

■ The 74th General Service Conference: 'Connecting with Love, Unity and Service'

The 74th General Service Conference was held April 14-20, 2024, in New York City at the New York Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge. With 134 Conference members, the General Service Conference was the culmination of a year of engagement and discussion on topics integral to A.A. members, groups, districts, areas, and regions across the United States and Canada, and ushered in the beginning of another year of sharing.

“To gather as our founders have and to be the voice of our area members, I would like to imagine Bill and Bob looking around this room today and having their hearts filled with gratitude and joy at all we have become — what we have accomplished as a Fellowship and our united vision for what we can become for the future of A.A.,” said Mary A., Conference delegate chair, in her welcoming address at the opening session of the Conference.

Reflecting on the Conference theme, “Connecting with Love, Unity and Service,” Irma V., Western Canada regional trustee, who would rotate at the end of the Conference, said in her keynote address, “We are all privileged to be part of Conference week, and I want to thank all of you for your dedicated service to this Fellowship that saved our lives. With happy and grateful hearts, we have the opportunity to demonstrate our gratitude by the focused attention we give agenda items and our thoughtful voting on the issues before us. The love and respect we show each other in the next few days will be a testament to the effectiveness of our program and the value we place on its principles.”

Serving as “the active voice and the effective conscience” of the Fellowship in the United States and Canada, as described in Concept II, the Conference addressed more than 88 agenda items, engaged in

multiple sharing sessions, and heard presentations and reports on topics of critical importance to the Fellowship.

Spanning many issues of trust, vision, and direction, the Conference sought to balance questions of time, focus, and participation, as a tightly orchestrated schedule featuring area input and service highlights meshed with the fundamental work of the Conference.

Much of the activity of the Conference revolves around the deliberations of the 13 Conference Committees and full discussion of the reports and



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Note on anonymity: From time to time in this publication full names and/or pictures of GSO employees, Class A trustees and other nonalcoholics are used. The anonymity of A.A. members is maintained, as they are identified throughout by first name and last initial only.

recommendations they provide to the Conference body based on agenda items submitted from the members, groups, and areas throughout the U.S. and Canada. In addition, reports from the General Service Board and its affiliate boards, AAWS and AA Grapevine, are presented for review and discussion, along with a detailed finance report provided by the treasurer of the General Service Board. There are also a series of “What’s on your mind” general sharing sessions for Conference members to ask questions and express the thinking and input of their individual areas on a wide range of topics. A workshop titled “Connecting Home Groups to the Conference Throughout the Year to Better Inform the Group’s Conscience” was held, with Conference members sharing experience, strength and hope on the Legacies of Unity and Service. In addition, reading room sessions were held so all Conference members had the opportunity to confidentially review the manuscript of the Plain Language Big Book, which was on the agenda of the Conference Literature Committee for possible approval.

In the run-up to Conference week, Conference members also met virtually to discuss matters related to the Founders’ writings and to share input garnered from the Fellowship. Covering a broad spectrum of responses, the input basically followed along three lines: those indicating that no changes whatsoever be made to the Founders’ writings; those who favored changes based on current values, expressed need, and more modern language; and those who felt that if changes were proposed that such changes move slowly and with broad exposure and input from the Fellowship prior to any implementation.

While the work of the General Service Conference is a year-round activity, with input asked and

received from the Fellowship, this one week in April gives Conference members the opportunity to meet in person and to connect, as noted in the Conference theme, with love, unity and service.

The Conference closed on Saturday morning with a heartfelt round of goodbyes from Panel 73 delegates followed by talks from rotating trustees. Mike L., West Central regional trustee, and Irma V. spoke graciously and gratefully of their time in service to the Fellowship. Nontrustee director Cindy F., rotating from the Grapevine board, also expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve the Fellowship, noting it allowed her “to stay in the middle of A.A.” And Mary A., in her rotating remarks, passed the gavel to incoming delegate chair-elect Karen O. of Alberta/Northwest Territories, noting, however, with a wry smile, that she never actually got to use the gavel she was now passing.

Mike shared how he had at times over the past year — a year in which he served as interim chair of the General Service Board — found himself in some interesting situations and wondered, “Why me?” He said he realized that he was not alone, that he was “surrounded by 19 trustees ... they braced me and held me up.”

Speaking about what he has learned in A.A. and in service, Mike said, “The tools I use in my professional career, I learned here ... how to treat people.” Sharing that working with other alcoholics is the pathway to compassion, Mike said, “I came to A.A. completely broken. You gathered me in and put me back together.”

In her remarks, Irma shared how deeply touched she has been by the opportunity to serve. “As servant leaders,” she said, “we have the opportunity to give back what we have been given, sharing the journey with others, for the greater good of the whole.” Likening service to riding a horse, she said, “There were times over the last few years that seemed daunting, but we stayed steadfast in our purpose of carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic. You just have to stay in the saddle.”

In closing, she added, “Our work here is not in vain. Each one of us can touch the heart of another.”

As Conference members reflected on their experiences through the week, collected their belongings in preparation for a visit to Stepping Stones, the historic home of Bill and Lois W. in Bedford Hills, New York, and their own ultimate return to their families, friends, home groups, and A.A. meetings across the U.S. and Canada, many turned their thoughts to the 75th General Service Conference and its theme, “Working Together, Increasing Trust.”

■ 2024 Conference Advisory Actions

Conference Advisory Actions represent recommendations put forward by the standing committees of the General Service Conference or Floor Actions that have been discussed, voted on and approved by the Conference body as a whole. A sampling of Advisory Actions from the 2024 General Service Conference appears below. A complete list will be published in the 2024 Conference *Final Report* (available from GSO in late summer).

Floor Action — It was recommended that a pamphlet on the Asian and Asian-American alcoholic in A.A. be developed, with a draft or progress report to be brought to the 2025 General Service Conference.

Agenda — The theme for the 2025 General Service Conference be: “Working Together, Increasing Trust”; a comprehensive summary of the 2025 General Service Conference Inventory be developed and distributed electronically.

Corrections — A pamphlet on the transgender alcoholic in A.A. be developed, with a draft or progress report to be brought back to the 2025 Conference Committee on Corrections.

Grapevine and La Viña — The AA Grapevine Board develop a 5-year financial plan for La Viña with the goal to reduce shortfalls and increase revenue.

International Conventions/Regional Forums — Anonymity-protected video footage with highlights

of the 2025 International Convention be produced for maintaining archival footage of the Convention, as well as for sharing the spirit and enthusiasm of the 2025 International Convention.

Literature — The draft of the revised pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic” (retitled “Black in A.A.: Experience, Strength and Hope”) be approved with minor editorial changes; the draft manuscript *Plain Language Big Book: A Tool for Reading Alcoholics Anonymous* be approved with minor editorial changes; the pamphlets “It Happened to Alice” and “What Happened to Joe” be retired.

Public Information — The revised pamphlet “Speaking at Meetings Outside of A.A.” be approved; the flyer “A Message to Teenagers” be retired.

Treatment and Accessibilities — The draft pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” be approved with minor editorial revisions.

■ General Service Board Selects Scott H. as New Chairperson

Scott H., of Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada, a past Class B (alcoholic) trustee, has been selected as the new chairperson of the General Service Board (GSB) following the 74th General Service Conference in April. He replaces interim Class B chairperson Mike L.

“This is a historic time to be involved in service to Alcoholics Anonymous,” Scott says. “We are seeing such great efforts by the Conference and so many members of A.A. to carry our message in new ways to the still-suffering alcoholic. At a time in my life where I was starting to think about retiring and taking it easy — I still work about 60 hours a week — I could not be happier to be thrust back into the middle of A.A. in a pretty busy role. I love this movement and am never happier than when giving back. A.A. has taken me from a place of utter hopelessness to a beautiful life full of good, kind, and caring people, whom I truly appreciate.”

Scott has lived in Kamloops for most of his life, except for 10 or so years in Vancouver, British Columbia, where he attended university and started his career as an attorney. Neither of Scott’s parents

(“two of the kindest people I know”) are alcoholics. “My first experience with drinking,” he says, “was when I was about 13 years old. I loved the effect and drank to a blackout, although I did get sick. But through the next few years, there came to be occasions to have a few drinks, which gave me just the feeling I wanted. I was one of those young people who was fairly successful in just about everything I did — socially, athletically, academically. But I still had that feeling that so many A.A. members have of not fitting in. So that was the magic of alcohol. I could go from ‘Why is he here? He’s not very interesting!’ to ‘I’m so glad he’s here, I can’t wait to talk to him!’”

But by the time he was 18, Scott’s friends could see there was something different about how he drank, although he didn’t figure that out until he was in his mid-30s. His drinking may have gone on a bit longer because he didn’t suffer a lot of the consequences that many alcoholics do suffer. “No divorces, no impaired driving, no drunk tank, no jail, no lost jobs. When I was first coming around to A.A., I even thought I might have an especially mild case of alcoholism, like someone being mildly pregnant!”

Nonetheless, Scott's drinking began to take its toll. "I'd look at myself in the mirror and say, 'You're not going to drink today' and then I did. So then I got to the place where I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror. I felt hopeless and helpless and the law firm I worked at was making noises about how much I drank. I could see that the end of my career could come quickly, although my main thought was how was I going to drink if I didn't have a job? But my wife was worried about me; everyone around me was worried about me."

Finally, some of Scott's colleagues reached out to the British Columbia Lawyers Assistance Program, which provides confidential assistance to lawyers dealing with a variety of personal problems. The director of the program, an alcoholic, made the four-hour drive from Vancouver to Kamloops to talk to Scott. "I wasn't converted all at once," says Scott, "but he put me in touch with some other lawyers in Kamloops who were alcoholics, and they helped me see that being a lawyer and being smart didn't mean I couldn't be an alcoholic." It was also around this time that a doctor told Scott — then 36 — that if he continued drinking for another year he'd be dead. With

the help of A.A.s in Kamloops, who "wouldn't take no for an answer," Scott surrendered. His sobriety date is December 4, 1998.

When Scott was three months sober, he told his sponsor he didn't feel comfortable talking to people and his sponsor suggested he become his home group's greeter. "I distinctly remember the door opening one night and a guy standing there who looked like I felt. He closed the door, but I opened it just as he was turning away. I said, 'Hi, I'm Scott, welcome to the Acceptance Group.' That was the first time I really thought about someone else, even for just a moment. That was kind of the start for me."

Scott worked the Steps and found them transformative in his life. When he was sober about a year, he and another A.A. began to take others through the Steps, and for the next 15 years they helped 25 to 30 men each year complete the Steps, starting in the fall and finishing in spring. He was asked to be part of the group of people who took a Public Information panel to a nearby detox center, which he continues to do today. Scott also has served as an alternate DCM and a DCM. He was Area 79 CPC chair for a term, served as Panel 61 delegate (2011-2012) and became trustee-at-large/Canada, from 2015 to 2019.

Like others in A.A., Scott occasionally hits plateaus where he feels that there is "a certain sameness in every one of my days and I start to wonder if this is all there is." He laughs. "Which is some sort of A.A. code for, 'What's in this for me?' But every time I get involved in service, I am rewarded with thinking about me a little bit less because I'm trying to do something that helps someone else. And I end up among a lot of people who are more interested in doing the right thing than in being right. Which is not necessarily in my skill set, nor in the nature of my profession. And so, I am really attracted to that."

Scott believes his past A.A. service as well as his professional experience will serve him well as GSB chair.

"Certainly, serving on the board as trustee-at-large has helped prepare me to take on this role; but professionally as well, I've served as chair of a number of not-for-profit boards — part of my actual practice is advising boards. So, I think I bring practical experience in terms of ideas on how boards might work better together, ensuring that there is lots of common goal setting, ensuring that there is strategic planning, and ensuring goal setting by individual members in terms of things we want to do better. I had the opportunity to serve with two different [GSB] chairs with distinct styles [past Class A trustees Terry Bedient and Michele Grinberg] and I've had number of conversations with Mike L., who served as interim chair,

■ REMINDER

UPDATED CONTRIBUTIONS MAILING ADDRESS FOR CANADA

Please note below the correct mailing address for individuals, groups, districts, areas, and other entities within the service structure to use when making contributions by check to the General Service Board. Which address you should use depends on whether the check is denominated in Canadian dollars or U.S. dollars.

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New York, NY 10163

Checks in U.S. dollars payable to "General Service Board" may be mailed to:

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New York, NY 10116-2407

GSO receives your contribution fastest when you contribute online via the secure portal on the A.A. Contributions webpage at contribution.aa.org. If you prefer to pay directly from your bank account rather than use a credit card, please open a PayPal account and link your bank account to your PayPal account. You may then use the PayPal option on our contributions portal. Please consider creating a recurring contribution.

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and got a real feel for what he was doing that was working. Those three people in particular have really given me some examples for how I might approach this role. I do think that part of my role as chair is to help build a safe place where ideas can come forward without judgment and quieter voices are heard.”

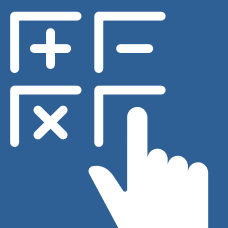
Scott also checked in on some of the challenges and opportunities A.A. is faced with today.

“Lots of the challenges A.A. is facing now,” he says, “are the same kind of challenges A.A. has always faced. How do we differentiate the message of Alcoholics Anonymous from any other kind of recovery message that exists out there? How do we inform the members of the importance of the services [GSO] provides so that those services are supported? How do we reach out to professionals to give them good information about Alcoholics Anonymous? But we’ve also got some challenges that have been there in the past but are maybe bigger than they were. There’s this creep from our general society regarding a lack of trust in our leaders, in perceived authority. That seems to be a growing sentiment across society, this ever-increasing polarization. We [in A.A.] are human, we’re affected by those things. So, it becomes a real spiritual challenge to leave those attitudes at the doors of Alcoholics Anonymous. One of the things that we have to be alive to is remaining really focused on our spiritual principles and not bring in these other things that will make it harder to carry our message.

“We also need to recognize that to some extent we all want A.A. to be exactly the same today as the day we found it. But there is still a need to recognize that the world we live in is a little bit different. There is no pay phone anymore for me to go and call Alcoholics Anonymous. And so we need to make sure that we are using the means that are available to us to carry the message of A.A. to the one who still suffers. By the same token, I look back even just since I’ve been in service at all the things that have come along that were going to ‘ruin’ A.A. — email, websites, videos — and none of that happened! I think we need to continue to trust in our Higher Power that if we are making genuine efforts to help the still-suffering alcoholic, we’re going to be fine.”

Inside A.A. Finances Column...

Will return in the
Fall 2024 issue
of Box 4-5-9



■ Meet Two New Class B General Service Board Trustees

Following their election in April at the 74th General Service Conference, two new Class B (alcoholic) trustees joined the General Service Board of A.A.: Gail P., of Victoria, British Columbia, Western Canada regional trustee; and Charlie H., of Lincoln, Nebraska, West Central regional trustee. While all trustees represent the Fellowship as a whole and no trustee can be said to “represent” a geographical section, these newly elected A.A. members bring extensive service experience and invaluable regional and professional points of view and experience to the board’s deliberations.

A blizzard changed **Gail P.**’s life and set her on the road to sobriety, although not without a few pitfalls along the way. “I was born in Fort William, Ontario, and then grew up in Winnipeg,” she says. “There was a blizzard in 1966 that shut the whole city down for four days. A guy on the radio described Vancouver as ‘God’s country,’ and I thought, I want that. So I started heading west and eventually ended up on Vancouver Island, where I’ve been since 1980.”

Alcoholism runs in Gail’s family. “All the men on my Dad’s side of the family were alcoholic,” she says. “The first time I was aware of getting drunk was at about 15. I always thought I was different. I thought, I’m not going to be like my Dad. I always worked and looked after what needed to be looked after. It wasn’t really until I moved to Victoria in 1980 that I became a daily, constant, couldn’t-go-without-it drinker. By 1985, I was probably on the edge of losing everything. I lost my home and ended up renting — I blamed it on all kinds of things, but it was my drinking. I was a single parent with a 13-year-old daughter and a job. So I sat at my table and thought, I could quit my job and just drink. That might be a valid option. But as I played the tape until the end, I knew that I would never get it together again. So the only option was to ask for help.”

Gail picked up the phone and called the Victoria central office. (She had previously taken the “20 Questions” quiz to gauge her alcoholism, answering the questions “one way on paper, but another way in my brain.”) It turned out the woman who answered the phone lived only a block from her. After Gail got off work, she went straight to the woman’s home. The woman said to her, “Do you have another drunk?” And Gail said, “I don’t know.” The woman replied, “Of course you do. But do you have another recovery.” And Gail said, “I don’t know.”

The woman replied, “Exactly.”

“Those words were there for my first 10 years in A.A.,” Gail says. “Every time I contemplated not being in A.A., I knew I wouldn’t recover again. That was the key.”

Gail never drank again and her sobriety date is June 23, 1985. Like a lot of alcoholics who put the drink down, Gail’s smarts and drive came to the fore as she got sober. She left her job as a legal assistant to build, along with a partner, a beachfront dive shop and café, which she describes as “hugely successful but an incredible undertaking, one of those things that you have to do one step at a time.”

In 2000, finally with spare time and income, she joined a home group that met every day. “I found myself living with these people. We went for breakfast, went for hikes, played charades, had house parties.” But being with the same 15 people on such a close basis began to feel claustrophobic to Gail and she became disillusioned. “So I stood up and walked out of that group, thinking, well, I’ll find another one.” Instead, she stopped going to meetings and spent the next two and a half years not drinking, but not in A.A. “I was adrift and it scared me very badly. So I made the decision to go back to A.A. and get in the middle.”

Which meant general service, something she had never before tried. Gail became a GSR and then a DCM. She became the Area 79 treasurer, alternate chair and chair, then alternate delegate and finally

Panel 69 delegate, experiencing the 2019 Conference in person and the 2020 Conference virtually.

“Until 2003, I really had no idea how vast Alcoholics Anonymous was. I had an intellectual understanding that it was a worldwide organization, but it is so big, so broad. In general service, what you find is such a love for our Fellowship and our program.” And being in general service has helped Gail in other areas of her life. Her only daughter — 13 when Gail got sober — died of alcohol and drug addiction in 2016. “All I can say is that I don’t think anyone should die of alcoholism. But it does happen. Thank God for A.A. service. I was the area chair when that happened and I was too busy to sink into a horrible depression. A.A. and the people in it saved my life. I have three amazing grandchildren who have never seen their Grandma drunk.”

Gail describes her life today as both “busy and serene,” but she is looking forward to her service as Western Canada regional trustee. “My first inclination was, ‘I’m too old for this job,’” she says. “But in talking to Scott H. [new General Service Board chair], when he was encouraging me to do this, he said, ‘You could be a very unifying force for our western region.’ I think that what he was referring to was the fact that Covid seemed to change everything for that two years, when we didn’t travel, didn’t hug, didn’t laugh. And so I have an opportunity to work with our region, to build and increase unity, and help us enhance the vibrancy of the wonderful region we are.”

Charlie H. remembers his first drunk as “just walking around the neighborhood with a friend and a bottle of Jack Daniels. I can remember that night so clearly because it was like the world quit spinning. I can remember how the moon hung in the sky, how it glistened across the grass. I looked at my buddy and said, ‘This stuff is great. Why isn’t everybody like this all the time?’”

Charlie was 13 years old that night and would only have about six more years to drink, but he packed a lot into those six years. The son of well-educated, nonalcoholic parents, he had “a pretty typical childhood for a kid in the ’70s and ’80s. I had lots of free rein and my ego historically got me into problems because I didn’t have enough sense to ask questions. As a result, I did a lot of dumb things.” In high school, Charlie was able to drive and the predictable results were hair-raising drunk-driving incidents, such as the time he was arrested for a DUI when he was 17 or 18. “They were alarmed because I tested at a 2.6 or 2.8 [Blood Alcohol Content] but the cops said I appeared sober. Which I thought was a point in my favor, but they thought it was bizarre that a kid that young

■ PUBLISHING UPDATE

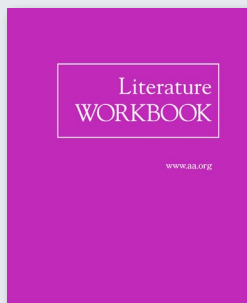
Coming This FALL...

“Black in A.A.” (P-51)

The completely rewritten pamphlet will replace the current “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic.”



Literature Workbook



A brand-new publication compiled from the practical experience of A.A. members in the literature service area.

could handle that much booze.” When they took him in, Charlie decided to lie and say that he only blacked out once or twice a week, thinking that was what normal people did, and was shocked to learn that normal people didn’t black out at all. (Charlie had also taken the “20 Questions” quiz, but even then he sensed that “only alcoholics take alcoholic evaluations, so you basically fail automatically.”)

Finally, after getting arrested “about every 90 days” and seriously injuring himself when he crashed his car while driving drunk, Charlie quit drinking at the age of 19. “I knew that it owned me,” he says. He was in an outpatient treatment center and a woman came in and spoke about A.A. “She said that what A.A. does is reach out to drunks and they do it for free and that’s how they get better. I thought, well, they’ve got something if they can do that.”

Charlie’s sobriety date is October 28, 1990. A pivotal moment very early in his sobriety was when he went to an A.A. workshop at the local Holiday Inn. One of the speakers was Tom I., from North Carolina, sober 34 years at that time. Tom’s story and his evident love for A.A. and A.A.s was so compelling that he became a lifelong friend and mentor of Charlie’s. “He just lit me up like a Christmas tree,” Charlie says. “He put a fire under me.” At about a year sober, he was elected alternate GSR, and moved on to becoming GSR and then DCM. He held just about every Area 41 office (except treasurer) and served as a Panel 56 delegate.

Recovery began to feel like coming back to life. “I do remember that I was about three or four years sober,” Charlie says, “and I was driving down the road and, shockingly, I noticed that the world was in color. I hadn’t realized that in so long.” At the urging of his family, he quit working in the spring of 2023 to focus on their real estate holdings and spend more time with his wife and four children. He did not expect to become a trustee — “I am happy as heck as a husband and a father and an A.A. member” — but at the urging of the current Nebraska delegate (also his sponsee) he threw his hat in the ring and was elected.

“I don’t have an agenda — my agenda was actually to lose the election,” he laughs. What he brings to the table as a trustee, Charlie says, is a deep love and understanding of the Traditions and Concepts and a desire to help promote harmony within the Fellowship. “I think if the Fellowship wants us to be looking at something, I really think our job as a Board is to be looking at it and thinking about it.” Other than that, he says, “if at the end of four years Alcoholics Anonymous is in better shape than it was at the beginning, then I’ll feel like I’ve done my job.”

■ The General Service Board Welcomes New Class A Trustee



Following the 74th General Service Conference, the General Service Board selected Dawn Klug as a Class A (non-alcoholic) trustee who will serve the Fellowship over the next six years. Class A (non-alcoholic) trustees are friends of the Fellowship specifically selected for their profession-

al expertise and the unique skills they bring to the board’s work of carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, A.A.’s seven Class A trustees are able to do certain things that the Class B (alcoholic) trustees cannot do, such as showing their faces on camera or using their last names without violating the Traditions and principles of anonymity that are designed to keep A.A. members out of the public eye.

Dawn Klug is the chief operating officer and president of the Employee Assistance Network (EAN) in Asheville, North Carolina, a provider of employee assistance programs, workplace-related consultation, and training and education programs. Originally from Florida, Dawn currently lives in Asheville with her husband and stepdaughter. She has a master’s degree in mental health counseling and is a certified employee assistance professional as well as a licensed clinical mental health counselor.

While not an alcoholic herself, Dawn says: “I’ve been touched by A.A. in almost all parts of my life. When I was in high school, A.A. saved the life of a family friend. I can remember as a teenager, hearing them tell their story at an open meeting. Seeing how they were affected by alcohol and how A.A. helped so much really left an impression on me. Then after I got my B.A. in Psychology and I was working in different treatment centers, one of my jobs was to drive inpatients to meetings. I got to go to all the ‘Anonymous’ meetings, including Alcoholics Anonymous, and I really saw the power of the Twelve Steps in the lives of the people who were actually working them.”

After Dawn received her master’s degree, she says, “I had the privilege of working in a substance abuse treatment center, and it was there that I really started to recognize that A.A. was not just about drinking. I understood it differently at that point. Practicing the Twelve Steps is really a spiritual and life-changing experience.”

It was around this time that Dawn learned about employee assistance programs (EAP) and decided

this was the career path she really wanted to follow. “Twenty-five years later, I’m still in that field. Employee assistance has its beginnings in alcoholics helping other alcoholics in the workplace. In the ’70s and ’80s, employers were having problems with alcoholics at work, and so it became a peer-to-peer, ‘let me help you with your alcohol’ thing [with A.A.s] helping out. So employee assistance programs are really very much rooted in the recovery rooms.”

The employee assistance field has, of course, changed over the ensuing decades and most people who work in the field are professional counselors or social workers. EAP covers a host of issues employees might have, but through the company Dawn runs, “I’ve always been connected to A.A. We have [people in A.A.] come and talk to our counselors. We have phone numbers we can give to people and say, ‘When you go home tonight and you want a drink, call this person.’”

Dawn’s association with A.A. deepened when she went to a North Carolina conference of employee assistance professionals and began talking to A.A. members who were there to present information on the program. “I got to meet one particular gentleman who really wanted North Carolina to send someone to Atlanta for the 2015 International Convention. They asked me to be one of the people to present, to talk about A.A. in the workplace. So I got to go. It was such a wonderful experience to be with that many people in recovery in one place, taking over the whole downtown of Atlanta. The joy that was there was amazing — how could you not be touched by it?”

After Atlanta, Dawn was asked to put her name in the hat to become a Class A trustee. “I was so moved [by the Convention] that I wanted to become involved. There is something to me that is unique about how Alcoholics Anonymous functions. That inverted triangle — if you proposed that kind of structure to most organizations and leaders they would say: ‘That’s never going to work!’ But it does.”

Dawn did put her name in the hat but did not hear back from A.A. Nothing if not persistent, she tried several more times until she was finally elected a trustee at this year’s General Service Conference. She is still figuring out her role as a Class A. “This is such a privilege and I’m anxious to get started,” she says. “What I’m doing is figuring out where I can best contribute — for instance, in thinking about what happens in the workplace and how employers respond to employees who have problems with alcohol. Also in working with and being connected to the treatment field, I have an understanding of the changes that are happening there and I can also advocate for A.A. and for the magic that A.A. provides to people.”

■ Regional Forums: All Are Welcome

Regional Forums strengthen our Fellowship’s Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service by providing an opportunity for A.A. groups and area representatives, as well as any interested A.A. members in a particular region, to share experience, strength and hope with representatives of the General Service Board and General Service Office (GSO), and Grapevine staff members. There is no registration fee for Regional Forums, which are supported by Seventh Tradition contributions. The forums are hosted by the General Service Board and coordinated by GSO.

These weekend sharing sessions enhance and widen communication and help spark new ideas for carrying the A.A. message through service work. Mailings regarding each Regional Forum are sent to area committee members, delegates, DCMs, and central offices and intergroups approximately six months ahead of time. Learn more and how to register at aa.org.

Upcoming 2024 Regional Forums

Eastern Canada Forum

Aug. 23–25, Delta Hotels by Marriott,
Ottawa City Centre, Ottawa, Ontario

Southeast Forum

Dec. 6–8, Golden Nugget Hotel,
Biloxi, Mississippi

AA GRAPEVINE

and

LA VIÑA

Welcome

Teresa J., Southwest Regional Trustee,
and **Nikki O.**, Nontrustee Director
to the AA Grapevine Board

And congratulate

New AA Grapevine Board Chair
Joyce S., Eastern Canada Regional Trustee

■ 2025 International Convention Update

Registration Opens for IC 2025 in Vancouver

As the excitement builds for the 2025 International Convention in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, July 3-6, 2025, important registration dates and instructions are now available.

Registration forms will be mailed to local A.A. groups and entities around the world in August. You can get a form from your GSR, your area structure, your local intergroup/central office, from your GSO, and the International Convention [webpage](#).

Online registration opens on September 10, 2024. Check the IC 2025 [webpage](#) for more information about online registration on or after that date.

Registration costs and deadlines:

Advance registration fees (prior to April 15, 2025):

\$160 USD or \$220 CAD (Canadian residents only if paying by CAD check or money order).

Registration after April 15, 2025, will be \$185 USD or \$255 CAD.

Registration by regular mail is payable by check or money order only. International checks and money orders (except Canadian) must be in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank. **Note:** We cannot accept travel agency checks for multiple registrations.

Mail the registration form and check or money order to:

2025 International Convention
PO Box 1032
Lancaster, PA 17604

Registration online may be paid by debit or credit card.

A valid email address is required for both online registration and registration by mail. Once we have received your registration, we will email confirmation to you. Your registration form will not be processed if it does not include a valid email address.

Important Deadline: Register by May 15, 2025, to receive your badge and other items being made available for purchase during the registration process, such as souvenir books, in the mail prior to the Convention.

Registration forms sent by regular mail and received *after* May 15, 2025, may not be processed in time to mail your badge before the Convention. Those who register by mail after this deadline will need to check in at the Onsite Registration Counters at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The Registration Hall opens Wednesday, July 2, 2025, in the morning.

Avoid the long check-in lines at the Convention by registering by May 15, 2025.

Your registration badge entitles you to attend all Convention events, including the Thursday night Block Party, the Stadium meetings on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the BC Place Stadium, and all the marathons, panels, workshops, special interests, and other meetings at the Vancouver Convention Centre and nearby hotels on the “Convention Campus.”

Housing

Housing reservation information, including the Housing Bureau’s contact information and reservation website, will be included with your registration confirmation. You will then be able to complete your housing reservation online. As with prior Conventions, housing for the 2025 International Convention will be on a first-come, first-served basis. **However, you must be registered for the Convention before you can make your reservations.**

Al-Anons and Alateens Join the Fun

As at other International Conventions, many A.A.s will be accompanied by Al-Anon and Alateen members. (Remember to check the appropriate badge box on the registration form to indicate Al-Anon and Alateen guests.) They will have the opportunity to take part in a full schedule of daytime activities, including meetings and workshops, designed for their interests. Of course, Al-Anon and Alateen members will join in the festivities at the Block Party, the Big Meetings, and more.

First-Ever Virtual International Convention Experience

Understanding that not everyone who wants to attend IC 2025 will be able to do so for various reasons, we are offering for the first time a virtual Convention program track. Registration for the virtual program will be \$35 USD or \$50 CAD.

In addition, we will be offering a delayed, anonymity-protected digital streaming video of the three Big Meetings at the 2025 International Convention. This will be offered as a stand-alone product for viewing after the Convention and will be available to pre-order by attendees through the Convention registration process. The streaming video will also be for sale in the AAWS store after the Convention. The price of the product will be \$60 USD or \$82.50 CAD.

Questions?

Check out our IC 2025 [FAQs](#), which are regularly updated with information on Convention-related topics, including a recent update on volunteering at the Convention.

Mark Your Calendars and Make Plans to Attend the 2025 A.A. International Convention

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

July 3-6, 2025

Vancouver will welcome A.A. members from around the world for the 2025 International Convention. This will mark the 90th anniversary of the beginning of our Fellowship's founding.

Online registration opens on September 10, 2024.

Check the IC 2025 [webpage](#) for more information about online registration on or after that day.

Taking place once every five years, the A.A. International Convention marks the anniversary of Bill W.'s first meeting with Dr. Bob and the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935. At the Convention, members and their families and friends from around the world attend meetings, workshops, dances, and events. A highlight is the traditional flag ceremony to celebrate sobriety worldwide.

**Let's celebrate sobriety together
in Vancouver in 2025!**

Visit the General Service Office!

Visitors are welcome to GSO, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Tours are scheduled at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., and 2 p.m., and last about 45 minutes.

**On Fridays, GSO hosts an open A.A. meeting at 11 a.m.
There is also a guided tour offered after the meeting at 12:15 p.m.**



SCHEDULE YOUR VISIT TO GSO

All visitors must register in advance to gain access to the building in accordance with the building policy. Accordingly, we strongly recommend that individuals contact us prior to their visit so that we can enter them into the building's security system.

**We're located at 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY
(building entrance at 61 Claremont Avenue).**

Groups of 10 or more must contact us ahead of time to schedule their visit so that we can best prepare for your time at the General Service Office.

To schedule your visit, email gstours@aa.org or call 212-870-3430.

To learn more about visiting GSO, including location details, our health and safety policy, and information about purchasing literature, please visit aa.org/visiting-the-gso.

**Please note, the building
will be closed to visitors September 2,
October 14, November 11, 28 and 29.**



Calendar of Events

NOTE: Events may be canceled or moved to online formats due to health and safety concerns. Please contact the event coordinators as listed before making your plans.

SEPTEMBER

- 13-25: National Technology Workshop
St. Louis, Missouri
Info: NAATW.org
- 20-22: Woman to Woman San Diego
San Diego, California
Info: womantowomansandiego.com
- 20-22: Northern NJ Area 44 Annual Convention
South Plainfield, New Jersey
Info: njaa.org/convention/2024/
- 20-24: 24 ièm Congrès des Alcooliques Anonymes de Gatineau
Gatineau, Quebec, Canada
congres22@aa90.org
- 27-29: Three Rivers Big Book Weekend
Richland, Washington
Info: threeriversbigbookweekend.org
- 27-29: 30th Annual Wakefield Campfire Conference
Wakefield, Virginia
Info: wakefieldcampfireconference.com/
- 27-29: Sobriety by the Sea
Crescent City, California
Info: sobrietybytheseareally.com
Box 871, Crescent City CA 95531

OCTOBER

- 4-6: Idaho Area 18 Fall Service Assembly/Conv.
Boise, Idaho
Info: idahoarea18aa.org
Box 7892, Boise ID 83707
- 4-6: 51st Annual Antelope Valley Round Up
Lancaster, California
Info: www.avroundup.org
- 4-6: Northeast Woman to Woman Conf.
Piscataway, New Jersey
Info: www.newomantowoman.org
Box 1642, Piscataway NJ 08855
- 9-13: Costa Brava International Speaking Conv.
Tossa de Mar, California
Info: convention-costabrava.com
- 18-20: Area 1 Assembly
Auburn, Alabama
Asecretary@aaarea1.org
- 11-13: Area 24 Assembly/ Fall Conf.
Sioux City, Iowa
Area24fallconference2024@gmail.com
Box 351, Sioux City IA 51102

- 11-13: Southwest Regional Service Assembly (SWRAASA)
Richardson, Texas
Info: www.swraasa2024.org
Box 863582, Plano, TX 75086
- 18-20: NAGLNJ's Weekend Conf.: "24 in 24"
West Orange, New Jersey
Info: www.naglnj.com
Box 404, West Orange NJ 07052
- 25-27: First OIAA International Online Conv.
Sanford, North Carolina
Info: www.aa-intergroup.org/1st-oiaa-online-international-convention/
- 25-27: Promises in Paradise
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
Info: www.Promisesinparadise.com
Box 307556, St. Thomas VI 00803

NOVEMBER

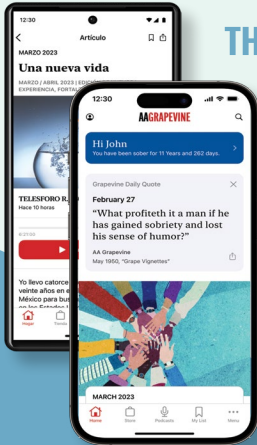
- 1-3: Anyone, Anywhere Area 75 Fall Conference
Pardeeville, Wisconsin
Info: www.area75.org
Box 954 Pardeeville, WI
- 1-3: Primary Purpose Convention
Oslo, Norway
Info: www.ppkonvent.no/
- 8-9: The 44th Annual Bayouland Jamboree
Houma, Louisiana
Info: thebayoulandjamboree.org

- 8-10: Seventh Annual National Corrections Conference
Charlotte, North Carolina
Info: nationalcorrectionsconference.org
Box 1201, Mebane NC 27302
- 8-10: 67th Annual Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly and Election
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
convention@area59aa.org
- 8-11: XXV Asamblea Hispana del Sur de Texas
Austin, Texas
alcoholicosanonomosax@gmail.com
Box 14262, Austin TX 78761
- 29-30: Warwick Parish Bermuda — Annual Bermuda Convention
Warwick
Info: www.aa.bm
- 29-1: CSCYPAA (Connecticut State Convention of Young People)
Meriden, Connecticut
Info: cscypaa.org
Box 7060, Meriden CT 06450

DECEMBER

- 6-8: Southeast Regional Forums
Biloxi, Mississippi
Email: regionalforums@aa.org

AVAILABLE NOW!



THE NEW GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA


APPS!


Help us spread the word that the Grapevine and La Viña apps are here. Please forward to others in AA service and to all your AA friends.

Members can download the apps for free from the Apple App Store for iPhone, or from Google Play for Android.

EASY TO USE!

Take GV & LV wherever you go!





To learn more visit:
www.aagrapevine.org/apps