

**South Florida Area 15
Delegate's Report
January 10, 2010**

Good Morning! I'm a member of the Vero Beach Step & Traditions Group in District 6. I have the privilege of serving as your Delegate, Panel 59, Area 15, South Florida, the Bahamas, the US & British Virgin Islands, Antigua, St. Maarten & the Cayman Islands. Wow! My name is Ken C. and I'm a grateful recovering alcoholic.

Happy New Year! Thank you District 1 & District 15 for a wonderful Quarterly. Berenice, Kevin, David & Rick: you and your committee have done a wonderful job (*applause*). Thank you for all your hard work.

I would like to thank Mike for a great talk Friday night. Don't lose that enthusiasm.

El, thank you for a wonderful talk last night. On behalf of Area 15, thank you for joining us and thank you for all of your service and dedication to Alcoholics Anonymous. I will enjoy working with you over the next year.

I want to welcome all of our new GSRs. How many of you are here for your very first assembly? *Raise your hands*. I hope that each of you will get a Service Sponsor and ask a lot of questions; you are the life blood and future of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I started this quarter with a trip to District 14, the U.S. & British Virgin Islands, Antigua & St. Maarten, to give the last of 14 Delegates Reports for 2009. Your Registrar accompanied me for a trip that I felt was extremely fruitful. There were many miracles. The Promises In Paradise Convention gave me a room and 1 ½ hours to do a Delegates Report. There were 20 in attendance out of the convention registration of 229. It was reported that this was the best attendance to date. The Area 15 Registrar met with many of the District GSRs and local members and was able to update many of the District 14 groups and otherwise pass on information. Fred H., the DCM and tour guide, gave me a gift. It's a bumper sticker that says "I STOP FOR IGUANAS!" *Hold up bumper sticker* No kidding, he does! Fred said that before he stopped drinking – there were twice as many!

On Thursday, Kevin M., past DCM & District 14 Chairperson had asked me to do the lead at the 5:30 Happy Hour Group in downtown St. Thomas. I was thrilled to participate with many old friends and convention attendees. It was anniversary night and Kevin presented me with a 24 year medallion on my actual birthday. I will treasure the memories of this trip for years to come and I thank all of you for my sobriety, the memories and the many privileges you have bestowed on me. But the most important happening was a series of miracles that started to unfold on Friday evening. The theme of the Promises In Paradise Convention was "A.A. Around the World". Molly L. was an A.A. visitor from Port au Prince, Haiti. Molly is doing relief work in Haiti and there are no A.A. meetings. Molly asked Courtney and Kate, 2 young convention attendees, who are 19ish and 3 years sober, who she could speak to in order to start an A.A. meeting in Haiti. They introduced Molly to me and we had a long discussion about the difficulties involved. I informed Molly that I would contact the International Desk at GSO on Monday to see if there were any political challenges that would need to be addressed and gave her contact information as well.

I asked Kevin if we could locate a Service Manual & some literature. He put me in touch with

the District 14 PI/CPC chairperson, Denny. On Saturday, Denny brought in a Service Manual and an envelope of indexed literature – almost anything we have! We found Molly and then Denny presented her with all the literature from District 14. She just cried – tears of joy! Now we are all crying!

On Sunday evening after the convention, Molly came up to Annie's and my hotel room. Annie proceeded to show Molly how to access GSO's website and find various helpful information. Coincidentally, the General Service Board was meeting as we spoke (6:30 PM). I decided to call El N., our new S.E. Regional Trustee. I called El; coincidentally she was on dinner break. I repeated all of the happenings to El. She was very quiet, and then just said, "Ken, we were talking about Haiti today!" El asked me to call Don Massey, our new Trustee at-Large U.S. I called Don and repeated the story to his amazement. I asked Don if he would like to speak with Molly, he said, "of course". Molly got on the telephone and said "Sir, this is Molly and I'm an alcoholic." At this point we are all in tears.

Molly has posted a website, secured a telephone and had a meeting place lined up. Unfortunately, the meeting place was in a government building which required a photo I.D., sign in, purpose, etc. so this meeting place did not work out. But... the grapevine is working and many have stepped up to assist Molly in locating a meeting place such as in a church.

In the interim, I have spoken to several of our staff workers at our General Service Office. I learned that "Information on Alcoholics Anonymous" was translated and extremely helpful in bringing A.A. to China and Cuba. I have made a request to Valerie O., Publications Director, that "Information on Alcoholics Anonymous" be translated into French-Creole. Valerie has budgeted this request for 2010. Once we have confirmed the language to be translated, this piece will go forward.

On Wednesday evening, Molly called on "Skype" and informed me that French was the language used by professionals, however she thought that "44 Questions" and "Is A.A. for Me?" translated in French-Creole would be helpful to reach the local community. On Thursday, Valerie O., Publications Director at GSO informed Molly and me that the translation is in process. Molly called me at 4:40 and informed me that she spoke to a Dr. at the hospital regarding a meeting place. He was thrilled to hear there was contact with A.A. and thought Molly should contact APAAC, a local treatment facility. Molly took a ride to APAAC, a mile from her home. After 5 months of attempting to start a meeting, Molly searched out the location that GSO had reported as the last known meeting place. Molly found a room with slogans on the wall, window shades, some literature and French speaking meetings at 5:00 PM every day. Molly has decided that Public Information/CPC is the place that God has chosen for her to pass our message. Yesterday, Molly met with a group member to initiate the start of an English speaking A.A. meeting.

I am reminded, when we place just a few dollars in the basket, one may keep the meeting room open, the other dollar may carry the message to another country. Please... pass the message as to why it is important we support the General Service Office and why Area 15 sends excess contributions down the ladder. I am proud of your unselfish support and generosity and feel so privileged to share this story.

Well, speaking of other countries. I attempted to contact each of the groups in the Bahamas by telephone. I was able to contact one group and left a message for another group to contact me. At the Chairperson's Meeting yesterday, I have asked individual Districts to "Adopt a Group" in the Bahamas. With some perseverance, I am confident that we can assist the groups in the

Bahamas.

For your information, South Florida Area 15 is the only area of 93 in the U.S. and Canada that has groups from other countries. We are actually comprised of groups from 5 countries now. Although it is wonderful to announce our area at a conference, this is not about inflating our ego. I truly believe that we have opened our arms to any group of Alcoholics Anonymous that would be better informed and served as part of South Florida Area 15.

Today, you voted on the Cayman Islands' request to join Area 15 from the International A.A. community. The Area 15 Re-Districting Committee met and put forth a recommendation. You listened, questioned and made an informed decision based on all of the information presented. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the groups in the Cayman Islands.

The 54th FL State Convention and 66th Southeastern Conference will be held in Miami next August. The FL State Convention will be focusing on the Steps; the Southeastern Conference will focus on the Traditions. For those who have never attended a Southeastern Conference, the Delegates from the 13 areas will do workshop presentations. You do not want to miss these presentations done by a truly remarkable set of trusted servants. We will have workshops, skits and many other exciting events presented by the southeast region. We will all have the opportunity to meet and hear presentations from our new General Service Office General Manager, Phyllis H., our new Trustee-at-Large, Don M. and our new Southeast Regional Trustee, El N.. I can't wait, I'm all registered. Who else is registered? *Raise your hands* The committee is setup right outside the door. I'm sure they need volunteers as well. Please register and offer your service at the registration table right outside this meeting.

Eva S., Forums Coordinator has sent a letter asking that any area in the Southeast Region interested in holding an Additional Regional Forum in 2013 submit a bid including information on the proposed city and hotel and the goals for this Additional Regional Forum. An Additional Regional Forum may be used to supplement the regular Regional Forum rotation schedule or to address concerns of geography, language or culture.

We are in the rotation for a Regional Forum in 2012, however, we may wish to consider an Additional Regional Forum for the Spanish, Native American or Special Needs Communities, or possibly we should consider an Additional Regional Forum in the Bahamas, Virgin Islands or even the Cayman Islands. Please note, if you would like to present a bid, it will be necessary to submit that information to me well in advance of the Conference which starts on April 18, 2010; as I will present the bid to the Southeast Region at the Conference.

As you know, the S.E. Region Delegates have had discussion and proposed a regional service conference to be called SERAASA or South East Region of Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly. The Southeast Region has voted in favor of this event at the last Southeastern Conference. Our S.E. Regional Trustee has appointed an ad-hoc committee in order to be certain this event will be guided and supported appropriately. The committee has proposed Initial Guidelines for the planning and implementation of this event. The Southeast Region will discuss this further at the Delegates Get-Together in February.

Our S.E. Regional Trustee has also appointed an ad-hoc committee to investigate the current Southeastern Conference Guidelines and establish a clear understanding of how the Southeast Region arrives at a group conscience if and when that is necessary. This committee report and recommendations will also be discussed at the Delegates Get-Together in February.

I have posted on the Area 15 website, information for the *2010 International Convention - Frequently Asked Questions - Registration, Hotels, Transportation, and Volunteering*. Just click on the Alamo icon. This will be an extraordinary event. If you have not registered already, rooms are on a first come, first serve basis. As of January 8, 2009, registration was at 29,000. Although the core downtown rooms are sold out, additional rooms are available in the outlying areas. Shuttle service will be provided at no charge to registered attendees.

Phyllis H., General Manager announced the appointment of Michelle M. as the permanent Archivist. Phyllis also reported the end of the construction project. The G.S.O. Archives are now open to visitors.

The Special Needs pamphlet project has not received many submissions in response to the 2009 General Service Conference Advisory Action “that a Special Needs recovery pamphlet for newcomers or prospective members be developed and that stories be solicited from members with various special needs, for example, members who are deaf, blind, wheel-chair bound, etc.” Anyone who knows of such members is encouraged to let them know of this project and, if necessary, help them submit their stories.

The Trustee’s Literature Committee reports that the Sponsorship pamphlet has gone through a significant re-write.

The A.A.W.S. Finance Committee reported that contributions are down 6.5%, however, total revenue was \$192,500 more than budgeted.

Highlights of the Publications Report: Book sales are up 14.9%. Gross Sales were 10.1% under budget.

The Grapevine is in need of financial support. Sales declined 40% in October. The Grapevine does not have advertising revenue unlike most magazines. The Grapevine and La Vina rely on new subscriptions and items sold. Let’s pass the word to our groups.

The new Grapevine Representative handbooks are here. *Hold up handbook* This handbook is chock full of information including what GvRs do. In the South Florida Area, typically the Alt. GSR is the Grapevine Representative, or GvR. The GvR is the vital link between your group and the Grapevine. Please call or email the Grapevine Executive Editor @ 212-870-3400 or ee@agrapevine.org for more information.

“A Rabbit Walks into a Bar” – Best Jokes and Cartoons from the AA Grapevine is available. #GV-22 @ \$9.95. *Hold up book*

“Las Doce Tradiciones” Volume 1 & 2 *Hold up set* are now available in Spanish. These two volumes contain nineteen selected articles from La Vina on how the Traditions work in AA groups and in the lives of AA members. Volume 1, #CD-14 & Volume 2, CD-15 are \$10.00 each from the Grapevine.

Last evening, after a wonderful speaker meeting, many of you had the opportunity to view the three videos approved by the 59th General Service Conference. I hope that you enjoyed the show and I also hope that you will take advantage of these videos to use within your committees and other various 12th step work.

The Hope Video has been distributed. Order information appears on pages 12, 22 & 23 (English, French & Spanish) of the 2009 – 2010 Literature Catalogue; #DV-09 is available for \$10.00.

The Young Peoples Video has been released. Order information appears on pages 12, 22 & 23 (English, French & Spanish) of the 2009 – 2010 Literature Catalogue; #DV-10 is available for \$10.00.

The third CPC Video Segment is now live on our website. You can view all three at www.aa.org. Click on the tab “Information on A.A. From that page, click on “A.A. Videos for Professionals” and then select from the drop down list. The DVD called “A.A. Cooperation with the Professional Community” #DV-13 is available for \$10.00.

CPC/New Service Piece: “Alcoholics Anonymous as a Resource for Drug & Alcohol Court Professionals” #F-177 is now available at no cost in English, French & Spanish.

I received an inquiry from the CPC Chair of Area 09, Mid-Southern California resulting from an article Mario L., CPC Alt. Chair, Area 15 wrote for the CPC/PI Newsletter earlier in the year. They asked for, and received, a picture that was used on our area CPC billboards. That same billboard picture is now being utilized on the inside of 150 buses in Orange County, CA. Area 15’s CPC billboard message carrying an A.A. public service announcement has gone coast to coast. Let’s give Mario and our CPC Committee a hand. *Applause*

The 60th General Service Conference will follow our April Assembly on April 18-24, 2010. I have forwarded the Preliminary Conference Agenda to all of our Area Officers, Area Standing Committee Chairpersons and District Chairpersons. I will also do the same with the Final Conference Agenda and background material upon receipt which will be around the 2nd week in February. Please distribute this information to your groups and members at your earliest convenience.

The Conference background material may come printed or by CD to the District Chairperson. PLEASE – remember that the background material is not anonymity protected and is not to be electronically copied and/or forwarded to any one, at any time. This means that the background material should not be sent via email, website or CD. The only electronic copies authorized will be from the General Service Office or the Delegate. I trust that this won’t be a problem, but I would be remiss if I did not inform you.

Area Standing Committee’s will present their committee’s background at the April Quarterly. Other presentations, Agenda, Policy/Admissions, Report & Charter, Trustee’s & International Conventions/Regional Forums will be presented by your Area Officers along with the Standing Committees.

You will have three opportunities to discuss the background material at the April Quarterly. They are as follows: Conference Agenda Review Meeting, Saturday from 4:00 – 6:00 PM, the Conference Agenda Review Meeting, Saturday evening from 10:00 PM until we are done, and the final discussion at the Area Assembly on Sunday afternoon following the business meeting. The Final Agenda will contain items for discussion, review and/or consideration. Discuss or Review may not require lengthy comment on the background but Considerations will. We will follow the order of the Final Agenda. DCMs & GSRs – this may be your most important responsibility; to inform the Delegate of your group’s conscience. I hope that all Officers,

Standing Committee Chairs, DCMs and GSRs will be present at all 3 meetings. Remember, if we get all the information discussed and questions answered on Saturday, the Sunday meeting will go quickly and efficiently. I would like to thank all of you for your cooperation in advance. After the Conference which ends April 24, 2010, I will be visiting every District that I am invited to give the Delegates Report. You will have the opportunity to hear first hand about my experience in bringing forth your group conscience to the whole of Alcoholics Anonymous – the Conference. I will share the collective experience of the Conference and you will have the opportunity to ask questions again. Why did the Conference vote that way? Maybe your conscience suggested I vote a certain way and I voted the opposite. I will explain the process that led me to that decision.

I have discussed all of this information with your District Chair at the Chairpersons Meeting yesterday. They will invite me at the appropriate time if your District would like. The theme of the 60th General Service Conference is “Practicing A.A.s Principles – the Pathway to Unity”. I could not think of a better theme that exemplifies the spirit of Area 15. I trust that we will continue to practice unifying principles in the year ahead. We have done together, what we could not do alone.

If I can assist you in any manner, please feel free to call me or send an email.

I would like to thank each of you for the privilege of serving as your Delegate; I am truly blessed. God bless each of you.

Respectfully submitted with Love in Service,

Ken C.
Delegate, Panel 59