



12th Edition December 2023

AAversaries!

CONGRATULATIONS To All Those With December Sobriety Anniversary Dates!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION If you want your sobriety birthday featured in our future newsletter, there are simple rules: Years only, 1st name, last initial, home group. To iadistrict13newsletter@gmail.com by 15th of the month. If you want to receive this newsletter, send an email to iadistrict13newsletter@gmail.com.

WE ARE NOT A GLUM LOT.

What happens if you play a country song backward?

You get your house back, your dog back, your wife back, and you sober up.

My Humor is so dry.... It comes with a glass of water.

It's easy to tell the difference between sober and drunk pedestrians.

The difference is staggering.

What's the difference between deer nuts and beer nuts? Beer nuts are \$1.75, but deer nut are under a buck.

AREA 24 AA

DISTRICT 13

iadistrict13.org

2023-2024 District Officers and Chairs

Jim S. DCM

iadistrict13dcm@gmail.com

Wayde L. Alt DCM

iadistrict13altdcm@gmail.com

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IMPORTANT!! SEE GSO 7th Tradition Appeal Letter! Next Page.

General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

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Please direct all communications to:

P.O. Box 459 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163 Fax: (212) 870-3003

November 17, 2023

To: GSB Trustees, AAWS Board, AA Grapevine Board, Trustees Emeriti, Appointed Committee Members, Current Delegates, Past Delegates, Past Trustees, All Conference Members, IGCOS: U.S. and Canada, International GSOS, GSRS, DCMs, Area Officers, Area Registrars, GSO/AA Grapevine Employees

Dear A.A. Friends:

As a Fellowship, we celebrate and recognize November as Gratitude Month. This is a time when we A.A.s reflect on the many gifts and blessings sobriety has given us. The program of Alcoholics Anonymous encompasses many facets: our home groups, sponsorship, the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, fellowship among each other, service on many levels, and many more. As the General Manager of the General Service Office (GSO), I'm grateful to see firsthand the many services GSO provides that support the spiritual purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous - carrying the message of sobriety to the alcoholic who still suffers. These services assist the many facets of the A.A. program.

With the spirit of Gratitude Month in mind, I write today to share with you the difficult news related to the current financial health of Alcoholics Anonymous and the potential continued challenges ahead as we strive to fulfill our spiritual purpose. I hope this letter will be met with understanding, and that the honesty and sincerity in my heart are apparent throughout. The last four years have been very challenging for A.A. in many respects. This began with the worldwide shutdown in early 2020 due to the pandemic, which immediately forced nearly all A.A. groups to close their physical doors and either stop meeting altogether or find other means of gathering. This was followed by a slow return of groups meeting in person, an economy filled with uncertainty, and a workplace that changed in many ways. During this time, GSO and our Boards, like other organizations and businesses, were forced to change dramatically. We quickly transitioned to working 100% virtual to continue serving the Fellowship.

The office, along with the A.A. World Services (AAWS) and General Service Boards (GSB), have worked hard to manage our finances through these last four years with the hope that many of the challenges we faced would subside and return to pre-pandemic conditions. It is apparent now that the financial challenges we face cannot continue to be met with the deferral of essential projects and office development that are necessary to carry out Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference and support the vital services GSO provides.

Our tradition of self-support has always been vital to the health and future of the Fellowship and been our main source of income. However, there has always been a need for additional support from the sale of our literature. When the pandemic hit in early 2020, the initial impact on our revenue was significant, with a steep decrease in contributions. Income from sales of A.A. literature was also significantly reduced as sales came to an almost complete halt. The Fellowship responded with tremendous generosity, resulting in contributions reaching record levels. That continued in 2021, and contributions in 2022

nearly matched the 2021 level. This year to date, we are on pace to reach similar levels to the last three years. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and heartwarming.

Unfortunately, literature profits have not rebounded back to pre-pandemic levels. In addition to the slow return of sales, inflation has resulted in substantial increases in the cost to produce and distribute literature. Conscious of the challenges facing groups and members, the AAWS board held literature prices steady for as long as possible until earlier this year, when it became apparent the costs to produce and distribute were not going to return to pre-pandemic levels. Despite increased contributions after the pandemic, the loss in literature revenue has left our total revenue short by approximately \$1,000,000 compared with pre-pandemic times.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact on virtually all our expenses. Of note are increased costs related to meetings, events, and travel, which are a key necessity to support the Regional Forums, board meetings, and the General Service Conference. However, we have managed to reduce total operating expenses to an average of \$15,768,000 compared with pre-pandemic levels of \$16,258,000. Reducing total expenses below pre-pandemic levels truly illustrates the diligence the office and the boards applied to the budget and operations to offset losses.

Because of the significant decline in literature sales and revenue and the large cash outlay needed to continue printing and distributing our literature, we have also experienced a very tight cash position. Our reforecast budget for this year estimates a loss of \$997,000, after depreciation and the GSB support of La Viña.

The office and all three boards have worked diligently to address these financial challenges. A systematic and dedicated approach to budgeting has been developed over recent years and allows for the most informed group conscience possible. Throughout, budget managers and the AAWS Board work together to find the most effective ways to prioritize and execute services, maximizing the use of each A.A. dollar. In addition to the annual budget process, a reforecast is done midyear to adapt to the direction brought forth by the April General Service Conference and other factors impacting original estimates.

As difficult as this letter is to write, I'm hopeful and optimistic for A.A.'s future. Together we can overcome the challenges we're facing. We need your help to continue to adjust to and plan for the reality of current economic conditions and changes in our Fellowship. As members we often say that when A.A. needs money, the Fellowship will respond. This is one of those times. Your generosity has sustained us through very difficult times in the past. If your group is able, in the spirit of Gratitude Month, please consider a special contribution to the General Service Board. You can make a contribution through aa.org by clicking here or by mail.

Make your check payable to the General Service Board to:

General Service Office
P.O. Box 2407
James A. Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

Moving forward, more frequent, and incremental contributions would be much appreciated as the office incurs many of its expenses during certain parts of the year. In particular, many of our more significant expenses are incurred from January to May, due to planning, preparation, and operation of the General Service Conference each April.

Attached to this letter you will find a summary of the operations of GSO and details of many of the vital services GSO provides. I hope this information gives you a greater understanding of the vital work and services your contributions help to support. Thank you so much for everything each of you do for Alcoholics Anonymous.

With gratitude for all the sacrifices you make for A.A.,
Bob W.
General Manager, GSO

If you have read the letter, you would have noticed that a **\$997,000** short fall is expected this year. District 13 officers and chairs would like to add their voices to appeal to our fellowship for contributions to GSO. Individual and group contributions. The summary of the vital work and services Bob W. referenced can be found at aa.org on the General Service Office page.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, December 3rd, 2023, at 10 AM Intergroup will be having elections! See flyer. A great opportunity for service. Elections are online Zoom ID 810 0506 4290 Passcode WILSON.

The Iowa City Intergroup meets online on the first Saturday of the month at 10 am. Zoom ID 810 0506 4290 Passcode WILSON. Intergroup will be hosting a **New Years Eve party at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church**, Iowa City. A flyer will be available soon, watch the Intergroup and District 13 websites. (aaiowacity.org and iadistrict13aa.org)

New Years Eve Party! At the Recovery Group at Zion Lutheran Church 513 Sycamore St., Muscatine. Starting at 6 PM on December 16th, 2023. See Flyer attached.

Area 24 January Business Meeting January

Notice: The next **District 13 Meeting** will be held **Sunday, January 28th, 2024**, 2:30 PM at 704 S. Houser, Muscatine. We meet on the 4th Sunday of the month alternating between Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Iowa City and 704 S. Houser, Muscatine, however, we will not meet on the 4th Sunday of December due to the holidays. **All are welcome.**

FYI: Area 24 (the State of Iowa) has a newsletter that comes out 5 times a year. If you would like to see it, contact Area24.Newsletter@aa-iowa.org. It is available to all AA members and you are an AA member if you say you are.

INTERGROUP ELECTIONS

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 9, 2023
10:00 AM ON ZOOM

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

CO-CHAIR • SECRETARY • TREASURER
TELEPHONE CHAIR • DISTRICT LIASON
WEBMASTER • COMMUNICATIONS

MEETING ID:
810 0506 4290

PASSCODE:
WILSON

Recovery Group

Christmas party!



December 16th at 6PM Pizza and soda pop provided
“Bring a snack to share” \$10.00 gift exchange (White elephant)

November 13, 2023

Dear Trusted Servants:

A.A.'s Co-Founder, Bill W., in his 1953 address to the General Service Conference, stated that he did not consider himself the author of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Big Book (*Our Great Responsibility*, p. 92). He also alluded to the fact that in the various A.A. literature published prior to his passing, he borrowed heavily from other sources, and that other AA members made significant contributions.

On the other hand, addressing the historical context of some of the writings of our Founders, many members in our Fellowship have expressed strong sentiment against any changes in the first 164 pages of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Big Book, as well as the Preface, the Forewords, The Doctor's Opinion, Doctor Bob's Nightmare, and the Appendices. In fact, as early as 1995 and most recently in 2022, Advisory Actions designed to protect the above-referenced contents have been passed by the General Service Conference.

In response to a Committee Consideration from the 73rd General Service Conference suggesting that trustees' Literature Committee *seek input from the Fellowship (including but not limited to Area delegate feedback) regarding any possible future changes to literature written by A.A.'s Founders*, the trustees' Literature committee agreed it would be beneficial to gather shared experience from the Fellowship regarding this topic.

We would like to hear from you – the top of the triangle! While we hope that the suggested questions will help to spark thoughtful sharing and discussion, please feel free to add questions that we may not have thought of that you feel may best inform the discussion. Most of all, we are grateful for and thank you for your participation.

In fellowship,

The trustees' Literature Committee (2023-2024)

Attachment: Suggested Questions

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT A.A. FOUNDERS' WRITINGS

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you think that A.A. Founders would object to or embrace revisions to their writings? If yes, why? If not, why?

2. Do you think the Founders' writings are effective in reaching new members? If not, what measures do you think can be taken to resolve this issue?
3. What reasons would you consider for changing our Founders' writings?
4. How do you feel about changing A.A. Founders' writings to replace outdated references?
5. What suggestions do you have for preserving the Founders' writings, along with keeping pace with our current A.A. Society and its future?
6. Should there be a special Conference process for approval of changes to our Founders' writings? (e.g., super, or qualified majority – 75%, and/or 2-year consideration process.)
7. What additional ideas, thoughts or suggestions can you share about changing or not changing the Founders' writings?

Note: Please be as concise as possible in your responses to the questions.

These questions will be discussed at the Area 24 January Business Weekend

January 13, 2024 @ 8:30 am - January 14, 2024 @ 5:00 pm

January Service Weekend

MACC 709 S Center St, Marshalltown, IA, United States

We will be at a new location: Marshalltown Arts & Civic Center 709 S Center ST Marshalltown, IA 50158

Editor's Note: My apologies, I was not able to include the headers of the letters from GSO. Important and time sensitive information has come about, that not waiting till mid-month seemed prudent. A happy and sober holiday wish to you all.

Cindy G. Dist. 13 Newsletter Chair