

Highlights From A.A.W.S.

July 30, 2015

The A.A. World Services Board met on Thursday, July 30, 2015, at the General Service Office in New York, NY. Chair of the A.A.W.S. Board, Chet P. opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance, including Northeast Regional Trustee, Richard P., and General Service Board Treasurer and Class A Trustee, David Morris.

A resolution was presented to General Service Office employee Constance Ivey who is retiring as of July 31, 2015, after 37 years at the General Service Office. A resolution was also presented to General Service Office Staff member, Jim M. who is leaving the General Service Office at the end of August to pursue other interests. Constance and Jim were thanked for their dedicated service to the General Service Office and to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Manager's Report

General Manager Phyllis H., reported that approximately 57,000 attendees took part in the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta, "80 years—Happy, Joyous and Free."

Everyone involved, including more than 4,000 volunteers, contributed to the success of this Convention. You could see the volunteer host committee out in droves in their bright green t-shirts; the G.S.O. and Grapevine team busy at their posts; employees of the Georgia World Congress Center and Georgia Dome well prepared; and, the city hospitality community mobilized.

Post-Convention mail and phone calls have been coming into the office from the many members who attended the Convention. Responses have been overwhelmingly positive, and all have expressed their joy at having gathered in Atlanta with tens of thousands of other sober alcoholics to celebrate A.A.'s 80th anniversary. The agencies and professionals we worked with have already made comments on how "happy and especially nice" our membership is.

As reported earlier, on August 31, 2015, we will bid a fond but sad farewell to Jim M. (G.S.O. Staff member currently on the Public Information assignment) who will be leaving G.S.O. to pursue other interests.

The G.S.O./A.A. Grapevine Co-Location project is moving forward as scheduled with our initial construction phase beginning August 10, 2015. A number of staff have relocated to their "temporary homes" throughout other sections of the office while construction is being done in their work area. This will continue until all 5 construction phases have been completed, November 2015.

As detailed on the aa.org website, and Box 459 (as well as noted on signage throughout the General Service Office) large group tours will be suspended during the construction period. Visitors to the office will be welcomed during this time, however there will be limited access to office areas. The Friday A.A. meeting will be held as usual, but in different locations within the building or nearby Riverside Church.

Staff

The Summer *Box 4-5-9* Conference issue was posted on G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site. We anticipate that the Final Conference Report will be distributed late in the summer in all three languages.

Staff are preparing for rotation into their new assignments September 2015.

Planning for the 66th General Service Conference, which will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Times Square, April 17-23, 2016, is underway. The theme of the 2016 General Service Conference is: "Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts." Early in August the Conference Coordinator will send out a request to the delegates for theme, presentation and workshop topic suggestions for the 2017 General Service Conference.

On the Corrections desk, The summer edition of *Sharing From Behind The Walls* has been distributed and posted on the Corrections page, on www.aa.org. The selection process for the new Corrections Appointed Committee Member from Canada has begun. The new Corrections video, which will replace "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell," is in full swing. We have recorded over twenty alcoholics who are currently incarcerated, or have been in the past. We are waiting for approval from a Canadian Correctional facility, to record sharing from alcoholics behind the walls in Canada.

The 2015 Regional Forum season continues with preparations for the 2015 West Central Regional Forum in Casper, WY (August 21-23, 2015) and the Additional Western Canada Regional Forum (Whitehorse, Yukon, September 11-13, 2015). Announcements of, and invitations to, the 2015 Southwest Regional Forum (St. Louis, MO, October 9-11, 2015) and the East Central Regional Forum (Milwaukee, WI, November 13-15, 2015) are being prepared and sent as scheduled. Online registration for all of the 2015 Regional Forums is available at www.aa.org where the Regional Forum Flyers and Registration Forms can also be viewed and printed.

Technology/Communication/Services

The A.A.W.S. Board approved the following recommendations from the Technology/Communication/Services Committee:

- That the 2015 Second Quarterly Report on G.S.O.'s A.A. Website Activities be forwarded to the trustees' Public Information (P.I.) Committee as presented, along with the March-June 2015 Website Analytics Report.
- That the 2015 Annual Letter to the Media Website Analytics Report be forwarded to the trustees' Public Information (P.I.) Committee as presented.

Publishing

International Licensing/Translations

After careful consideration and deliberation, the A.A.W.S. Board passed a motion to grant a license to reproduce and distribute A.A. literature within Russia to the RSO Board upon the expiration of the two temporary licenses. Both the RSO and the FOAA service structures have been notified of this decision.

A.A.W.S. literature is currently translated into 89 languages worldwide. The Big Book has been translated into 69 languages and translation into 15 additional languages is pending.

The project to translate *Alcoholics Anonymous* into Navajo has picked up momentum with a strong Navajo-speaking committee effort. There is still no estimated completion date for the draft translation (in audio format) of the Big Book in Navajo.

2015 Gross Sales to Date

For the first six months of 2015, sales were substantially below the estimate. In May, gross sales (including digital books) were \$967,096 vs. the budget of \$1,138,176 (a 15% negative variance). June sales were slightly above budget at \$1,114,706 vs. \$1,105,572.

For the first half of 2015, sales stand at \$6,567,068, which is \$1,002,988 (or about 13%) below the six-month estimate of \$7,570,056. Total print unit sales continue to be below the levels of 2014 and 2013 in the aggregate and specifically the Big Book and the 12 & 12. Unit sales of titles in all major print book categories—e.g., Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*—were lower than budget and lower than last year.

The A.A.W.S. Board approved the recommendation from the Publishing Committee that the Public Service Announcement (PSA) "Doors" be priced at \$10.00.

eBooks Unit Distribution

For the first four months of 2015, total ebook sales were \$93,993.55. It is anticipated that gross sales in May (ebook sales not yet included) will also be below budget, but preliminary figures indicate that June will be better.

Finance

Unaudited G.S.O. financial update for the six months ended June 30, 2015:

Net sales	\$6,446,929
Gross Profit (Literature)	\$4,235,549
Contributions	\$3,208,531
Total operating expenses	\$7,748,047

It was noted that at the end of the six month period, revenues were approximately 8.5% less than budgeted, with total operating expenses under budget as well. Showing an improvement from the March 31, 2015 numbers, contributions for the six months ended June 30, 2015 were approximately \$59,000 less than budgeted and \$11,000 less than the first six months of 2014.

The A.A.W.S. Board approved the following recommendation brought forth by the Finance Committee:

- That the mid-year budget adjustments in the amount of \$184,000 (resulting from Conference actions) be approved and forwarded to the trustees' Finance Committee.