

Pass it on...



NWTA 66 NEWSLETTER

August 2009

FROM TIM B. OF MIDLAND

In 1994 we were really having a lot of discussion at my home group (710 club) about smoking. It seemed that there were a couple of old-timers that could not come to meetings because of the smoke. A few people got together and started looking for a place that would be smoke free. I remember a real cold Monday afternoon after an AA funeral there were several of us that met at the proposed new sight. Not only was I cold I was scared. Scared of leaving the only place I had known in sobriety. Scared of starting something and it failing. Scared that I could not go back to my old home group if this didn't work out. One of the guys spoke up and said "we

should trust god and if we start it they will come." Well I ran out of that room filled with the spirit that those old Notre Dame football players must have felt after a Knute Rockne speech. Some guys secured the use of the building and we decided to have meetings on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday night. We wanted to have a group conscience so one guy said he would head the Tuesday night step study and tradition meet-



Change is scary for a lot of us but sometimes it is a great asset that we can ac-

ing and the rest of us would take turn chairing the other two meetings till the group got going. Talk about discussions, we had group meeting after group meeting to decide what to do. Finally we set up some guidelines got a service committee started. We got a schedule set for the other meetings. The first order of business for the group service committee was to fire the Tuesday night chairman as they did not want someone "running the group". It was a great experience being on the ground floor of seeing a group start and flourish 15 years later to be a core part in many people's lives and the AA community in Midland.

FROM GSO

As of July 30, of 2009 the AAWS Board met and approved the removing the fourth edition Big Book from the Kindle website. It could take up to 30 calendar days to fulfill this action. The reason of cancellation to this is: The contract did not allow the consistent price of

the product, The advertising surrounding the complete ion of a purchase gave the impression that we were affiliated with other titles and authors, advertisements and referrals. And lastly, the function ability built into Kindle website did not allow for any adjustments to

meet our requirements.

It is clear despite 75 years of publishing, things are changing in the electronic world. It appears at this time, that if we want control of our message, we would have to utilize our own website for the production and sale in electronic format.



Mitch H of Perryton
2 years.

Wynn S. of Hereford
17 years

Rhonda of Amarillo
5 years

contributions

*La Louisiann AA
Group*

of San Angelo

\$25.00

The newsletter committee would like to thank all who support the Area 66 newsletter. If you want to make a contribution please send it to the area treasure PO Box 1204

Hereford, Texas 79045

From the desk of Conley

Dear Friends,

The Trustees, Directors, and Staff had a most astounding week in New York City.

The Summer General Service Board Weekend (read that week) began on Tuesday with my flight to New York. Wednesday began a day of orientation for Directors' of the Grapevine Board starting at 7 am that ran through the afternoon and concluded with a Grapevine Planning meeting that went to 11 pm that evening. The next day (Thursday) was a full day of Grapevine Board meeting that was attended by the two new Regional Trustees – Pam R, East Central Regional Trustee and El N., Southeast Regional Trustee. This gave them the opportunity to see how the Grapevine Board operates as one of them will rotate at the end of the next General Service Conference on to the Grapevine and the other will rotate onto AAWS Board. They will both attend the AAWS Board together immediately preceding the Fall General Service Board Weekend. Friday was a full day of Orientation for the new General Service Board that concluded with a Trustee's dinner that evening. It was a chance to meet the new Trustees (Class A's: Corliss Burke and Frances Brisbane and Class B's: Don M, Trustee at Large US; Don M, General Service Trustee on Grapevine; George M General Service Trustee on AAWS; and Pam R and El N, as Regional's; along with Leonard Blumenthal in his new role as Trustee emeriti). It was a good reminder of our roles and responsibilities. As part of that discussion, the Trustees' Executive Session was renamed the Trustees' Sharing Session to more accurately reflect what that meeting is. The majority of the time it is just a sharing session, and similar to any AA meeting, it was agreed that we could share what occurs there providing that the personalities of who said what remain anonymous. The only exception to that would be when it truly becomes an executive session dealing with personnel or other issues that would warrant a level of strict confidentiality. Sort of like having open and closed AA meetings at your home group. Saturday and Sunday were Trustee Committee meetings, General Sharing, Saturday night General Service Board AA Speaker Meeting (at which they changed the format to three speakers talking for 15 to 20 minutes each – rather than the one speaker starting for five minutes followed by the second speaker followed by another five minutes by the first speaker followed by the third speaker and then the first speaker finishing their talk – as you can imagine it was better in the new format), the new Trustees Sharing Session (as opposed to Trustees' Executive Session) and Trustees Sunday night Dinner at which we receive all of the Trustees' Committee Reports for each of the committees for review prior to Monday morning.

The General Service Board met Monday morning at 8 am, reviewed all of the minutes, Board communications, Corporate Board reports and Trustees' Committee Reports and voted on all of the recommendations from each of those entities and fin-

ished by 10:30 am.

The astounding part was a spirit of openness, commitment to communication with each other and the Conference, and cordiality that began with the both Corporate Boards and continued through to Monday morning. I have never experienced anything like it in my previous two years as Trustee. I kept expecting the other shoe to fall all week, and neither it nor the first one fell. The Staff felt the freedom to share and did, Trustees that had previously had grave differences of opinion were respectful and courteous to each other, there was no rancor or bitterness expressed the entire weekend. I told several folks that it was if we had all drank the Kool-Aid. If you could have looked into my mind and seen my greatest expectation of what service at this level could and should look and be like – it was that week. Everyone was talking in Principles and placing them before all Personalities. I don't mean that there were not some differences of opinion, especially on how to apply the principles, but there was a degree of politeness, tolerance, kindness, and love of our fellow servants that I have never seen in my tenure as Trustee. While I know that death and rotation do indeed change a lot of things, I recognize that the leadership of Ward Ewing as Chair, and Phyllis H, as General Manager, has created a new epoch in the annals of General Service that I hope continues. If it does, I suspect that we'll see a very different General Service Conference at Rye than we have certainly experienced the last two years. **Brief highlights:** Book sales were 1,495,764, up 37% resulting in a net profit of 38% over the same period last year as customers purchased large quantities prior to the book price increases. Group contributions fell by 7% (\$-203,264) compared to the same period the previous year as it appears that groups purchased more literature while contributing less. The Reserve Fund is currently earning at 3% and represents approximately 9 months of combined operating expenses. The Kindle project where the 4th Edition Big Book was sold electronically has been canceled and the Contract discontinued.

The Grapevine is doing better than anticipated with a slight increase in monthly circulation with an average monthly circulation of 104,571 (103,211 print and 1,360 audio) although it has not quite caught up with the downturn that resulted from the economy. Distribution of other books, CDs, and other items was up over 13.5% over the previous period last year primarily because of two new titles, *Beginners Book* and *Voices of Long-term Sobriety*. Readers of the Grapevine will notice that the Preamble is back inside the front cover and the Steps and Traditions are inside the back cover again in larger font. The Alcohol at Large disclaimer will be increase in size beginning with the September issue. It is too early to tell what the effect of the price increase to \$27.00 on the Grapevine and \$12 on LaViña will have on circulation if any.

AAWS will have a special souvenir soft cover format edition of AA Comes of Age (\$7.00) and

Grapevine will have a larger size specialty item Grapevine magazine (\$4.00) available for purchase when you register on line, and while supplies last, for purchase at the 2010 San Antonio International Convention. You will be able to access registration online for the host hotels at regional forums in the near future. The Young Peoples Video in DVD format will be \$10.00 and should be ready for release the end of September. The Young People's Poster was priced at \$1.00 each. There will be an abridged format of the Big Book produced in audio CD format for about \$18.00. A request was approved to convert the ASL Big Book and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions videos to DVD format. The experimental use of the Conference Dashboard has been extended for another two years to evaluate its effectiveness. The Trustees Committee on CPC/Treatment Facilities is now the CPC/Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities Committee making it the longest titled committee in General Service History. Now the purview for the development of the Special Needs-Accessibilities pamphlet will fall under this committee. For the present, the Trustees Committee will meet and discuss all of the Treatment Facilities committee business, then adjourn and reconvene as the CPC committee, then adjourn and reconvene as the Special Needs – Accessibilities committee to accomplish all of the work that falls under these three areas. The revised video Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous is scheduled for release late September. The CPC/TF/SN-A Committee (one committee member remarked that he wanted to buy a vowel) is reviewing the use of Full Faces in Videos and anticipates having a Conference Agenda Item as early as November. The General Sharing Session dealt with the issue of Full Face Videos and there is a growing consensus that it appears that the use of Full Faces in Videos depicting members of Alcoholics Anonymous creates confusion within our Fellowship as well as the public arena on the importance of Anonymity. It was reported that during this year's Conference one of the sitting delegates was doing a daily blog each night concerning the Conference activities that was posted to a Face Book site that displayed the delegates full face photograph and full name. There was no finger pointing as it was noted that the use of Full Faces in videos was the past group conscience and use of the right of decision at that time. It was noted that all material produced by the Conference, Boards, and GSO should be held to the highest standards when it comes to the Traditions. However all recognized the General Service Conference is where the final informed group conscience should occur after wide sharing within the Fellowship. All of the final General Service Conference Agenda Items and Additional Considerations have been reviewed and are in the process of being implemented by each of the Committees, Boards, and GSO.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the Southwest Regional Forum in Dallas, 9-11 October 2009.