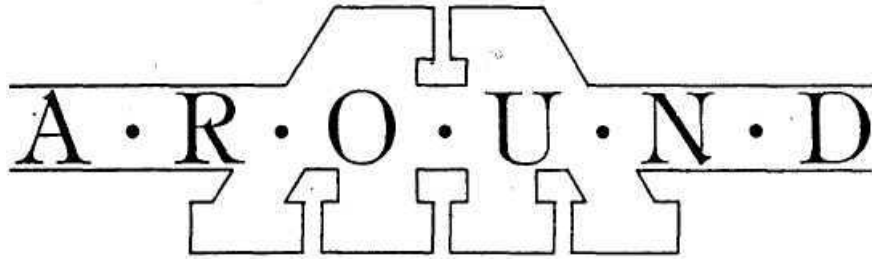


August 1992



"The AA Message in a Changing World"  
—42nd General Service Conference

The General Service Conference is the Fellowship's annual business meeting, and the theme, as well as the many agenda items, of the 1992 Conference reflected a variety of matters any AA member would recognize from a home group business meeting. A quotation from Bill W.'s writings, part of the keynote address, said it well: "... we found that the kinship of having suffered severe alcoholism was often not enough in itself. To cross all barriers, our channels of communication had to be broadened and deepened."

The 132 Conference members—91 area delegates, 21 trustees, nontrustee directors and staff members of AA World Services and the Grapevine—met the week of April 26 to May 2 at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, New York City to share on matters important to the Fellowship and to carrying the AA message to all who need it.

The week opened Sunday morning, and the day's activities included roll call of all Conference members, greetings from the delegate chairperson, the keynote address, and a workshop. Sunday evening, the opening dinner and AA meeting featured five speakers whose stories led into the week's hard work by demonstrating "what we were like, what happened, and what we are like now."

Conference week is always chock-full of activity, and this year's schedule—half a day longer than previous Conferences—was no exception. Each morning from 7:30 to 8:30, an AA meeting based on a reading from *Daily Reflections* started the day. Monday morning saw reports from the General Service Board and its two service corporations, AA World Services and the AA Grapevine, as well as reports from all the trustees' committees. Throughout the week, presentation-discussions,

workshops, a lunchtime topic sharing session, area service highlights, and several "What's on Your Mind?" sharing sessions gave every individual and every point of view a chance to be heard.

The real business of the Conference takes place at the Conference Committee meetings. Every AA member has heard the suggestion that we trust the process—the process of recovery, the process of the group conscience as it emerges in the home group. Likewise, the process works at the Conference level, through the committee system. Committee members discuss items on their agendas (received from a variety of sources, including individual AA members, area committees and delegates, and trustees' committees), deliberate, and report their recommendations to the full Conference for a vote. The results emerge as Conference Advisory Actions (see next page for highlights of those Actions).

Presentations and agenda items often reflect the Conference theme, and this year was no exception. Conference members viewed a video of the Big Book (minus stories) in American Sign Language as a means of reaching the deaf community, and the PI Committee presented a video for young alcoholics.

Trustee elections were held Wednesday afternoon. Les L. of Scottsbluff, Nebraska, will replace Don B. as West Central regional trustee, and Gerry F. of Humboldt, Saskatchewan, will become Western Canada regional trustee, replacing Phil C.

Saturday morning, all gathered for the traditional closing breakfast, and heard farewell talks by rotating trustees Joan Jackson (Class A, nonalcoholic trustee), Desmond T. (general service trustee), as well as two regional trustees, Don B. and Phil C.

**Digest of Advisory Actions** (a full list will appear in the *Final Conference Report*):

The Conference recommended that:

—a feasibility study be undertaken by the General Service Board of all possible methods by which sobriety chips/medallions may be made available to the Fellowship, and that a report be made to an ad hoc committee of 1993 Conference delegates who would make a recommendation to the 1993 Conference; that G.S.O.'s general manager and the A.A.W.S. Board devise an equitable system of pay for the G.S.O. staff that embraces the spiritual principles of Concept XI and complies with all applicable laws.

—the theme for the 1993 General Service Conference be: AA Takes Its Inventory-The General Service Conference Structure, that the proposal of the General Service Board to directly manage A A W S / G S O on an experimental basis for nine months not be implemented.

—the revised pamphlet "AA as a Resource for the Healthcare Professional" be approved replacing "AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession."

—the Correctional Facilities Workbook be published in a soft-cover format and be enclosed in a folder which would include the appropriate pamphlets and guidelines; that the Correctional Facilities Directory be discontinued.

—the computer monitored Birthday Contribution Plan be discontinued and any data base be destroyed; that the financial statements presented to the Fellowship not show allocation of expenses between various funds and entities until the basis of such allocations can be justified.

—the Grapevine continue to include at least one article in each issue and, as a possible future replacement, the Grapevine Board investigate the feasibility of developing a quarterly Spanish newsletter based on original material and translations of current Grapevine articles.

—the following proposal from the Grapevine Corporate Board be accepted: In order to

achieve some uniformity of procedure and to gain desired Conference input into Grapevine special items, yet not to compromise the Grapevine Corporate Board's "right of decision" to manage the fiscal affairs of the Grapevine, let it be proposed that:

Based on the positive model of mutual Conference and Board involvement in production of *The Language of the Heart*, the Grapevine Corporate Board offer to the Conference Grapevine Committee, on an ongoing basis, a general list of proposed special items at least two years in advance of possible production in order that the Conference could offer any guidance or register any disapproval they might have. Having so presented the conceptual basis of these special items to the Conference Committee, final approval for the completed items would rest with the Grapevine Corporate Board.

—the story of "John," a young person who entered A.A. while in prison, be added to "Young People in A A", that in lieu of a moratorium on new literature, the ongoing literature subcommittee continue to review current and proposed Conference-approved material and service pieces; that the A.A. History Book manuscript be returned to the 1992 Conference Literature Committee for further review and then forwarded to the 1993 Conference Literature Committee.

—a revised form, "Application for Additional Delegate Area," be approved.

—Question #!4—"In addition to your alcoholism, were you addicted to drugs?" -be removed from the 1992 A.A. Membership Survey Questionnaire; that the video directed to young alcoholics be approved for distribution with two editing changes; that the six-segment public service announcements directed to teens and seniors be approved.

—the Procedures for Election of Class A trustees, previously approved by the General Service Board, be added to the A.A. *Service Manual*.

—a paragraph, stating local committees will provide informational presentations on A.A., be added to pamphlets directed to treatment facilities professionals.