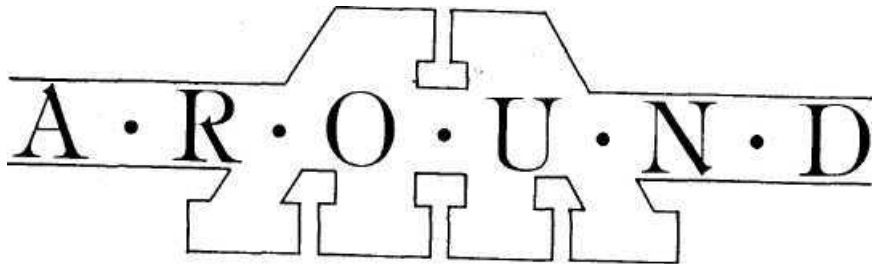


August 1993



AA Takes Its Inventory at the 43rd General Service Conference

From April 18 to 23, 1993, members of the 43rd U.S./Canada General Service Conference met in the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, New York City, to do the annual business of AA and to take inventory of the Conference structure.

Since the 42nd Conference last year set "AA Takes Its Inventory" as the 1993 theme, AA entities everywhere have been making a "searching and fearless moral inventory" - of groups, areas, districts, the AAWS and Grapevine Corporate Boards, the trustees, as well as the GSO and GV staffs. These inventories have been shared in writing or one-on-one in a variety of ways.

Thus, when the Conference convened, it was a culmination of a process. The 133 Conference members (91 area delegates, 21 trustees, and AAWS and Grapevine directors and staff) met for an intensive week of workshops, presentations, area service highlights, sharing sessions, and most important, meetings of the standing Conference Committees.

The Conference began Sunday morning with greetings and introductions, followed by a keynote address by regional trustee Jan W., who reminded Conference members of the meaning and process of inventory. Sunday evening's opening dinner was followed by an AA meeting with four speakers chosen from delegates, trustees, directors, and staff.

On Monday morning, the Conference heard board and committee reports, and then, in joint

meetings of delegates with trustees and directors, the business of the eleven standing Conference committees (composed entirely of delegates) began. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the committees considered agenda items and decided on their recommendations to the entire Conference. The recommendations came to the Conference floor on Thursday and Friday, for discussion and vote by the entire body.

During the past year, an ad hoc committee of delegates has been involved in a feasibility study "of all possible methods by which sobriety chips/medallions may be made available to the Fellowship." The committee's report and conclusions were presented to the Conference on Tuesday afternoon.

Three Class A (nonalcoholic) trustees rotated at the end of the 43rd Conference. Michael Alexander, longtime trustee and chairman of the General Service Board since 1988, will be replaced by W. J. (Jim) Estelle. Board treasurer Robert Morse will be replaced by Gary Glynn. For reasons of health, Amos Reed took an early rotation; his position will not be filled this year.

The Conference came to an end Saturday morning, with a report on the World Service Meeting, and closing talks by rotating trustees. The last "official" act of the Conference was the Serenity Prayer in the three principal languages of the U.S./Canada Conference area, English, Spanish, and French.

So the year of the inventory is over, but in a real sense it has just begun, as AA entities continue to look at themselves and to use the results of the inventory in their ongoing work of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. For in the final analysis, that's what it's all about.

Digest of Advisory Actions (a full list will appear in the 1993 *Final Conference Report*).

The following recommendations were approved by the 43rd General Service Conference and the General Service Board.

It was recommended that:

- the General Service Office review the current practice of mailing label distribution and devise a new policy that will encompass the principle of anonymity.
- in agreement with the consensus of the 1958 General Service Conference, the *use* of sobriety chips/medallions is a matter for local autonomy and not one on which the Conference should record a definite position in behalf of the movement.
- it is not appropriate for AAWS, Inc., or The AA Grapevine, Inc., to produce or license the production of sobriety chips/medallions.
- the theme for the 1994 General Service Conference be: Spirit of Sacrifice.
- in light of declining contributions, a new self-support pamphlet be prepared.
- the current policy of publishing monthly Grapevine articles in Spanish be reaffirmed; that because of staffing needs and other cost factors, a quarterly Spanish newsletter not be implemented at this time; that delegates and the Grapevine Corporate Board continue to explore different ways of carrying the message to the Spanish community through Grapevine materials.
- AAWS produce an anonymity display card with the following verbiage: "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions. Please respect this and treat in confidence who you see and what you hear."
- AAWS produce a pocket-sized version of the Big Book with all front matter (Preface and various forewords, Doctor's Opinion), basic text, Or. Bob's Story and Appendices.
- the AA history book project be deferred for two years so that a new team of AA servants can look at the history book with fresh ideas.
- the area delegate term not be extended to three years.
- in order for groups/districts/areas to fully participate in the Conference process, the following steps be taken: a) Conference agenda items be submitted as early as possible but no later than January 15 each year; b) Final Conference committee agendas be automatically sent to all Conference members by February 15 each year; c) Background material for each specific committee be sent to its members by February 15 each year, with other committees' background material available upon request.
- that each area delegate encourage discussions within all AA groups on the spiritual principles of Anonymity, including photographs, publications and posthumous Anonymity, as related to our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions.
- the following be added to the *AA Service Manual*: "To encourage participation of the maximum number of groups, some areas have incorporated linguistic districts within their structure. These districts usually have a bilingual DCM, or liaison. Their boundaries may be independent of the conventional district boundaries."
- hereafter, Class A trustees be limited to two (2) consecutive three-year terms. Since the committee recognizes the necessity of a degree of flexibility in the terms of class A trustees, the chairperson of the General Service Board - after approval by that board - is granted the opportunity to extend one (1) additional three-year term for Class A members of the General Service Board, where necessary.
- the chairperson of the General Service Board serve for no more than four (4) consecutive years.