

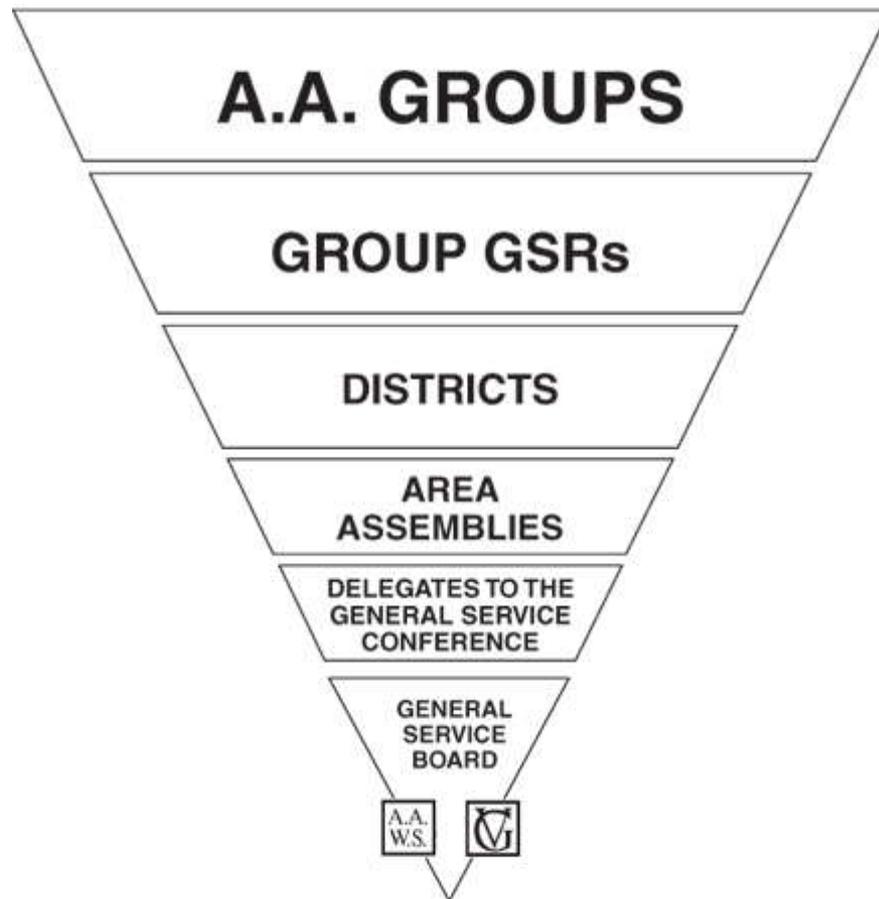
# 2016 General Service Conference

## April 17-26, 2016



# Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts

**STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE**  
(U.S. and Canada)



# Why Do We Need A Conference At All?



## What Bill Said ...

*We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A. A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.*

**S-20, AA Service Manual**

# Who Votes at Conference



# By the Numbers

**93 Area Delegates from the US and Canada**

**69.5%**

**7 Class A Trustees (Non-alcoholic)**

**5.0%**

**12 Class B Trustees (Alcoholic)\***

**10.0%**

**6 Non-Trustee Directors**

**4.5%**

**15 GSO and Grapevine/La Viña Staff**

**11.0%**

# Area Delegate Statistics

<b>Average Age</b>	<b>57 Years</b>
<b>Oldest</b>	<b>76 Years</b>
<b>Youngest</b>	<b>33 Years</b>
<b>Average Length of Sobriety</b>	<b>22 Years</b>
<b>Longest</b>	<b>50 Years</b>
<b>Shortest</b>	<b>9 Years</b>
<b>Average Length of Service</b>	<b>17 Years</b>
<b>Longest</b>	<b>49 Years</b>
<b>Shortest</b>	<b>6 Years</b>

# Five New Trustees for the GSB

2 Class A

Hon. Christine Carpenter

Nancy J. McCarthy

3 Class B

Grapevine - Carole B.

Western Canada - Cate W.

West Central Region - Thomas A.

# The Opening Session

The very first day, right off the bat, we had a motion from the floor that took the rest of the session; replacing the scheduled workshop on Anonymity with the new workshop on the Feasibility Study.

*Email Balloting was the issue ... specifically ...*

**Necessary Quorum**

**Secret Balloting**

**Minority Opinion**

# The Third Concept

**To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”**

# The Committee System

Agenda \* Archives \* Cooperation With the Professional Community \* Corrections \* Finance \* Grapevine \* International Conventions/Regional Forums \* Literature \* Policy/Admissions \* Public Information \* Report & Charter \* Treatment/Special Needs-Accessibilities \* Trustees

Public Information:

*Tom C.*, Iowa; *Rebecca M.*, Arkansas; *Diane P.*, Northeast Québec; *Glenn W.*, North Florida; *Jim G.*, Western Michigan; *Laura H.*, Alaska; *Andrew L.*, Southern New Jersey; *Scott R.*, Washington East; *Bill W.*, Hudson/Mohawk/Berkshire ... NY Secretary — Clay R.

# Sunday

## **We had the Joint Meeting of Conference Committee on Public Information and the Trustees' Committee on Public Information, 2:45-3:45**

- A. Introductions — Ivan Lemelle, trustees' Committee chairperson.**
- B. Review Conference Committee Composition, Scope and Procedure — Glenn Walters, Conference Committee chairperson.**
- C. Review History of Conference Committee — Clay R., secretary.**
- D. Report of trustees' Committee — Ivan Lemelle, trustees' Committee chairperson.**
- E. Discussion of trustees' Committee report.**

# Monday and Tuesday: 8:00am - 12:00pm

Discussion and acceptance of trustees' Committee report.

A. Review 2015 annual report from the trustees' Public Information Committee regarding [aa.org](http://aa.org) and [aagrapevine.org](http://aagrapevine.org).

B. Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan.

1. Review the trustees' Public Information Committee report on the Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan.

2. Review 2016 Public Information Comprehensive Media Plan.

C. Review the July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015 distribution and tracking information for the video P.S.A. "Doors."

D. Review 2015 report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on the Usefulness and Relevance of Public Service Announcements.

1. Consider centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the English and French language versions of the video P.S.A., "Tengo Esperenza" at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, in addition to the distribution work of local public information committees.

D. Review 2015 report from the trustees' Public Information Committee on the Usefulness and Relevance of Public Service Announcements.

1. Consider centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the English and French language versions of the video P.S.A., "Tengo Esperenza" at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, in addition to the distribution work of local public information committees.

2. Consider discontinuing the video P.S.A. "I Thought."

E. Discuss a request to reconsider the 2011 Advisory Action regarding the "Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or Its Affiliates."

F. Review contents of P.I. Kit and Workbook.

G. Other subjects.

# Public Information

It was recommended that:

- **A proposal for implementing a Google-for-Non-Profits account for carrying the message of A.A. to the public be developed and brought back to the 2017 Conference Public Information Committee for review.**
- **A proposal for the implementation of a Twitter account for carrying the message of A.A. to the public be developed and brought back to the 2017 Conference Public Information Committee for review.**
- **The English- and French-language versions of the video public service announcement “Tengo Esperanza,” be centrally distributed, tracked and evaluated at a cost not to exceed \$40,000, in addition to distribution by local committees, and that the information gathered from the process be forwarded to the 2017 Conference Public Information Committee for their review.**
- **The video public service announcement “I Thought” be discontinued.**

# Public Information... continued

We suggested that the Trustees Committee on PI explore ways of providing guidance to the Fellowship on carrying the A.A. message online and in social media.

We discussed but took no action on a request to reconsider the 2011 Advisor Action regarding the “Policy on Actors Portraying A.A. Members or Potential A.A. Members in Videos Produced by the General Service Board or Its Affiliates.”

# Agenda

## **2017 General Service Conference Theme**

**The Conference Committee on Agenda recommended the theme:**

**“Supporting Our Future”**

**and**

**3 Presentation/Discussion topics for the 66th annual GSC:**

**a) Growth b) Participation c) Contributions**

**The workshop topic for the 2017 Conference will be: “Anonymity - The Spiritual Foundation”**

# Archives

**No recommendations.**

**Committee Considerations:**

- **Encourage discussion at area assemblies and area committee meetings.**
- **Communicate this endeavor at local A.A. archives workshops.**
- **Include a notice in Box 4-5-9 and the Archives e-newsletter, Markings.**
- **Add the G.S.O. Archives service piece “Researching Group Histories” to General Service Representative (GSR) and District Committee Member (DCM) mailings.**

# Cooperation With The Professional Community

It was recommended that:

- A new section on A.A. and medications be added to the pamphlet “If You are a Professional...” with the following text:
- A.A. Members and Medications

*A.A. does not provide medical advice; all medical advice and treatment should come from a qualified health care professional. The suggestions provided in the pamphlet “The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs” may help A.A. members minimize the risk of relapse.*

- Text be added to the last paragraph of the first page of the pamphlet “Is there an Alcoholic in the Workplace?” to read (additions in *italics*):
- A.A. can help organizations, *corporations and businesses, regardless of size*, contact men and women who have achieved sobriety, and are willing to share their experience freely with anyone who seeks help.

(Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.)

- Several minor revisions to the pamphlet “How A.A. Members Cooperate With Professionals” be approved.
- An introductory paragraph for professionals be added to the pamphlet “Problems Other Than Alcohol” addressing the notion that while some language in the 1958 pamphlet is dated, the issues are prevalent today, and asked that a draft introductory paragraph be brought back to the 2017 Conference Cooperation With the Professional Community Committee for review.

# Corrections

Recommended that the video to replace “*It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell*” with the title “*A New Freedom*” be approved.

## Additional Committee Considerations:

- The committee suggested that the trustees’ Committee on Corrections explore creating additional versions of the video “*A New Freedom*” in varying lengths to effectively carry the message to different audiences in different settings.
- The committee discussed the Corrections Correspondence Service (C.C.S.). They reviewed some of the challenges of expanding C.C.S. in Canada, offered insights, and were grateful to note that the trustees’ Committee on Corrections continues to explore solutions.
- The committee also discussed ways to attract more Spanish-speaking “outside” A.A. members to correspond with Spanish-speaking inmates in order to fill the current need. The committee offered two suggestions for area delegates:
  - Encourage members of Spanish linguistic districts to participate in Corrections Correspondence Service.
  - Ask members involved with C.C.S. to write articles for Grapevine and La Viña sharing their experience.



# Finance

## No Recommendations

### Committee Considerations:

- **The Conference Finance Committee requests that the General Service Board/A.A.W.S. consider measures that would assure that all future International Conventions are self-supporting through registration activities. The G.S.B./A.A.W.S. might consider the feasibility of a separate ongoing Convention Fund, transportation requirements, hotel accommodations, cut-off dates, and other appropriate items.**
- **The committee suggests the General Service Board consider the spiritual message of self-support in our spending priorities when dealing with items such as World Service Meeting and related activities.**
- **In addition to the above actions and suggestions, the committee had a long discussion about better communication of information within the Fellowship concerning financial matters.**

# Grapevine/LaViña

## Recommended:

**That the delegate chair for the Grapevine Conference Committee be allowed the same participation at the January A.A. Grapevine Board Meeting as all other delegate chairs at their corresponding trustees' committees.**

## Considerations:

The committee reviewed the 2016 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and requested that the Grapevine office provide an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future to the 2017 Conference Committee on the Grapevine. The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2017 or later:

1. **Stories by Atheist and Agnostic A.A. members (working title)** A collection of stories by A.A. members who are atheist or agnostic, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/ or AAGrapevine.org.
2. **Steps Four and Five (working title)** Members tell helpful, hopeful stories about how they did Step Four and/or Step Five and how it changed their lives— from previously published stories in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

# International Conventions/Regional Forums

**No recommendations.**

**The committee accepted the reporting on the 2015 International Convention and noted that the financial results of the Convention showed a loss of (\$210,431)**

**- The committee noted ongoing efforts by the General Service Board and the General Service Office to review all aspects of the 2015 International Convention in order to plan effectively for the 2020 International Convention in Detroit, Michigan.**

**Ÿ Special notice was made that over 700 A.A. members who are deaf participated in the 2015 International Convention.**

# Literature

It was recommended that

- The trustees' Literature Committee develop a plan that includes a systematic schedule for the annual review of recovery literature items, taking into consideration the following: content, relevance, and usefulness; and prioritized by time span since last review. The committee requested that the plan also include an annual report, to be forwarded to the Conference Literature Committee, reflecting the results of their review and any other items for proposed updates or revisions. (Members of this committee serve on this as a secondary committee assignment.)
- The trustees' Literature Committee revise the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." to include information about young people's conferences and that the proposed text be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee for review.
- The trustees' Literature Committee update the pamphlet "Young People and A.A." to better reflect the experiences of young people in A.A. today. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee.
- The trustees' Literature Committee undertake a comprehensive revision of the pamphlet "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated" with a modernized presentation of both text and illustrations to reflect contemporary A.A. experience. The committee requested that a progress report or draft pamphlet be brought to the 2017 Conference Literature Committee.

# Policy/Admissions

Recommended that:

- **Mykhailo A., past World Service Meeting delegate, and Yury T. from Ukraine be admitted to the 66th General Service Conference as observers.**
- **Implementation of Phase 1 of the Conference Translation Project to translate pre-Conference and Conference material into Spanish and French, as described in the 2015 Advisory Action, continue with an estimated cost of \$50,000 - \$100,000.**
- **The 69th General Service Conference be held April 28-May 4, 2019 since these dates do not conflict with any significant holiday or hotel availability.**

# Report and Charter

It was recommended that:

- A new section on “Local Forums” be added to Chapter 9 (The General Service Board) of The A.A. Service Manual, after the “Regional Forums” section with the following text: Local Forums

In October 2006, the concept of Local Forums was approved by the General Service Board. The purpose of Local Forums is to bring Forum information to A.A. members in remote, sparsely populated areas, urban neighborhoods or underserved A.A. communities. Any A.A. community or service entity may request a one-and-a-half or two day Local Forum. Unlike Regional Forums, the responsibility for Forum expenses such as meeting room rental and miscellaneous expenses are assumed by the Local Forum Committee. The General Service Board will send two participants, one from the Board and one from the General Service Office or Grapevine office, and display literature at Board expense. Like Regional Forums, Board participation in Local Forums requires the approval of the trustees’ Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums. The Regional Forums coordinator works closely with the Local Forum organizing committee to create an agenda that is responsive to local needs.

- The following text in endnote 4 be removed from Concept XII on page 73 of the Twelve Concepts for World Service:

*Bill here, apparently inadvertently, used the phrase “in action and spirit,” instead of “in thought and action,” that appears elsewhere in both the Conference Charter and the statement of Concept XII.*

# continued...

- The following text be removed from the Concept XI essay on page 58 of Twelve Concepts for World Service:

*Women workers present still another problem. Our Headquarters is pretty much a man's world. Some men are apt to feel, unconsciously, that they are women's superiors, thus producing a reflex reaction in the gals. Then, too, some of us — of both sexes — have been emotionally damaged in the area of man-woman relations. Our drinking has made us wrongly dependent on our marriage partners. We have turned them into our "moms" and "pops," and then we have deeply resented that situation. Perhaps maladjustment has taken still other turns which leave us with a hangover of hostility that we are apt to project into any man-woman relatedness that we undertake.*

*It is possible for these forces to defeat the good working partnerships we would like to have. But if we are fully aware of these tendencies they can be the more easily overcome, and forgiven. We can be aware also that any sound working relation between adult men and women must be in the character of a partnership, a non-competitive one in which each partner complements the other. It is not a question of superiority or inferiority at all. Men, for example, because they are men, are apt to be better at business. But suppose we replaced our six women staff members with six men? In these positions could the men possibly relate themselves so uniquely and so effectively to our Fellowship as the women? Of course not. The women can handle this assignment far better, just because they are women.*

- Endnote 10, on page 59 in Twelve Concepts for World Service in the Concept XI essay be revised by the Publishing Department with language noting that two paragraphs have been removed from the Concept XI essay and are available upon request from the G.S.O. Archives Department as a reference to A.A. history.

# And continued again...

- **The A.A. Service Manual be revised per existing schedule after the 2016 General Service Conference and that a new edition be published biannually (i.e., every two years), beginning in 2017 at a savings of approximately \$45,000 - 50,000 in alternate years when a new edition is not published. The next edition of The A.A. Service Manual is to be published in 2018 (after the Conference), the subsequent edition in 2020 (after the Conference), etc.**
  
- **The category title “Online Meetings” be changed to “Online Meetings/Online Groups” on page vi and vii in the A.A. Directories.**

# Treatment Facilities/Special Needs-Accessibilities

**It was recommended that:**

**The term “Special Needs” be removed from the name of the Conference Committee on Treatment/Special Needs--Accessibilities and throughout the committee’s Composition, Scope and Procedure. The new name of the committee will be the Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.**

# Some Financial Stuff

In 2015 the cost of services was \$146.48 per group or \$7.14 per member.

However, the cost of services NOT covered by contributions in 2015 was \$37.66 per group or \$1.90 per member.

Revenue from publishing makes up this shortfall. With the future of print sales uncertain, self support becomes vital.

For 2015, contributions accounted for \$7,154,146 while AAWS publishing revenue accounted for \$4,203,763.

Total cost of services provided amounted to \$9,629,499.

The difference in the cost of services and the amount of contributions (the shortfall) was \$2,475,353 or 25.7% of the cost of services, made up by publishing income.

# Grapevine and LaViña

## GRAPEVINE – FIVE YEAR SUMMARY OF GROSS PROFIT

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
<b>Average Circulation:</b>					
<b>Print</b>	71,966	74,000	77,126	83,263	90,493
<b>Online</b>	<u>5,233</u>	<u>5,262</u>	<u>5,175</u>	<u>5,535</u>	
<b>Total</b>	77,199	79,262	82,301	88,898	90,493
<b>Gross Profit on:</b>					
<b>Magazines</b>	\$1,418,247	\$1,529,061	\$1,477,689	\$1,525,247	\$1,472,411
<b>Other Publishing Items</b>	<u>550,581</u>	<u>509,303</u>	<u>515,827</u>	<u>423,668</u>	<u>385,475</u>
<b>Total Gross Profit</b>	1,968,828	2,038,364	1,993,516	1,948,915	1,857,886
<b>% Other Publishing Items to Total Gross Profit</b>	28.0%	25.0%	25.9%	21.7%	20.7%

continued...

## LA VIÑA – STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Average Circulation	10,350	10,380	10,145
	2015	2014	2013
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Magazine	\$121,130	\$121,886	\$116,550
Related Items	<u>12,965</u>	<u>12,923</u>	<u>10,721</u>
Total Revenue	134,095	134,809	127,271
Costs of Goods Sold	<u>60,855</u>	<u>65,031</u>	<u>63,737</u>
Gross Profit	<u>73,240</u>	<u>69,778</u>	<u>63,534</u>
<b>COSTS AND EXPENSES</b>			
Editorial Costs	130,204	122,859	130,546
Circulation and Business	81,933	73,337	73,022
General and Administrative	<u>7,481</u>	<u>5,608</u>	<u>2,510</u>
Total Costs and Expenses	<u>219,618</u>	<u>201,804</u>	<u>206,078</u>
Shortfall between Revenue and Expenses	(146,378)	(132,026)	(142,544)
Support from GSB General Fund	<u>(146,378)</u>	<u>132,026</u>	<u>142,544</u>
NET	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -

La Viña projected shortfall: **2016** - \$152,600; **2017** - \$166,100 & **2018** - \$175,300

# Seventh Tradition

## 7<sup>th</sup> TRADITION SELF-SUPPORT

	2015	2014	2013
<b>Number of Contributions</b>	<b>77,235</b>	82,927	79,363
<b>Groups<sup>1</sup></b>	\$5,973,124	\$5,816,065	\$5,718,306
<b>Specials<sup>2</sup></b>	550,592	507,201	629,542
<b>Individuals<sup>3</sup></b>	471,558	396,445	398,880
<b>Foreign, WSM<sup>4</sup></b>	78,521	127,400	73,800
<b>Memorials</b>	60,528	31,473	63,178
<b>Special meetings<sup>5</sup></b>	13,308	14,509	12,815
<b>Other</b>	<b>6,515</b>	<b>4,975</b>	<b>9,850</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,154,146</b>	6,898,068	6,906,371

<sup>1</sup>Includes individual who contribute utilizing the online system and who specifically identify that their contribution is being made on behalf of their Group.

<sup>2</sup>Special contribution is one that comes from any number of A.A. entities that is not an A.A. Group, for example, a Conference, a Committee, an Area, a District, an Intergroup, etc.

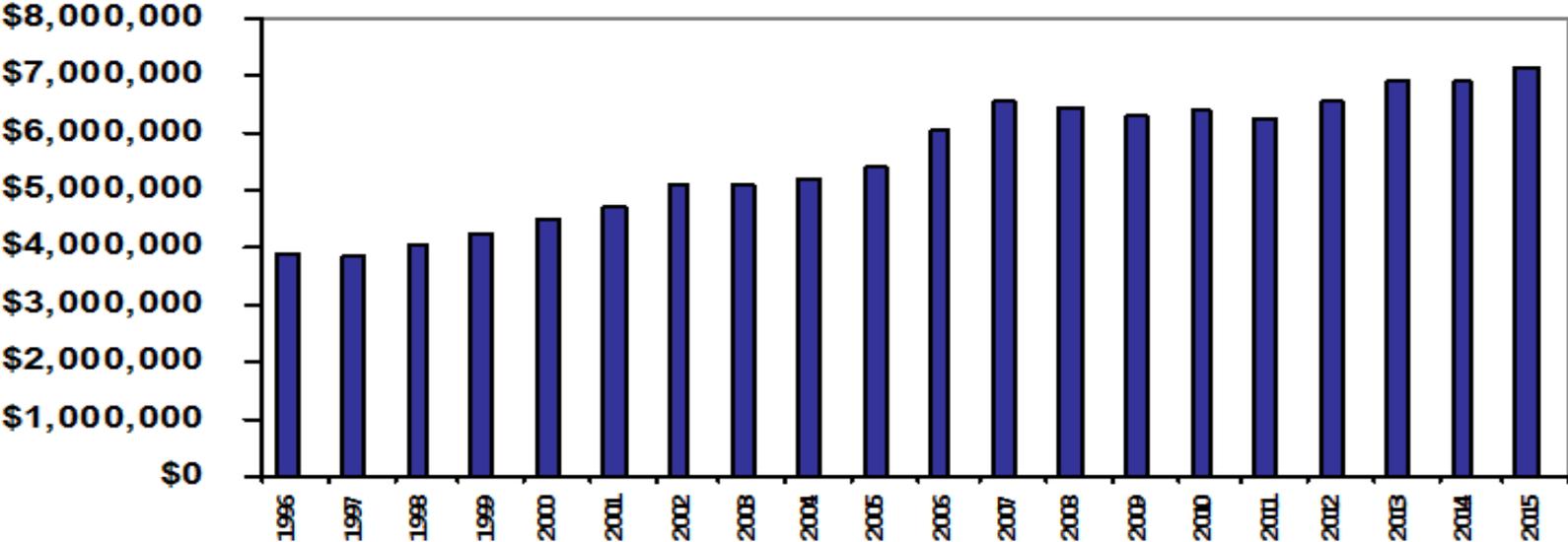
<sup>3</sup>Contribution from Individual who does not designate a Group.

<sup>4</sup>WSM contributions in 2015 - \$44,800; 2014 - \$69,578; & 2013 - \$36,130.

<sup>5</sup>A Special Meeting is a meeting that does not want to be a group but does want to contribute to the General Service Board.

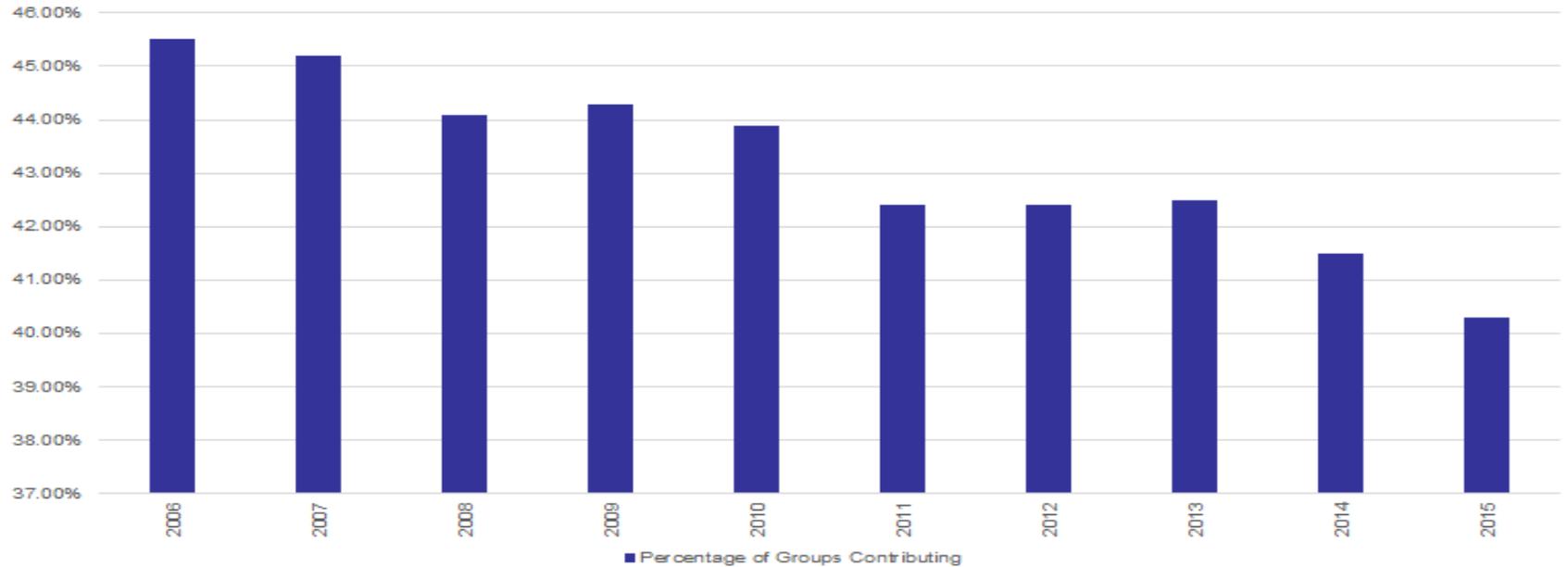
# Seventh Tradition Over Time

## 7<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION SELF-SUPPORT – 1996 – 2015

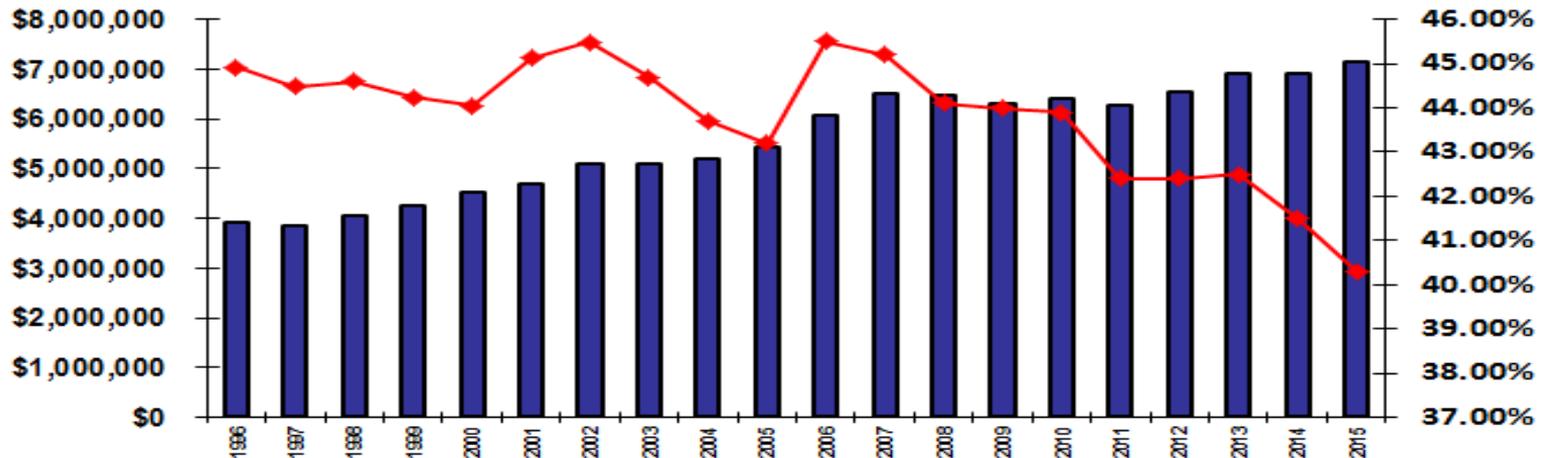


# Contributing Groups

## PERCENTAGE OF GROUPS CONTRIBUTING – 2006 – 2015



## 7<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION SELF-SUPPORT – 1996 – 2015



■ Total Contributions

◆ Total Percentage of Groups Contributing

# The Dollar

A dollar in 1945 had the buying power of \$13 in 2015 while the buying power of one dollar in 1945 is worth only 8 cents in 2015.

**Remember –**

**Finance has no importance in and of itself. Finance is simply a way to help carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic.**

# Floor Actions

Nine Floor Actions were introduced and of those nine, the following three passed:

## **FLOOR ACTIONS THAT PASSED:**

- **General Service Conference delegates be provided a copy of the final approved annual General Service Office and A.A. Grapevine budgets with the pre-Conference material for all future Conferences.**
- **The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda Review and Selection Process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference.**
- **The trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference create a plan to translate Conference background material, considering all possible methods, with a progress report to be forwarded to the 2017 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions that describes the process and costs.**





## A Thought About Service

**“You can fake sincerity, but you can’t fake showing up.”**

George K., Delegate, Panel 65, Area 60, Western Pennsylvania

**Thank you...**

**For this opportunity to serve,  
for your continuing support,  
and for your own service.**

**Questions?**