

70<sup>th</sup>

**GENERAL SERVICE  
CONFERENCE**

*A Clear Vision for You*

**Post Conference Workshop**

# Historic 1<sup>st</sup> Virtual General Service Conference

4 days only via Zoom  
May 16th-19th

# AGENDA

Saturday – 12pm – 8 pm

Welcome Michele Grinberg

Roll Call

Trustee Keynote Address

Committee Meetings

Open AA Meeting

Sunday 12pm – 8pm

Finance Report

What's on your Mind?

Elections-WCentral Regional Trustee, WCanada Regional Trustee

Delegates Only Meeting

Monday and Tuesday – 1pm-9pm

Committee Reports and Discussion

## Some things that were different about this conference

- 1 minute versus 2 for any sharing
- 45 minute time limit to read committee recommendation; no add'l committee considerations read and only discussed if time allowed after recommendations discussed and voted on
- If committee recommendation/discussion time ran out, item was automatically forwarded to 71<sup>st</sup> GSC

# COMMITTEES CAN...

**Recommendations** – committees bring recommendations to the full conference for consideration as possible advisory actions. Last 2 days are devoted to discussion and voting on committee recommendations. Must be approved with 2/3's vote or substantial unanimity. If approved, these become advisory actions that are referred back to trustees' committee, GSO or GV for implementation.

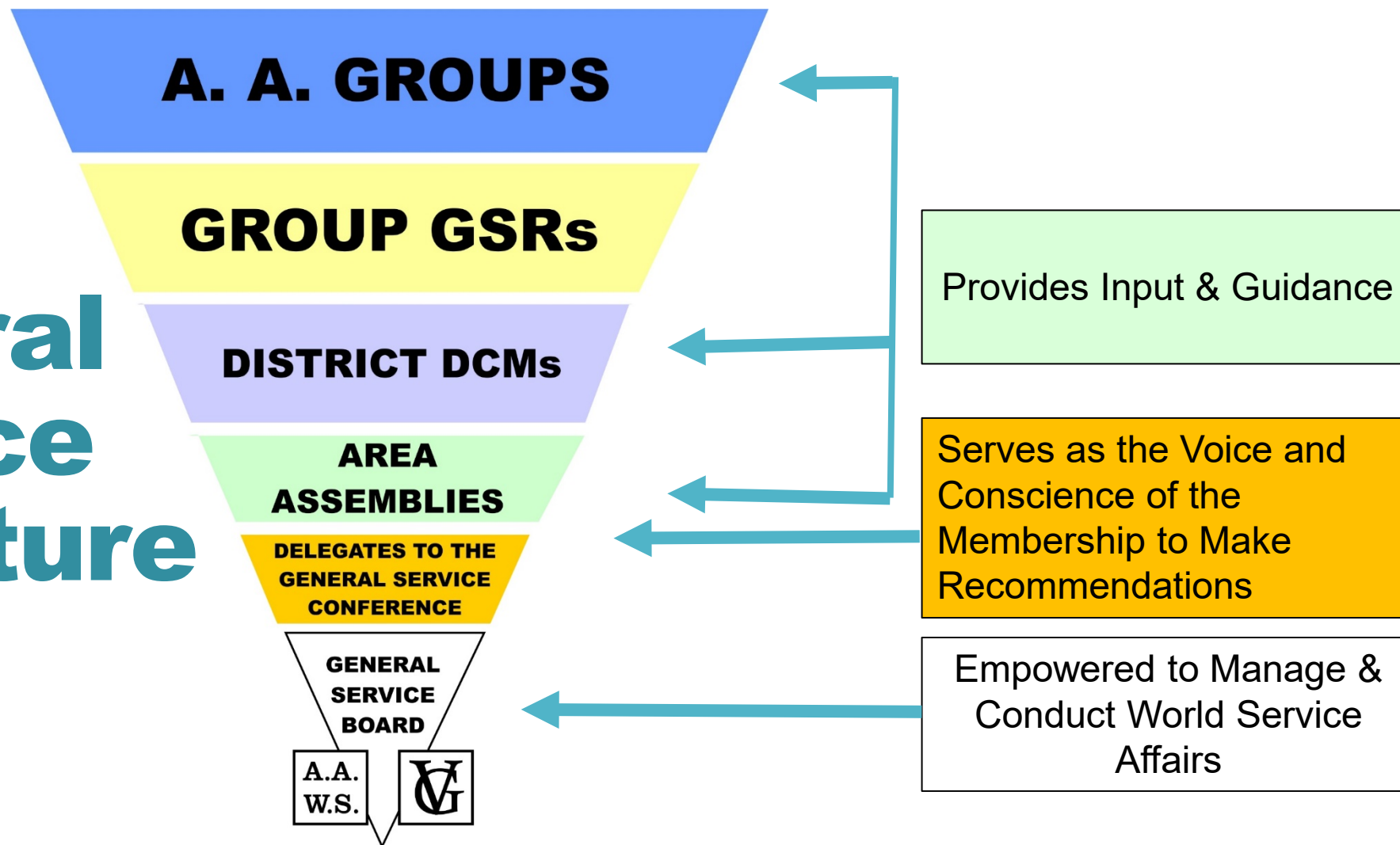
**Take No Action** – committees can decide to not recommend an agenda item

**Additional Committee Considerations-** an item that was discussed by a committee with no action taken by the Conference as a whole.

# CONFERENCE MEMBERS CAN...

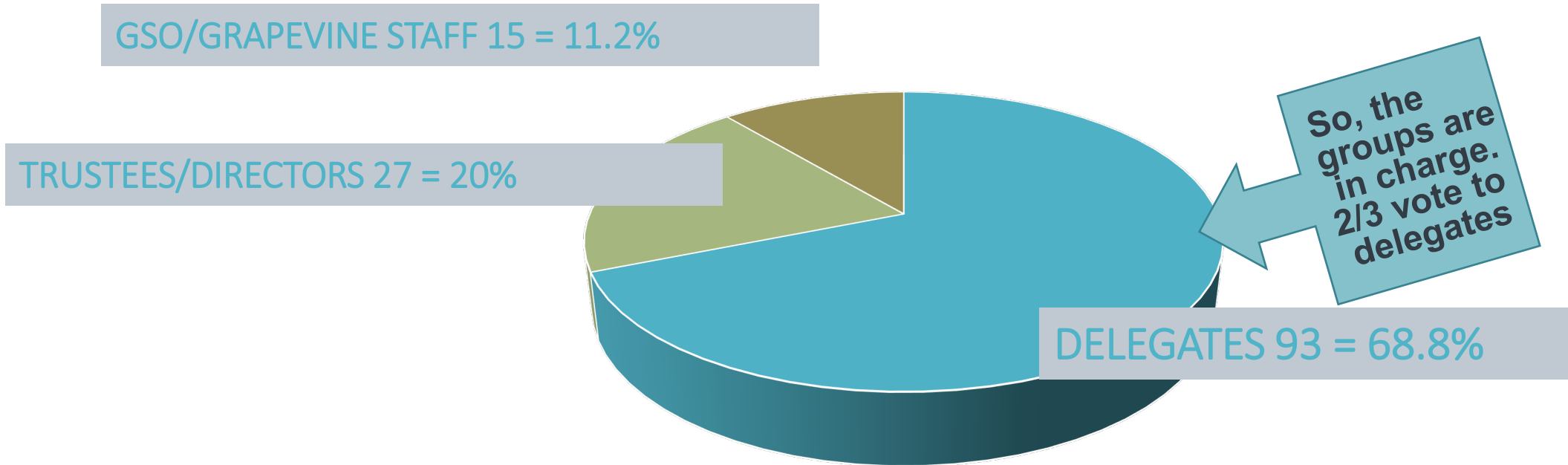
**Floor Actions** – recommendations that come from the floor in the course of discussion. Needs a motion to Decline to Consider then simple majority for it to pass. Usually recommitted to Trustees' Committee for consideration and action.

# The General Service Structure



# Who Makes Up the Conference

135 CONFERENCE MEMBERS



Meets once a year  
For one week

**IX.**

**REPORT and CHARTER**



# IX. REPORT and CHARTER

C. Consider restoring the two paragraphs and the accompanying footnote in the Concept Eleven essay of The Twelve Concepts for World Service that were removed by an advisory action of the 66th General Service Conference. **TOOK NO ACTION**

# IX. REPORT and CHARTER

**D. Consider amending a sentence in Article 4 of the current Conference Charter.**

**Recommended: that the sentence in Article 4 of the Current Conference Charter which currently reads:  
“**3/4 vote of** all conference members”**

**Be changed to read:**

**all Conference...members **participating in the vote”****

**Passed**

# **IX. REPORT and CHARTER**

**Committee Consideration: The Committee accepted a report from Publishing Department outlining the General Service Office process for timely and accurate preparation and publication of the 2020 General Service Conference Final Report.**

# **IX. REPORT and CHARTER**

**E. The A. Service Manual, 2020-2022 Edition. Review the draft and the agenda items that were forwarded to Publishing during the period of the redesign project.**

**Committee Consideration: The Committee reviewed the draft of The A.A. Service Manual, 2020-2022 Edition and noted the significant progress made toward the goals agreed upon by the 2019 Conference Committee on Report and Charter. The Committee requested that an update draft be brought back to the 2021 Conference. The Committee will forward suggestions for the next draft to the Publishing Department.**

# **IX. REPORT and CHARTER: to the 71<sup>st</sup> GSC**

**A. Discuss GSC *Final Report***

**B. Discuss A. Directories (Canada/E. & W. US)**

**XII.**  
**ARCHIVES**

# XII. ARCHIVES

**A. Consider requests to develop a book on A.A. history from 1955 through the present.**

**Committee Consideration: The Committee considered requests to develop a book on A.A. history from 1955 through the present and following a lengthy discussion, suggested that the trustees' Archives Committee consider possible themes, content ideas, and the time period such a book might cover. The Committee requested a report be brought back to the 2020 Conference**

# **XII. ARCHIVES: to the 71<sup>st</sup> GSC**

## **B. Review Archives Workbook**



**XI.**

**TRUSTEES**

# XI. TRUSTEES

- B. Review slates of trustees and officers of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous**  
**Passed**
- C. Review slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc.**  
**Failed initially, but approved in a later motion**
- D. Review slate of directors of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.**  
**Passed**

# XI. TRUSTEES

## Floor Action #4

The 70<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference approve the slate of directors for A.A. World Services, Inc. as originally presented (no vacancy) **Motion to decline consideration failed. Moves to 71<sup>st</sup> Conference**

## Floor Action #6

The slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc., as submitted by the Conference Committees on Trustees, be approved **Motion to decline consideration failed. Moves to 71<sup>st</sup> Conference**

**VI.**  
**LITERATURE**

# VI. LITERATURE

**G. Review update of video: “Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure.”**

**Recommended: The Committee recommended that the updated draft video of “Your General Service, Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure” be approved. **Passed****

Play video

# VI. LITERATURE

## H. “The Twelve Traditions Illustrated” pamphlet:

Committee Consideration: The Committee discussed a draft update of the pamphlet and noted the accessibility of the language in terms of reading level. The Committee noted that the final draft is a distinct item from the original version of the “12 Traditions Illustrated”, addressing a **different audience** and serving a **different purpose**.

# VI. LITERATURE

- J. (1) Review “A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and other A. Materials” approved in January 2020

The Committee recommended that the “A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature, Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials be approved by A.A.W.S. in January be approved. **Passed**



# VI. LITERATURE

O. Consider updating the pamphlet “A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic.”

The Committee recommended that the Pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic” be updated to include fresh stories and a new title that is respectful and inclusive.

**Failed** to come to a vote before time expired – will move to **71<sup>st</sup>** (also **Floor Action** moved to **71<sup>st</sup>**)

# VI. LITERATURE

Floor Action #5: The pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic: be updated to include fresh stories and a new title that is respectful and inclusive.

**Motion to decline Consideration failed.  
Moves to 71<sup>st</sup> Conference**

**X.**

**TREATMENT and  
ACCESSIBILITIES**

# **X. TREATMENT and ACCESSIBILITIES**

## **B. Consider request to develop a Bridging the Gap Workbook**

Committee Consideration: The Committee suggestion that the trustees' CPC/TA Committee develop a BTG Committee Workbook and provide a progress report to the 2021 Conference. The Committee suggested that the shared experience included in the workbook include a list of BTG temporary contacts available from GSO. (Service piece)

**IV.**  
**FINANCE**

# **IV. FINANCE**

## **A. Review the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.”**

### **Committee Consideration**

**The committee reviewed a report from the trustees’ Finance Ad Hoc Committee on Google Grants and the 7th Tradition. The committee strongly suggests forwarding this report to the trustees’ Finance and Budgetary and the appropriate 71<sup>st</sup> GSC committee**

# IV. FINANCE

## Floor Action #7

The launch of Google AdWords Grants by the General Service Office be halted until the 71<sup>st</sup> GSC convenes and approves that launch, and that the “Ad Hoc Committee Progress Report – Google Grants and the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition”, from the trustees Finance Committee, dated 3/30/2020, be immediately released to the members of the 70<sup>th</sup> GSC.

**Motion to decline consideration failed. Moves to 71<sup>st</sup> Conference**

# IV. FINANCE

## Floor Action #1

The Finance Committee expand Agenda Item #2 that will be forwarded to the 71<sup>st</sup> Conference to include the proposal to revise the pie chart percentages, in order to emphasize more clearly that any percentages included in the pamphlet are only suggestions and examples, not recommendations. **Motion to decline consideration failed. Moves to 71<sup>st</sup> Conference**



**V.**

**GRAPEVINE**

# V. GRAPEVINE

D. Consider revising the A.A. Preamble to use gender neutral pronouns. For example, “Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of **people** who share their experience, strength and hope with each other...”

**Took No Action**

# V. GRAPEVINE

E. Consider a request to change the language of the first sentence of the A.A. Preamble as follows: ...fellowship of **people**

## Committee Considerations:

The committee also discussed making suggested changes to the A.A. Preamble for gender neutral pronouns. The committee requested that the Grapevine Board consider developing examples of generalized language options and that a progress report or draft versions be brought back to the 71st General Service Conference.

# V. GRAPEVINE

**G. Consider a request to change the name of the General Service Conference Committee on Grapevine to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.**

**The Committee recommended that the name of the Conference Committee on Grapevine be changed to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña**

**Passed**

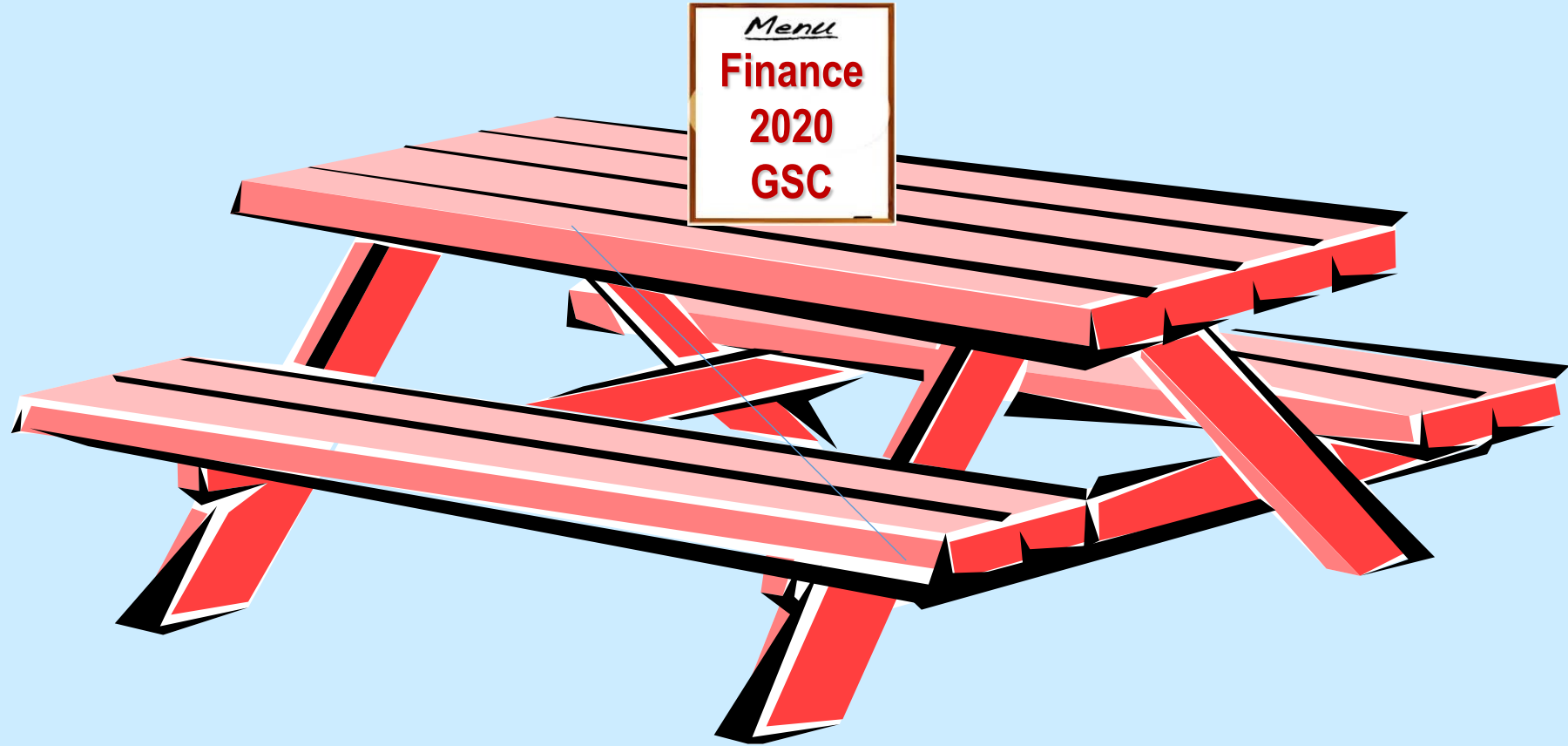
# V. GRAPEVINE

H. Consider a request for A.A. Grapevine, Inc. to establish an Instagram account in line with the Twelve Traditions

## Committee Consideration:

The committee discussed a request for A. Grapevine, Inc. to establish an Instagram account in line with the Twelve Traditions and encouraged them to continue with their planning. The committee suggested that the Grapevine Board provide additional information on implementation, anonymity, security, affiliation, outside contributions, privacy and promotion and bring a progress report back to the 71<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference.

# AROUND THE PICNIC TABLE



**Leslie Backus**  
**Class A (nonalcoholic) Trustee**  
**General Service Board Treasurer**

# 2019 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition of Self-Support – \$8.86 million set another record, up 5.71% from 2018
- ❖ AAWS publishing profits – \$9,36 million down 1% from 2018, used to cover shortfall between 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition and Cost of Services, resulting in net GSO loss of \$379,665
- ❖ Grapevine subscription levels decreased 2% in 2019. 2019 results were a loss of \$44,461 thousand
- ❖ General Fund support of La Viña service activity – \$289,314 thousand
- ❖ Reserve Fund – \$16.2 million resulting in ratio of 9.2 months

# 2019 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Due to many issues with the transition to the new ERP system the audit on the financial results for 2019 has not been completed. The audit should be completed and reviewed by the Audit Committee by May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ There may also be several versions of 2019 Income Statements for AAWS and the Grapevine. A final audited version of the financials will be included in the Final Conference Report.
- ❖ So if you see a few numbers that don't quite match don't worry the Finance Department and Marks Paneth, our independent auditors, are working to make sure the final audited financial for 2019 are correct.



# 2020 Budgets – Where Are They?

- ❖ Budgets for 2020 are also being reviewed and updated
- ❖ COVID-19 has had such a dramatic effect on the economy and how we are doing business that the budgets that were prepared in January are no longer relevant
- ❖ NetSuite, the new ERP, will make future budgets easier to prepare, once we get the “bugs” out

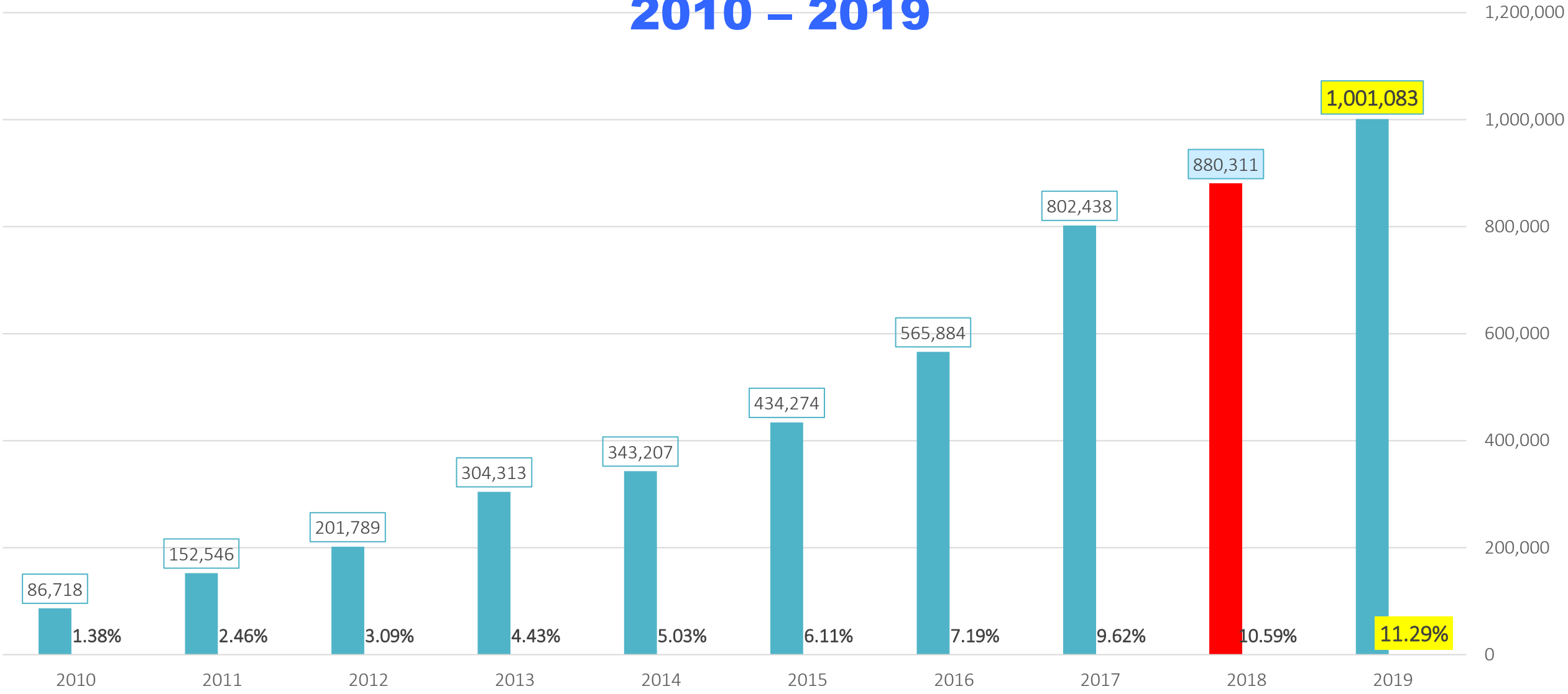
# 2019 Financial Results – What Happened?

- ❖ The 2019 GSO Budget showed a net profit of \$501,221 but the actual for 2019 is a loss of \$379,655
- ❖ Income was \$62,512 less than budgeted and expenses were \$943,388 more than budgeted
- ❖ Expenses for Contracted Services and Professional Fees were higher than expected
  - Professional Fees were \$317,653 over budget, in large part due to contract reviews. AAWS is in the process of implementing a new way to review contracts which is both cost efficient and less time consuming
  - Contracted Services were \$831,948 over budget, in large part due to the implementation of NetSuite, the new ERP System

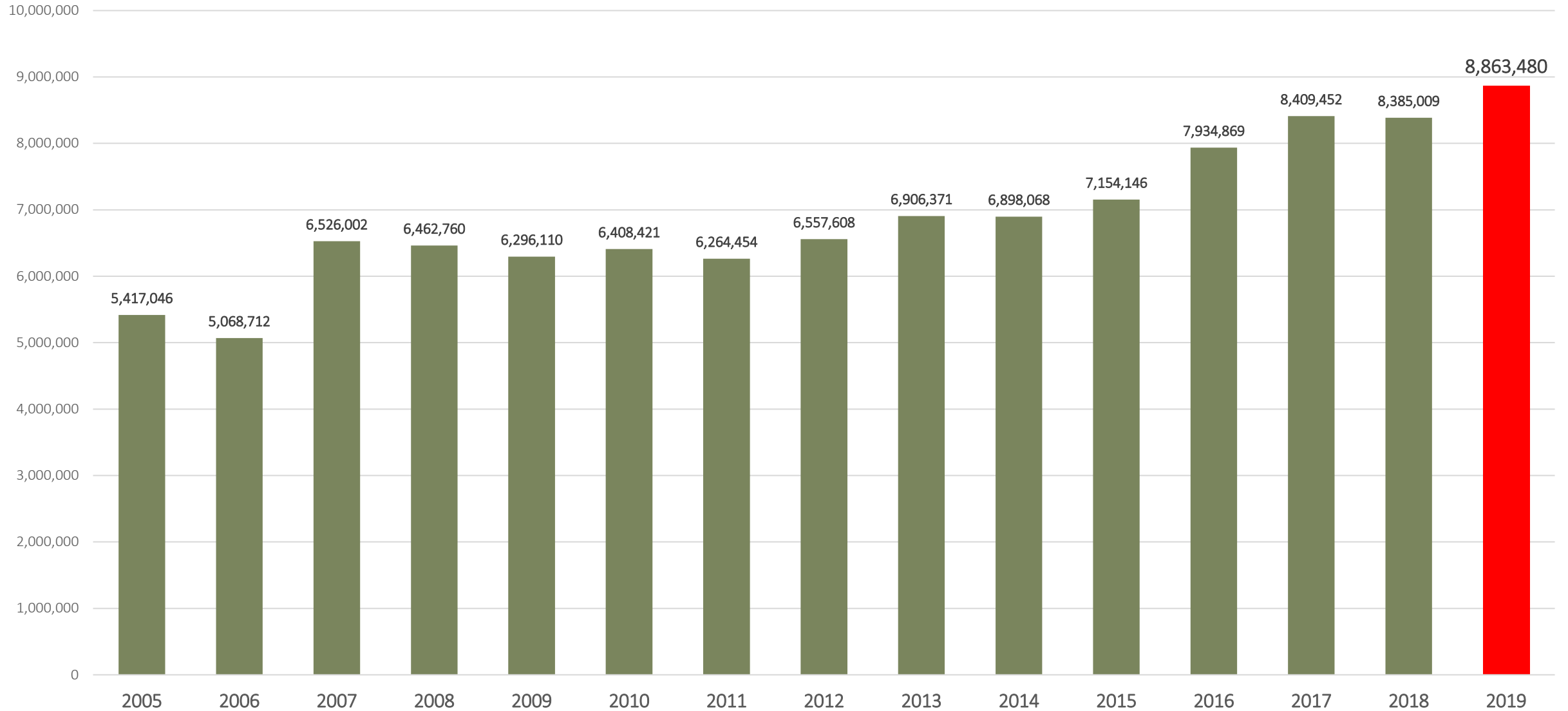
# 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ **28,180 Groups made \$6.9 million of 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions**
  - **Represents 40.6% of total groups**
  - **\$245.715 average group contribution**
  
- ❖ **Individuals, Memoriam & Special Meetings contributed \$1.3 million of 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions**
  
- ❖ **Total 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions were \$8.86 million**

# GROWTH OF ON-LINE CONTRIBUTIONS 2010 – 2019

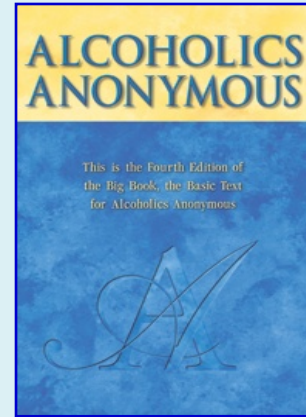
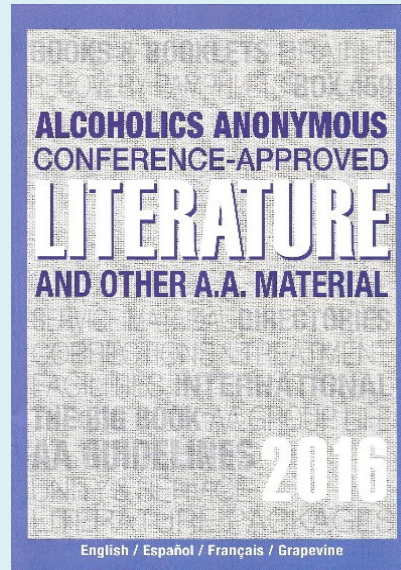


# 7<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION SELF-SUPPORT – 2005 – 2019

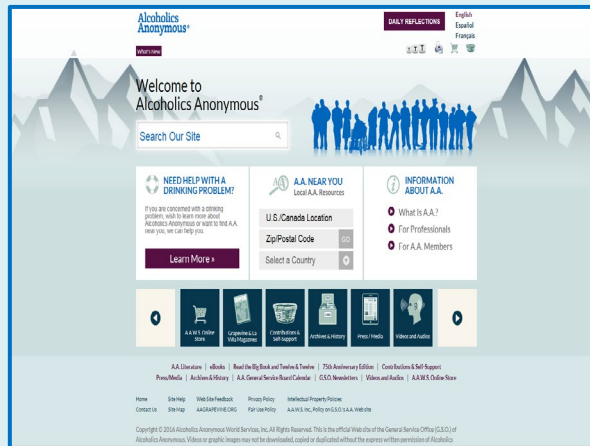


# G.S.O.'s TWO BASIC FUNCTIONS

## Publishing



## Services on Behalf of the G.S.B.



# SELF-SUPPORT OF THE WORLD SERVICES OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The A.A. spiritual principle of self-support enables us to pursue our primary purpose of carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic with a shared sense of responsibility for our lifesaving work and without interference or financial dependence on outsiders. From our Fellowship's earliest days, the expenses of the General Service Office, and the world services provided by it, have exceeded the amount derived from contributions of A.A. groups and members. As a result, providing these needed services has necessarily been supported in part by income from the sale of A.A. literature. **It is the policy of the General Service Board that income from literature sales should only be in amounts required to allow continued provision of vitally needed services and maintenance of a Reserve Fund. We hope that the day will come when A.A. groups and members, through their contributions, will be able to fund fully the services provided by the General Service Office. If that is achieved, revenues from literature sales will only be needed in amounts necessary to cover the actual costs associated with literature production and to maintain a Reserve Fund.**

Approved by the General Service Board February 3, 2014

## **2020 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION - CANCELLED**

- **How much of the costs of the cancelled convention will be covered by insurance?**
- **There is a \$5.8 M insurance policy for the International Convention. Exactly how much will be covered by insurance is not known at this time.**
- **Individuals who registered for the convention will receive refunds**
- **Individuals are responsible for cancelling their hotel and travel reservations.**



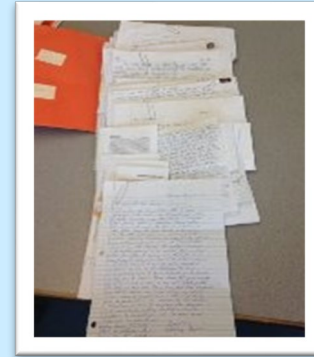
# 2020 Update COVID-19 Impact

## SERVICES CONTINUE AT AAWS AND GRAPEVINE



Over 125,000

Alcoholics provided with digital Grapevine subscriptions free of charge



475

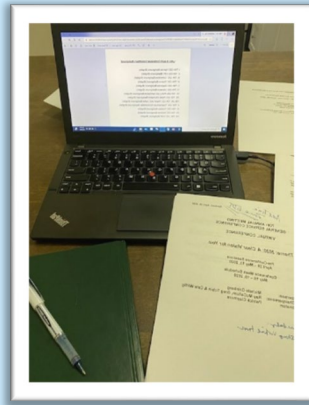
Pieces of inmate correspondence

364 members behind the walls connected to members outside

March 2020

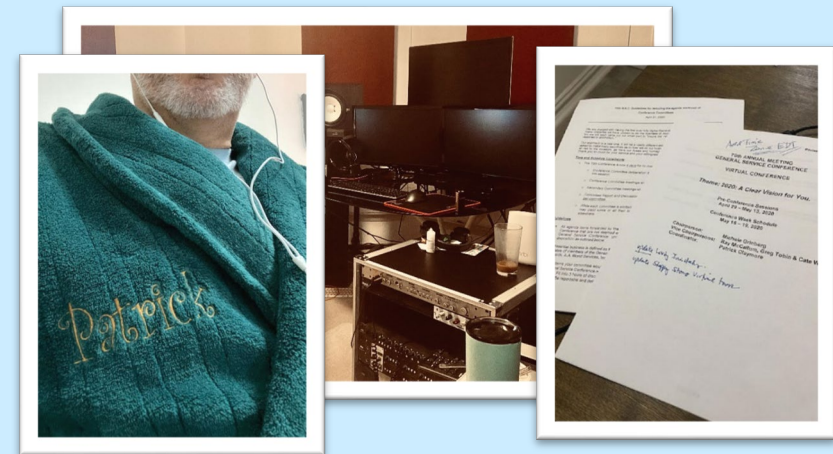
More than 15,000

emails/phone calls answered requesting information or help from GSO, since the office physically closed on March 20.



One

Completely virtual General Service Conference designed from the kitchens, living rooms and home offices across the US and Canada



# 2020 Update COVID-19 Impact

## CARRYING THE MESSAGE CONTINUES DESPITE THE PANDEMIC

Over 5,500 pieces of mail delivered to PO Box 459 and 475 Riverside were collected, disinfected, sorted and distributed to the homes of the service assignments, records and contributions.



This is Aubrey's home a.k.a. Alcoholics Anonymous mail sorting room

90 the number of responses to the media/public outlets about how AA has adapted to virtual meeting space/5<sup>th</sup> Tradition online efforts.

150 the number of A.A. related articles published around the world during COVID-19

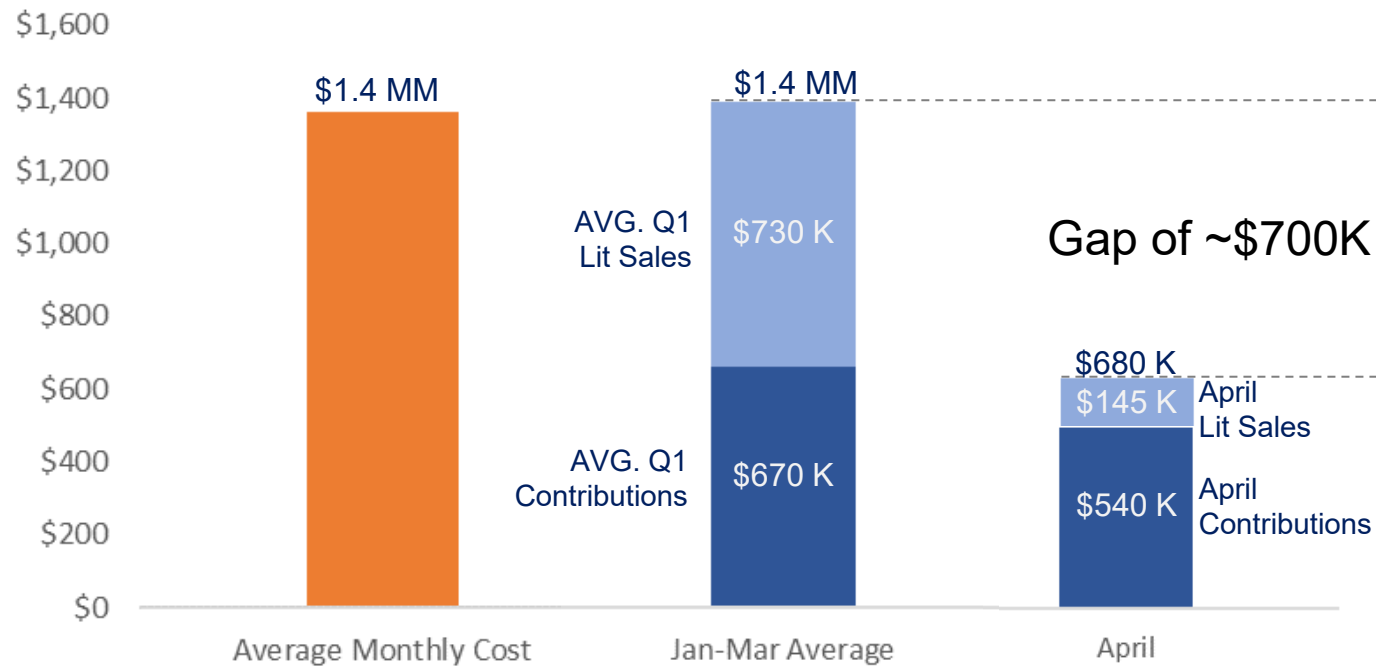
Virtual AA meetings successful in Newfoundland and Labrador



The subject of the article above got sober during COVID-19 and has never been to an in-person A.A. meeting

# 2020 Update COVID-19 Impact

## CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION COSTS AND INCOME BASED ON AVERAGES



Gap of ~\$700K expected for the next 3 to 4 months without a significant call out to the fellowship for contributions

This gap is further increased by remaining Convention costs and Capitol expenses (ERP, eighth floor renovation)

# 2020 Update COVID-19 Impact

OUR RESERVE FUND – DESIGNED FOR EXACTLY THIS TYPE OF SITUATION

## Our Reserve Fund at end of Q1 2020 ~9 Months



### The General Service Board Reserve Fund

In 1954, the Board of Trustees established a Reserve Fund whose principal purpose is to provide the financial resources necessary to continue the essential services of G.S.O. and the Grapevine in the event of emergency or disaster, to fund costs beyond the means of the G.S.O. and the Grapevine, such as major leasehold improvements or technical upgrades, and to allow the General Service Board and its two operating affiliates time to formulate and implement plans needed to adjust to changed economic or other conditions.

S76

# 2020 Update COVID-19 Impact

THE PLAN AHEAD – HELPING THE MEMBERSHIP TO BE SELF SUPPORTING



Getting you the facts here and now



Adding more channels for receiving contributions

- PayPal
- Venmo



Releasing a video to be played in online meetings with this information



Regular updates from your general service office keeping you informed of the progress

# 2020 Update COVID-19 Impact

## KEY TALKING POINTS FOR THE FELLOWSHIP

1

A.A. is still here! We actually thrive in uncertainty— hope remains, and the message continues to be carried

2

Our prudent reserve is designed precisely for this situation and will carry us through until the membership can get us back on our feet

3

This is unprecedented time in the world and a pivotal moment for A.A. Now is the time for this generation of our membership to demonstrate what self-supporting really means

**Please join me for a full  
report back of the 70<sup>th</sup> GSC  
at our Virtual Area 26  
meeting  
July 25-26**

**71<sup>st</sup>**

**GENERAL SERVICE**

**CONFERENCE**

**April 18-24, 2021**

**Brooklyn, NY**

**(hopefully)**



# WRAP-UP

## Q & A

Mary Ferguson  
Area 26, Panel 70 Delegate

**Conference Report and Charter and Archives Committees**

[delegate@area26.net](mailto:delegate@area26.net)

Thank You  
So Much