

Quarterly Report *from the Board*



AN UPDATE FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD TO AREA DELEGATES

This is a confidential bulletin, for use only within A.A.

May 2021

Trustees' Message

On the 16th May, we held a further 'Meet the Board' session via Zoom. This covered an array of updates on various topics and was well received.

We had a discussion around the role of the Emeritus Class A Trustee; the dangers of giving medical advice within AA and why we don't; a discussion around the need for service; an update from the GSO; and we even heard from members from Fiji and India. Our sole Class A trustee, Narelle, shared her association with AA whilst working as a prison officer in WA.

We will be discussing at our July board meeting if these 'Meet the Board' sessions should continue. This newsletter will cover off on a lot of the matters that were discussed. Most of the GSB were in attendance along with the GSO staff. Some shared a bit of their personal journey in the Fellowship and answered questions from the floor.

Membership Survey

As per Advisory action 035/19, it is proposed that a membership survey be undertaken. It was not undertaken in 2020 due to Covid and the lack of face-to-face meetings. The aim of the survey is to provide a snapshot in time of our Fellowship's makeup, which will assist with the General Service Board (GSB) planning, provide Public Information and be of interest to the media and professionals who work in the field of alcoholism.

All members will be asked to participate. The questions will be sent out via Delegates, posted on social media and available on our website. Paper surveys will be available to members who do not have access to the internet. We will aim to have around 2,000 surveys returned, around 20% of our membership.

The survey was originally to be launched at the 2021 Convention in Adelaide. With its cancellation, the launch will be at the Combined National Forum (see below for more details) in Qld in August. Thereafter, it will be distributed electronically via Delegates and Areas, CSOs, Districts and social media platforms.

It is proposed that it will be open for three months, closing in early November. Once the results are collated, they will be published as a Conference Approved Pamphlet in 2022.

The survey will be delivered via the Survey Monkey platform which is an easy and accepted survey platform to use.

Ahead of its release to the membership, the GSB has tested the survey. This test was to ensure that the survey is appropriate, flows in a logical way, that all questions have correct options, and that the time to complete the survey is not too onerous. The test was successful and we look forward to its launch.

Call for Class A Trustees

We currently only have one Class A (non-alcoholic trustee) and so there are three vacancies. One of the benefits of Class A alcoholics is that they can speak on behalf of AA in public. If you know of anyone who may make a good Class A trustee, please contact the GSO.

Finance update

We have been talking about the Reserve Fund (GSO's prudent reserve) in past newsletters and will continue to keep the Fellowship up to date. The Reserve Fund's principal purpose is to provide the financial resources to continue the essential services of the GSO for up to a year in the event of an unexpected and substantial reduction in the normal revenues of the organisation.

Advisory Action 025/20

In response to a request that it define the term "prudent reserve", Conference suggests that each group is autonomous:

- General Service Office: 12-16 months
- Central Service Offices: 6-12 months
- Areas, Districts, Groups: 1-3 months

GSO Prudent Reserve Plan

- Prudent Reserve will be quarantined, and we will work towards a minimum of 12-16 months reserve based on the Office operating costs of the previous financial year.

- The Prudent Reserve will not include current employee long service leave liabilities they will be reserved in a separate account.
- The Prudent Reserve will be assessed at the end of each Financial Year on the production of the Audit figures and adjustments will be made as agreed upon by the Management Group and presented to the Board.
- In the event of unexpected and substantial reduction in the normal revenues of the organisation. This would be decided upon by the Board.

The current status is:

- 2020 GSO operating costs were \$484,745, which equates to \$9,322.02 per week
- The prudent reserve goal is therefore \$484,745
- The current reserve is \$509,581- this is up from \$378,517 last quarter, and represents a prudent reserve of 12.61 months.

Income Summary

Please refer to the last page for a summary of the past five months' income.

Contributions goal

- Contributions goal is \$9,322.02 per week
- Average contributions from July 2020 to present are \$8,803.48 per week
- This leaves a shortfall of \$518.5 per week and \$22,815.88 year to date.

Intellectual Property

Judy W, Eastern Trustee gave an update at the recent 'Meet the Board' session on AA's intellectual property, covering off on copyright of AA literature, our licensing agreement with A.A. World Services Inc., how to acknowledge copyright when quoting from AA literature for use in publications such as flyers etc, and our registered trademarks.

This is an important role of the GSB to protect AA's intellectual property and to ensure that we are using it in terms with our licence agreement.

Donation or Contribution?

At the recent 'Meet The Board' session, Valerie gave an overview of the role of the GSO.

One of the many queries the GSO receives is around the word 'contributions' which is used in our Traditions and literature, begging the question why does the General Service Board use the word 'donations' in communications and on the website.

The answer is quite simple. Legally there is a difference between the two words.

A **donation** is a gift of money or property made voluntarily with no material benefit to the donor. The General Service Board has Tax Deductibility Gift Recipient Status, which simply means that if you make a donation to the General Service Board you can claim it on your tax return.

If you receive a material benefit (e.g. a raffle ticket) this is a **contribution** and you cannot claim it on your tax return.

Inaugural Combined National Forum

www.aanationalcombinedforum2021.com

Please support this face-to-face national event. If you or someone you know is interested in either PI/CPC, Treatment & Accessibility, or Correctional Facilities – then this is the place to come along and share your ideas and hear from others what is happening around Australia in these areas. Only \$50 registration.

The purpose of the Forum is to meet a need in our ever-growing Fellowship and provide a unique opportunity for direct communication and personal contact between members.

It will be held at the Colmslie Hotel Conference Centre in Morningside, Brisbane from 27-29 August. The theme is *Let's Be Friendly With Our Friends*.



2021 NATIONAL FORUM

Treatment & Accessibility, Correctional Facilities & PI/CPC

REGISTRATION IS OPEN
SEE OVERLEAF FOR DETAILS

AUGUST 27TH - 29TH

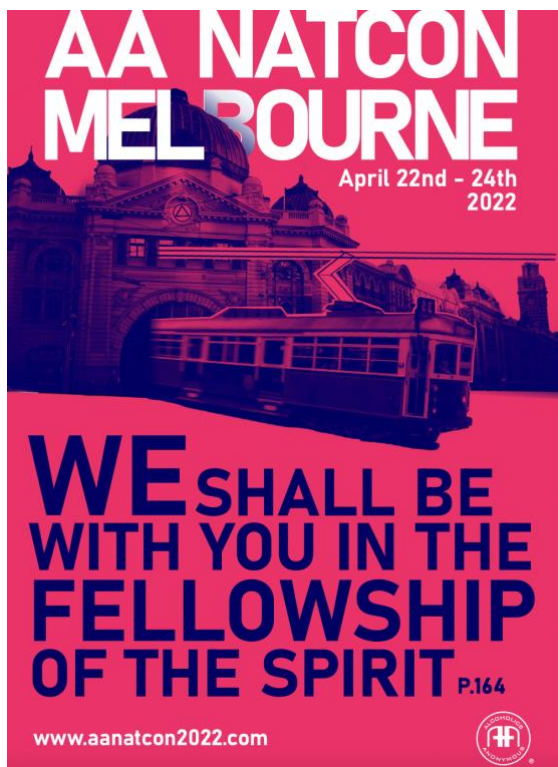
LOCATION
The Colmslie Hotel,
Morningside
Qld

LET'S BE FRIENDLY
WITH OUR
FRIENDS

2022 National Convention

Our new Southern Region Trustee, Geoff S, gave an update on preparations for the Australian National Convention which is set for **22-24 April 2022** in Melbourne.

The venue is still to be confirmed owing to COVID machinations and venues not being able to confirm bookings just at the moment. The theme is 'We Shall Be With You In The Fellowship Of The Spirit'. Further information can be found at www.aanatcon2022.com.



World Services

Attached to this newsletter is the fourth edition of the World Service Committee newsletter.

Joke of the Day



Yours in service,
Andy P. Chair, General Service Board

Income Summary

Income - September 2020 to January 2021					
	January 2021	December 2020	30 Nov 20	30 Oct 20	30 Sep 20
Income					
Action Club	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$550.00	\$655.00	\$720.00
Birthday Club	\$0.00	\$297.00	\$188.00	\$160.00	\$219.00
Central Region	\$1,720.00	\$4,412.00	\$7,615.87	\$8,715.12	\$9,311.32
Eastern Region	\$7,267.00	\$7,366.00	\$47,813.20	\$49,810.51	\$50,198.28
Northeastern Region	\$3,297.00	\$9,079.00	\$24,033.28	\$27,967.42	\$35,663.00
Northern Region	\$265.00	\$2,157.00	\$1,746.73	\$1,759.89	\$1,500.92
Personal	\$13,086.00	\$6,859.00	\$54,304.56	\$59,592.07	\$76,570.83
Southern Region	\$2,239.00	\$1,998.00	\$19,475.16	\$22,694.93	\$25,774.77
Western Region	\$1,354.00	\$4,330.00	\$15,653.89	\$15,038.89	\$11,537.39
Total Income	\$29,238.00	\$36,508.00	\$171,380.69	\$186,393.83	\$211,495.51

OUR UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP



A Newsletter from the World Service Committee

Number 4

The disease of alcoholism affects humankind throughout the world and is arrested by the Twelve Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous in over 80 countries in the world. It is interesting to read of the successes and trials in the Fellowship as we reach out internationally to suffering alcoholics. And although the languages may change from country to country the saving message of our Fellowship remains the same. These are some quotes from last year's World Service Meeting.

Columbia.

All the events of our national structure, including anniversaries, forums, roundups, and so on, have moved to a virtual platform, due to these times of the pandemic. This has not at all meant that we have stopped fulfilling our Fifth Tradition, Our Primary Purpose.

India

India is a unique country, with 1.3 billion population and a considerable presence of A.A. With 22 major spoken and written languages, more than 20 minor languages and countless more dialects, India in itself is a mini United Nations. Consequently A.A. India, as a Fellowship is not only one of the largest outside the U.S. and Canada (with more than 2,250 groups and estimated 50,000 members) but is also one of the most diverse, with literature in 14 languages. The Indian GSO publishes the Big Book in ten languages, pamphlets in 14 languages (excluding English) and, going forward, the number of languages is bound to increase.

Ireland

There has been much discussion about encouraging members into service, the importance of member-to-member sponsorship and the benefits of service. To address this, at the 2019 Conference, service workshops were held exploring these themes: How can we improve Service? How can Conference members lead by example? What action can we as Conference take to encourage Service? How can we implement changes and in what timeline?

Belarus

Unfortunately, at the moment not all A.A. members realize the importance of the office and service structure. **We must acknowledge that most alcoholics come to A.A. primarily for their own recovery and are poorly informed about the need and benefits of the A.A. office and service committees.** In order to change this situation, we have started some additional activities to raise awareness of Service in A.A. at the Fellowship level. These meetings do not gather meeting rooms full of people yet, but there are changes for the better. More people have become interested in serving. Committees have begun to collaborate, and more and more members have grown interested in A.A. Traditions. I believe that if we go ahead and continue to gently inform groups, many "indifferent" A.A. members will eventually change their minds about service structures.

The full report of the 26th World Service Meeting makes for interesting reading and has been sent to all Area Delegates.