



## GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

FLORIDA STATE COMMITTEE  
NORTHERN AREA

April 5, 1976

*2nd 4/3+4/76*

MINUTES OF THE SECOND QUARTERLY ASSEMBLY MEETING OF THE NORTHERN FLORIDA COMMITTEE OF A.A., HELD IN JACKSONVILLE BEACH, FLA., APRIL 3-4, 1976

Present were all State Officers. All D.C.M.'s present with the exception of: H.D. D-5, Allen S., D-8 and James A., D-14. Marge McR., A.F.I.C. Absent.

### PROGRAM AS FOLLOWS:

Saturday April 3, 1976 - 5:00 P.M., Business Meeting in Hospitality Room

Chairman Joe C., opened meeting in usual manner. Secretary David G., read minutes from last meeting. Seconded, and accepted as read. Treasurer Elise D., gave Financial Report. As of Mar. 31, 1976 the Balance is: \$ 1,345.01. Motion to accept, Second, Accepted as read. Joe C., urged groups to send money. Took up matter of re-districting D-4. Motion to re-district, Second, accepted. D-4 split into D-16. George G., D.C.M., Robert P., Alternate. Chairman Joe C., mentioned matter of the Delegates Expense check not being enough to defray costs. It was discussed and moved to increase "Buck's" account from \$ 600.00 (1975) to \$ 900.00 (1976). Motion to so increase, Second, and accepted. (Pending approval at General Assembly meeting). Buck reports to D.C.M.'s on contributions to G.S.O. during year. P.I. Chairman John Van D., gave his report on the T.V. Spots available for all District Committee members. (Contact John for more details). Marge McR., North Fla., Inst., Committee Chairman not able to attend this meeting due to sickness. It was mentioned that all groups are urged to contribute \$ 2.00 yearly for the Institutional Program to defray costs. Chairman Joe C., gave high praise for the merge of the North and South Committees's into one committee. Next Quarterly Assembly meeting to be held in D-8, Daytona Beach, Fla., Time and place to be announced. Next Assembly Election meeting to be held in Gainesville, Fla., Time and Place to be announced. It was moved that Gainesville be used as the site for this meeting since it was half-way between Orlando and Jacksonville. Alter-Delegate Barbara N., and David G., will make a new District map showing all new District's. Available at the mailing of these minutes. Chairman Joe C., read letter from Member in D-9. Letter had no merit in form of complaint. Will contact D.C.M. for details. The sad part of this Assembly meeting came when our Chairman Joe C., announced that he was resigning due to ill health. That Joella S., Alter-Chairman will take over duties of Chairman starting April 4, 1976. Buck R., and David G., said that they have had a Great Chairman to work with. D.C.M.'s gave Joe a round of applause. Basket passed for donations. Meeting closed with Lords Prayer.

Saturday April 3, 1976 8:00 P.M., Speaker meeting in Assembly Room

Sunday April 4, 1976 SHARING SESSION held in Assembly Room. "GROUP INVENTORY"

12:00 P.M. - Adjourned for lunch.

### MAIN ASSEMBLY MEETING - 1:30 P.M.

Meeting opened in usual manner by Joella S., Chairman. Joella asked that a letter be sent to Joe C., Thanking him for his service to the State Committee. Motion, Second, accepted. Joella stated that 218 had registered at Ramada Inn for this assembly meeting. David G., Secretary read minutes from last meeting, motion, second, accepted as read. Roll call by David showed that three D.C.M.'s not present. Only three districts did not have at least one G.S.R. present. D-9, D-13, D-15. David made the announcement of the 20th Fla.,/S.E. Convention to be held in Miami Beach on August 11-15, 1976 at the Deauville Hotel, 6701 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, Fla. Reg., blanks available. Elise D., Treasurer gave Financial report. Bal., as of March 31, 1976 \$ 1,345.01. Motion, second, accepted as read. Joella mentioned the \$ 900.00 for our Delegate to go to N.Y., motion, second, accepted. Motion to re-district D-4 and make D-16 accepted. P.I. Chairman John Van D., gave report on T.V. Spots. Available to all P.I. members. (Contact John for details).

Continued on Other Side

MINUTES OF THE SECOND QUARTERLY ASSEMBLY MEETING OF THE NORTHERN FLORIDA  
COMMITTEE OF A.A., HELD IN JACKSONVILLE BEACH, FLA., ON APRIL 3-4-, 1976

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Page Two.

David G., Secretary introduced Ralph Gilmore to the General Assembly as the Corresponding Secretary of the Fla., State Committee. Large applause. I am Grateful and thank all of you. Joella S., mentioned Marge McR., and the fact that the Institutions Committee needs help in the way of \$ 2.00 a year to help defray costs. Alter-Delegate mentioned about new district map she and David G., are making and will be mailed with these minutes to all D.C.M.'s. Asked about the style of the Flyer/announcement for Assembly meetings and if the assembly wanted it to continue. Accepted as a good idea. Joella S., mentioned election meeting in Gainesville, Fla., in November. Time & Place to be announced. It was announced about Bill Pratt, past Chairman who is in the Hospital from a Heart attack. Needs Cards and letters and a visit if those can get to see him.

Delegates report: S.A. "buck" R., mentioned about his losing Joe C., and that he was a great Chairman, and that he will be greatly missed.

AGENDA ITEMS:

ITEM # 1. Finances for Assembly and other business discussed Saturday evening during the D.C.M. meeting.

ITEM # 4. Feasibility of Big Book being published in PAPER BACK FORM. After assembly discussion a large majority was in favor of having the Big Book put out in Paper Back Form and still have the Hard Back version.

ITEM # 5. "Buck" says, that the con-census of the Atlanta Mini-Conference is that we have another Mini-Conference. The assembly voted to have another.

ITEM # 6. "Buck" will go to New York UN-instructed.

ITEM # 2-3 Passed over due to lateness of Assembly meeting. "Buck" hit the high spots of the 12 Concepts and urged all that are interested in A.A. work to read the 12 Concepts. Stressed that it is a 'help' for all G.S.R.'s.

Buck Thanked the Assembly for their cooperation and help during this meeting.

Meeting turned back to Joella S., Chairman who also thanked D-1,2,3,4 and the Ramada Inn for their help during this meeting. Round of applause for all concerned.

Majority in favor of having Elise D., Treasurer order more of the 12 Concepts and have them available at Daytona Beach for the next Assembly meeting.

Baskets passed for contributions.

Meeting closed with Lords Prayer at 3:08 P.M.

Sincerely in A.A. Fellowship,



Ralph B. Gi  
Corresponding Secretary

P.O. Box 221  
Raiford, Fla.. 32083  
% J.E. H

Note: A.F.I.C.= All Florida Inst. Committee

Approved: the idea of a test mailing of multiple copies of Box 459 to two or three Conference areas; the first two issues in 1977 will be used for the test. Follow-up will be through trustees, delegates and area committees, a questionnaire, and multiple-copy subscriptions to groups.

Highlights of the Conference:

We agreed with AAWS, after reviewing an independent feasibility study, that relocation of GSO is inadvisable now. In any event, the Grapevine wishes to remain in New York. The Fantus study was received in October 1976. Our existing lease runs to 1980, and at that time the matter may be brought up again.

Directories: approved listing of groups by states and provinces, rather than by regions, plus continuation of groups' listing of contributions to GSO. Further approved continued publication of addresses and listing the group service number along with other group information. In writing to GSO please refer to your group service number. I have a questionnaire to present to you for discussion at our next assembly listing eleven points that need answers. The results will be forwarded to Frank Mauser for processing so that they can be discussed at our 1978 Conference.

Institutions: Agreed that the Conference Institutions Committee should be divided into two separate committees: one on Correctional Facilities and the other on Treatment Facilities, and approved an outline for a new pamphlet for inmates entitled "It Sure Beats Hell Out of Sitting in a Cell." It is written in three parts: (1) what we did behind the bars (13 suggestions for staying sober while inside); (2) a selection of inmate stories, and (3) what we did on the first days out. Discussion of ways to inform AA members and groups of the spiritual rewards of carrying the message behind the walls brought out these points:

1. Make speaking at institutions a privilege.
2. Let institutions committee members speak at closed meetings to inform "outside" AA groups about the spiritual rewards of speaking to "inside" groups, and the purpose and needs of "inside" AA groups.
3. Suggest that "outside" AA groups elect institutions representatives and book speakers for "inside" meetings.
4. Encourage AAs who have been on the "inside" to speak at institutions where possible.
5. Hold institutions "special events" meetings and/or institutions workshops in conjunction with conferences. If possible, have inmates participate at these functions to tell what is most helpful for those on the "inside" to hear. Experience has shown that they are not interested in drunkalogs, but in sobriety.

It was recommended that suggestions for AA members speaking in prisons be gathered and made available in leaflet form.

Report & Charter Committee: This was the committee I was assigned to, and I feel relieved and grateful that I was one of the two people who helped change the conscience so that this very important committee was not dissolved. Our work was reviewed by the Conference and it was recommended that during this year we study the first eleven articles of the Conference Charter with the possibility of updating several next year. This committee's work deals with changes in and updating the Service Manual and with proofreading our Final Conference Report.

Policy: Approved admission of some overseas (nonparticipating) observers at future General Service Conferences (US and Canada), on request, one per country, at their own expense.

There was considerable discussion as to whether or not there is as much talk in AA today about spirituality as there used to be. Some felt that this was due to "higher bottom" drunks, others that the declining emphasis on spirituality in AA might be associated with our problems on sponsorship.

There was also discussion about anonymity within the Fellowship. There seemed to be a considerable body of opinion to the effect that we have been experiencing a trend toward a more rigid interpretation of anonymity within AA. Years ago, almost all speakers used their full names. Today, this is seldom done. Perhaps this represents a basic misunderstanding of the anonymity Tradition. It was suggested that it may well be each AA's responsibility to tell other members about anonymity on a one-to-one basis.

Even though people who call AA or interview an AA feel that that person is speaking for AA, we should continue to be guided by the concept that there are no official spokesmen.

It was agreed to continue using the term "Conference Approved" on AA material.

Cooperation with the Professional Community: Their participation in the 1976 NCA Annual Forum was integrated into specific programs. They also had two mini-workshops, one of which was entitled "Rehab Bridges to AA Sponsorship." The second one was a sharing session for members employed in the alcoholism field. At the annual meeting of the Alcohol and Drug Problems Association of North America, they participated in "AA and the Private Service Deliverers - Examples of Effective Cooperation." Dealing with private rehabilitation, the panel consisted of the current CPC staff member and representatives from Chit Chat Farms, Pa.; Lutheran General Hospital, Ill.; Palm Beach Institute, Fla.; and Guest House Sanitoriums, Michigan and Minnesota.

At the recommendation of the CPC Conference Committee, a paper for prospective members from, and administrators of, court programs and other referral agencies and treatment facilities has been prepared.

A chapter on AA by Dr. N. [redacted] will appear in an encyclopedia on alcoholism in 1977. He has also written "Management of the Chronic Alcoholic" for a publication entitled "Controversy in Psychiatry."

It is the committee's feeling that there are two areas as far as cooperation with the professional community is concerned that we should continue to address ourselves to: one is the importance of the attitudes, AA knowledge, and behavior of AA members working in the field, and the image of AA they project; the other is the importance of the way the AA program is presented to new AA members by the professional staff of treatment facilities.

The AA guidelines on Industry Programs have been updated.

Public Information: These Guidelines have also been updated. Five hundred copies of the January 1976 Grapevine (featuring a symposium on doctors) were mailed to medical directors, science writers, and offset copies were sent to large newspapers and news services. AAWS Board approved an expenditure of \$1,000 for sending TV spots to 55 stations in the ten largest cities. A press release on the third edition of the Big Book was sent to wire services, book trade magazines, book editors and local public information committees. One of the biggest projects is the 1977 survey. Its questions will probably refer to slips, service work and sponsorship. There is a three-fold purpose of the 1977 survey: (1) to update the findings of previous surveys (1968, 1971 and 1974) and note changes in the composition of the typical AA meeting. (2) To provide the public with a realistic appraisal of the effectiveness of AA in arresting the disease of alcoholism. (3) To develop a new understanding of the characteristics of the typical member attending an AA meeting. Distribution will be entrusted to area delegates, working with committee members and GSRs. The data gathered will be presented in a new pamphlet similar to "AA - a Community Resource" and in releases to the news media.

Another project of the committee is updating or revising audiovisual material. We have found that 30-second TV spots are more desirable than 60 second. We will add a tag line to radio spots stating how a person may contact AA. This committee is also preparing a question and answer sheet about AA in response to requests for information about AA from the media and other non-AA sources. It will be called "Information on Alcoholics Anonymous" and will simply state what AA does and does not do. We also feel that it would be helpful to distribute this "fact sheet" to our general service representatives and to group secretaries. It will be available in bulk up to 100 copies at no charge, and it can be duplicated in whole or in part as it is not copyrighted.

The committee suggested that area delegates maintain a close liaison with all Public Information Committees in their areas.

Working with the CPC Committee, we are exploring ways of carrying the message to the medical profession.

We viewed a film which is in the process of production and should be ready later this summer. "Circle of Love and Service" tells the story of how one small AA group performs a service for the entire Fellowship through its GSR. It also shows a good illustration of our service structure. It was professionally produced by Guidance Associates, Inc., under the supervision of GSO. It is in full color with sound track on either cassette or record. Actors are non-alcoholic professionals. This can be obtained from GSO, but delegates will each receive a free copy and I will be glad to show it along with a service talk.

Grapevine: People who read the Grapevine invariably consider it a valuable tool for sober living, but an amazingly large proportion of AA membership is not even aware of the Grapevine. The problem felt was how to reach people at the group level. The Committee recommended that delegates be responsible for establishing Area Grapevine Committees, using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group. Also recommended that one copy of the Grapevine, along with an order form, be included in every kit mailed out to new groups by GSO. We also discussed but took no action on the idea that a Grapevine table be a part of area conferences and conventions. Display kits are available.

Literature: The Literature Committee, cooperating with the Trustees Literature Committee, have worked on the following: third edition of Alcoholics Anonymous (May 1976); "Do You Think You're Different?" (sold almost 150,000 copies); "Is There an Alcoholic in Your Life?" (sold almost 150,000 copies); "Too Young", a teenage illustrated pamphlet, is now ready for publication. Recommended that AA Comes of Age be left as it is, but a history compiled of AA's first fifty years for distribution in 1985 should be considered; that AAWS allocate funds to begin compiling material for this history and to gather material on Dr. Bob while it is still available from those who knew him; a subcommittee be established to explore audio-visual material and report back at a later date. Accepted the recommendation to add to the "AA Group" how a group can contribute, as in a "Penny a Day for Sobriety." Suggested that individuals writing letters about masculine language in AA pamphlets be made aware that pamphlets are being reworded gradually as they are reprinted.

Trustees: One non-alcoholic and five alcoholic trustees were named to the General Service Board at our 1977 annual meeting of the General Service Conference. W. J. Estelle, Huntsville, Texas, will succeed Austin MacCormick who retired in November. Virginia H., Shorewood, Wis., was elected East-Central US Regional Trustee; Samuel S., Miami, Fla., was elected Southeast Regional Trustee; Ruth Hollis, N. Y., was elected General Service Trustee; two General Service "in town" Trustees named at the Conference for

election to the Board were Jerry D., and Martin L.

The Committee is continuing discussion on the duties of the chairman of the General Service Board and what steps should be taken in looking for a replacement for Dr. Norris, who has indicated a desire to step down as chairman in April, 1978.

A January 1st deadline was established for receipt of resumes at GSO for Trustee candidates, and it was agreed that a conference delegate should not be eligible as a trustee candidate until one year after his or her last Conference, beginning 1978.

Delegates' Meeting: This is a meeting for delegates only in which feelings are aired and suggestions are sometimes made to the Conference as a whole. No individual action is ever taken. We did suggest establishment of published qualifications for nontrustee members of trustee committees. This means outside "experts" who are invited for their special knowledge in the field.

Finance: Either we are doing well or we don't know how to budget! Income was over budget and expenses under budget this past year. However, our real problem is the decreasing percentage of groups contributing. 1976 was a low. We need to expand our base of group support and decrease our reliance on literature income. Until last year the General Service Office was becoming increasingly dependent on literature income for its operations, because group contributions were just not sufficient to carry their fair share of service expenses. Recognizing this, the 1976 Conference requested that the Board take action to broaden the base of group support. In anticipation of an increase in group support, the Conference recommended that the price of the Big Book be reduced, bulk discounts on literature be liberalized, and the distribution of free literature be increased. All of these recommendations were put into effect as of September 15, 1976. It is gratifying to report that so far everything seems to be working out fine. Contributions finished the year \$139,300 ahead of 1975, and sales income for the fourth quarter of 1976 decreased accordingly. However, we must remain aware that, in order to continue to make this policy work and further reduce the price of AA literature, the groups must participate and further support the cost of group services. And to do this, every effort has to be made to increase the percentage of groups contributing.

Literature sales for the year totaled \$2,244,200; contributions amounted to \$946,600. Total GSO income was over 1975 by \$348,100. Total GSO expenses were in excess of 1975 by \$196,700 (almost 1% under budget). To sum up the results of the year's operations: the net expense of the General Fund of the General Service Office, which was \$249,800, was offset by publishing net income, which totaled \$776,700; this resulted in a net income for GSO in 1976 of \$526,900.

The 1977 budget was reviewed and approved by the General Service Board Finance Committee. They expect a sale income 7.8% higher than 1976; contributions are budgeted to be \$1,060,500, 12.2% greater than 1976. Total expenses, excluding one-time expenses in connection with the installation of the electronic data processing system, are budgeted to be 13%, or \$1,144,100, over 1976. Net publishing income after operating expenses is expected to be \$593,200. Total service expenses are budgeted at \$83,600, greater than contribution income. This deficit will be funded out of the net income of the publishing operation. The 1977 budget for the Grapevine: estimated income from subscription and other sales: \$513,600; estimated expense: \$478,500; net income from operations: \$35,100; interest from investments: \$25,000; net income: \$60,100.

It was recommended that a prudent reserve be established to equal the preceding year's operating expense of the combined expenses of the General Service Board of AA, AA World Services, Inc., and the AA Grapevine, Inc. (\$2,250,000.00 in 1976). It was further recommended that the auditing firm be requested to review and comment, on an annual basis, the availability, feasibility, and adequacy of this reserve.

It was recommended that a prudent reserve for groups be dependent on local needs, and that a prudent reserve for Central Offices, Intergroups and area committees be, preferably, one to twelve months' operating expenses, depending on local needs.

Page 7 of the Conference Issue of Box 459 deals with group contributions, and as far as the Florida groups are concerned, we need to remember that the ratio of groups in the Northern Area to those of the Southern Area is about 1/3 to 2/3, with the Southern Area carrying the bulk of groups and contributions listed. Out of 652 groups reported, only 58.3% contributed and only 32.1% were on the regular contribution plan. Total amount of contributions were high - \$55,485.14, with membership contributions of \$11,846.00. Contributions per capita were \$4.68. In the United States in 1976 1,249 more groups were reported than in 1975; 813 of these contributed .6% more percentagewise; less were on the regular contribution plan.

Agenda: Possible subjects for the 1978 Conference agenda:

Presentations:

Finance.

Let's Carry the AA Message. (steps).

How Our General Service Office Serves Us.

The Participation of the General Service Representative - the Vital Link Between the AA Group and the General Service Conference.

Discussion Subjects:

Are We Letting Others Do Our Work?

Who Establishes Policy in AA? You - That's Who!

Workshops:

AA - What We Can Do.

Working With Others Inside and Outside AA.

The Conference recommended that the 1978 theme be built around "The Individual and the Group; Growth through Participation." It further recommended that the Twelve Steps, with emphasis on the Twelfth Step, be incorporated into the 1978 Conference Agenda.

I mentioned earlier that the Saturday brunch was an emotional time, with two beloved servants stepping down, Austin Mac- and Bob , and Dr. N soon to do so next year.

I will forever be grateful that I was elected to serve at this particular time, as all three men have, from the earliest days, meant a great deal to my sober life in our Fellowship. You have all given me a great opportunity to learn and grow in Alcoholics Anonymous, not only in the service structure, but in working and sharing with many others. In an age of bureaucratic governments it is a refreshing and precious thing to find Tradition Two and the mutual sharing of experience leading all of us onward in growth.

You have your copies of the Conference floor actions. We spent Thursday and Friday hearing committees' reports and working on these. If I were asked which one received the most care and attention, the answer would be the one dealing with discouraging AA groups from selling literature not distributed by the General Service Office and the Grapevine. Ever since the Big Book was written many self-help books have "gotten into the act." While we can't tell a group what to do, we can be concerned and make suggestions. Our concern here is real. The message we carry, through our own recovery, to the alcoholic who still suffers lies in the Twelve suggested steps of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Like many another, I read a lot of self-help books - drinking. It was when self wore itself out that I became willing to listen to the beautiful simplicity of people who had put these steps into their own lives. Like many others in AA, I want the money I place in our basket to go out for AA literature so that I feel confident that some other person will get the real meat of the AA program, and not some watered-down version of living. I want AA to be here for the next sick alcoholic whoever, wherever, and whenever he may be. For that, I truly feel responsible.

Thanks to you all, and many many thanks for trusting me.

Sincerely,

