

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM A.A.W.S.

*OCTOBER 31, 2014*

The A.A. World Services Board met on Friday, October 31, 2014, at the Hilton Westchester Rye Brook Hotel in Rye Brook, New York. Chair of the A.A.W.S. Board, Billy N. opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance.

## **Manager's Report**

General Manager Phyllis H., reported that 61 delegates representing 41 countries and zones traveled to share their experience, strength and hope at the 23rd World Service Meeting held October 12-16, 2014 in Warsaw, Poland. Rick W. and his assistant, Ayleen Martinez did an excellent job in coordinating this event and Jim M., Steve S. and Clay R. were key in supporting the committees with reports.

Planning continues for the 2015 International Convention. After the initial rush, registration has slowed down. At this date, over 27,000 people have registered, which is still above the numbers from previous conventions.

475 Riverside Drive, 11 Floor Co-location Project: As a result of numerous meetings during the past two months between the architectural firm, the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine, a floor plan has been agreed to. The final draft plan was submitted to the General Service Board's Joint Initiatives Committee for their review. Next steps include sending out request for construction bids. We are on track to complete Phase 1 of the co-location plan by the end of the year.

Recruiting /Hiring: Interviews for the IT manager position have been concluded. We are in the process of checking references of the final three candidates, with the expectation of a December 2014 hire.

## **Staff**

The 2014 Conference Evaluation Summary was sent to all Conference members. Planning for the 65th General Service Conference is in full swing.

The Corrections desk has received 4,870 letters and 2,742 emails through the third quarter of 2014. During these nine months, we linked 651 male alcoholics and 237 female alcoholics for a total of 888 through our Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.). The vendor proposals to create the new Corrections video are currently being reviewed.

## **Technology/Communication/Services**

The Board approved the recommendation of the Technology/Communication/Services ("TCS") committee that the 2014 Third Quarter Report on G.S.O.'s A.A. Website Activities be forwarded to the trustees' Public Information Committee.

The Board also approved the TCS recommendation that the Report on A.A. Regional Directories be forwarded to the Conference Committee on Report and Charter with a recommendation that a limited run of printed directories be considered.

G.S.O.'s Group Services coordinator attended the 29th Annual Intergroup/Central Office/A.A.W.S./AAGV Seminar in Chicago, Illinois on September 25-28, 2014 where G.S.O. had the opportunity to hear detailed, shared experience from local A.A. offices about a wide range of challenges and solutions on the frontlines of A.A. support services.

## Publishing

For the first nine months of the year, through September 2014, total gross sales are \$14,345,500 which is \$1,870,000 (15%) over estimate for the year to date. For the sales month of September, prior to the implementation of the book price increase, we saw \$3,868,044 in actual gross sales vs. the \$2,589,150 estimate, which is \$1,278,894 over budget (49.4%) for the month.

Sales in our two Online Stores (B2B for bulk orders and B2C for direct-to-consumer sales) accounted for 60.73% of all sales in the month of September. For the year to date, web orders total \$6,471,157, or 53.5% of total sales for A.A. literature. This is the highest percentage and highest dollar sales amount for the year.

It is noted that the year started out with web orders accounting for 44.14% of total sales, and reached a high of 57.89% of total online sales in the month of April (also the highest total sales overall with sale of the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Edition of the Big Book).

Ebook sales have continued apace. Prices have not been increased for our ebook titles. *A.A. Comes of Age* (English) is now available as a digital book on the three major platforms: Kindle, Apple and Nook; the translations into French and Spanish are being worked on. *As Bill Sees It* is next in line for publication as an ebook.

Implementation of the following new publications approved by the 2014 General Service Conference have been completed: "Circles of Love and Service" pamphlet (revised); "Markings on the Journey" video (3 languages); and "Many Paths to Spirituality" pamphlet.

A.A.W.S. approved the recommendation brought forth by the A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee to approve its Composition/Scope/Procedure, revised to reflect: Composition – the A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee is composed of not less than 5 members; Scope – "reviewing and recommending initial pricing of all A.A. literature and other inventory items to the A.A.W.S. Board. Any across the board changes fall within the purview of the Finance Committee."; and Procedure – "to make recommendations, reached in committee by substantial unanimity vote, to the A.A.W.S. Board."

## Finance

The unaudited G.S.O. financial update for the 9 months ended September 30, 2014 showed:

Net sales	\$14,147,000
Gross Profit (Literature)	\$ 8,708,000
Contributions	\$ 4,911,000
Total operating expenses	\$11,379,000

Of note, despite a slight drop in contributions this quarter, we ended the quarter \$1,210,961.50 over budget due to increased sales before the October 1, 2014 literature increase.

A.A.W.S. approved the recommendation brought forth by the A.A.W.S. Finance Committee to approve its Composition/Scope/Procedure, revised to reflect: Composition – the A.A.W.S. Publishing Committee is composed of not less than 5 members; Scope – "recommending approval of any across the board Literature price changes"; and Procedure – "to make recommendations, reached in committee by substantial unanimity vote, to the A.A.W.S. Board."

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