate, Delegate, and one candidate for each of two Trustee positions, Southeast Regional Trustee to replace El N, and Trustee at Large U.S. to replace Don M.

I want to strongly encourage each person in our Area who is qualified for one or more of these Area positions, or of the Area committee positions, to consider standing for the position when the opportunity comes. If you are qualified, willing, and you have the time, please stand to make yourself available. The participation level in our election process two years ago was very thin. I encourage you to make yourself available for these service positions.

### **Personal Note**

Thank you to everyone who has given me support and prayers through the past few weeks. I am grateful for each and every one of you and especially those who drove many miles to attend my mother's funeral in June. Thank you to District 8 and 9 for rescheduling the Conference report and consolidating their Districts for a single report. Thank for all the phone calls, text messages, emails, and beautiful cards, and for the flowers and plants that you gifted to me in memory of my Mom. I am so very blessed to have you in my life. I will never be able to repay what you all have given to me at this time of need. God bless and keep you each and every one.

Love in service,  
Kathy G., Delegate