

A Guide to AA Grapevine

*The Story of the International Journals of Alcoholics Anonymous
And a Workbook for Grapevine and La Viña Representatives*

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Responsibility Declaration

*I am responsible. When anyone,
anywhere, reaches out for help, I want
the hand of AA always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible.*

AA Preamble

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety

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**General Service Conference
Advisory Action, 1986:**

*“Since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through
the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes
the AA Grapevine as the international journal
of Alcoholics Anonymous.”*

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This workbook is service material, reflecting AA experience shared at the AA Grapevine Office.

AA Grapevine

Statement of Purpose

AA Grapevine is the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous. Written, edited, illustrated, and read by AA members and others interested in the AA program of recovery from alcoholism, Grapevine is a lifeline linking one alcoholic to another.

Originally known as a “meeting in print,” AA Grapevine communicates the experience, strength, and hope of its contributors and reflects a broad geographic spectrum of current AA experience with recovery, unity, and service. Founded in 1944, Grapevine does not receive group contributions, but is supported entirely through subscription sales and additional income derived from the sale of Grapevine items.

The awareness that every AA member has an individual way of working the program permeates the pages of Grapevine, and throughout its history the journal has been a forum for the varied and often divergent opinions of AAs around the world. Articles are not intended to be statements of AA policy, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either AA or Grapevine.

As Bill W. expressed it in 1946, “The Grapevine will be the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement. Its editors and staff will be primarily accountable to the AA movement as a whole. ... Within the bounds of friendliness and good taste, the Grapevine will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholics Anonymous. ... Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be but one central purpose: The Grapevine will try to carry the AA message to alcoholics and practice the AA principles in all its affairs.”

Preface

Welcome to AA Grapevine and La Viña, the international journals of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This workbook is a basic resource for all Grapevine and La Viña representatives—or for any AA member, in fact, who is interested in the journals in print, audio and online and their use as tools for helping alcoholics get sober and stay sober and better understand the principles of AA.

Part One offers an overview of the journals. It describes their basic contents and how they carry the AA message today. This section is designed to answer some of the questions you or your group may have about Grapevine and foster deeper interest in the journals. Recently updated and revised, it includes a chapter devoted to La Viña, AA's Spanish-language journal, and highlights new developments at Grapevine such as the redesigned website and the Digital Story Archive, which contains thousands of Grapevine articles going back to 1944.

Part Two explains what the job of GVR/RLV entails at the group, district, and area levels, and offers practical, hands-on suggestions on how to do it—all based on the experience of seasoned Grapevine and La Viña reps. It presents a wide variety of ideas, so that you can select the ones that best suit you and the needs of your group. There are also a number of suggestions for organizing special area and district events that committees might choose from and fact sheets that can be copied and used as handouts.

Those who wish to learn more about AA history can turn to the appendices, which provide more information on Grapevine's landmark publications and some of the Conference Actions that have guided the magazine, along with a glossary of important terms.

We hope this information is useful, and, in the tradition of AA, we hope you will want to pass it on ... to other Grapevine and La Viña reps and to your fellow AAs. For more information, contact the Grapevine office at 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115, or visit the companion to this guide, the GVR/RLV section of the Grapevine website at www.aagrapevine.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

In fellowship,
The Executive Editor/Publisher
eep@aagrapevine.org

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PART ONE: The Story of AA Grapevine and La Viña

AA Grapevine and La Viña are the international journals of Alcoholics Anonymous, including a monthly magazine and a website. A collection of articles written and illustrated by members and others interested in AA, Grapevine reflects the diversity of experience and thought found in the Fellowship and the power of the AA way of life. La Viña is AA's bimonthly Spanish-language magazine.

AA Grapevine, Inc., is the name of one of the two operating corporations of the General Service Board. The other is AA World Services, Inc. (AAWS). AA Grapevine, Inc., publishes Grapevine, La Viña, aagrapevine.org, and its collections of members' stories in books, CDs and other formats.

AAWS manages the General Service Office and publishes the Big Book and other Conference-approved media, along with general service material and other information about AA.

Chapter One: The Inside Story

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

AA Grapevine became the national journal of AA in 1945, after AA groups throughout the United States voted to make it their central publication. Four years later, when Grapevine's readership had expanded to include members in Canada and Europe, the designation was changed to "the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous." In 1986, the General Service Conference reaffirmed the magazine's place in AA with an advisory action that states: "Since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes the AA Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous."

A Modest Beginning

Grapevine was the brainchild of six AA members in the New York area who published the first issue in June 1944. The print run of that inaugural issue was about 1,200, with 165 subscribers. Today, approximately 86,000 AA members subscribe to Grapevine, and 9,500 subscribe to La Viña.

Some subscribers are loners, homebound AAs, and others who have difficulty getting to meetings and rely on the magazine for sharing AA experience. But the majority are AA members who welcome Grapevine in print, online, and audio every month as a lively way to enhance their sobriety.

“Our Meeting in Print”

To many, Grapevine became known as “Our Meeting in Print,” a term coined during World War II, when the editors sent a copy to every known AA member in the armed forces. Cut off from meetings and contact with other members, the grateful soldiers referred to Grapevine as their “meeting in print,” a name that has stayed with the magazine for sixty years.

Today, Grapevine not only carries the words “AA’s Meeting in Print” on the cover, but its format resembles an AA meeting as well, beginning with the Preamble on page one and ending with the Serenity Prayer on the back cover. It has the makings of a good meeting: discussion topics, humor, announcements, and, above all, the stories of experience, strength, and hope of alcoholics practicing the principles of AA. But today Grapevine offers much more in addition to print.

In Their Own Words – Mail Call

A WWII veteran on Grapevine: *I received my first issue of Grapevine (Vol. I, No. 1) in June of 1944. At that time, I was in the army, stationed overseas. So far as I knew then, there were no AAs within several thousand miles of me, so you can imagine the kick I got out of that first number. ...*

I think I probably felt a good deal like a shipwrecked sailor when the rescue vessel steams into sight. For what that first Grapevine did for me, more than anything else, was to assure me that I was not alone. ... [A]fter that I knew that no matter where I went, my Grapevine would sooner or later catch up with me. And I knew, too, that in its pages I would find the help I needed.

R.H., AA Grapevine, June 1954

The Magazine

Each issue of Grapevine typically offers between 18 and 20 stories written by members of AA and, on occasion, by one of AA’s dedicated friends. The stories are direct and personal, and as varied as the Fellowship itself. Grapevine writers come from all walks of life and every generation and geographic area. And because it is a monthly publication, Grapevine is the only AA literature that offers an ongoing picture of the current Fellowship.

Like the personal stories heard at meetings, the stories in Grapevine cover a wide range of experiences—from problems solved, to emotional and spiritual healing. Many focus on the transformation recovering alcoholics experience by describing, as the Big Book suggests, “what it was like, what happened, and what we are like now.” Others focus on the Twelve Steps, the Traditions, and the tools of AA.

Departments

In addition to stories of recovery, the magazine publishes articles on the Twelve Steps and Traditions, long-term sobriety, and about how members use the principles of AA in their everyday lives. These articles are highlighted in the departments below.

Steps and Traditions

Grapevine has been publishing articles on the Steps since the beginning. Its first Step article appeared in the November 1944 issue. Bill W. began laying out the framework for the Traditions in a series of Grapevine articles published in 1945.

Spiritual Awakenings

This department invites members to share their varied spiritual experiences and their highly individual understandings of a power greater than themselves.

Home Group

The idea for this department came from readers who wanted to share the experience, strength, and hope they receive from their home groups where, for so many AAs, recovery begins.

Sponsorship

For many, the power of AA begins with one alcoholic talking with another about their drinking lives and the program of AA. The stories in this section discuss the sponsee-sponsor relationship from both sides of the experience.

Into Action

Articles in this department bring to mind co-founder Dr. Bob's famous saying, "Our Twelve Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the words 'love' and 'service.'" Topics run from service in the group to participation in the general service structure of AA.

Old-Timers

In this department, AA old-timers look back on the long roads of their recovery and offer insight into their spiritual and emotional growth. They also share about ongoing challenges in sobriety and reflect on the miracle of not drinking today.

Young People

The stories in this department dispel notions such as "Teens are too young to be alcoholics" or "Sobriety is the death of fun." They also offer assurance that no one is alone in AA, no matter what age she or he is.

AA News

This report, which appears often throughout the year, provides information about news events in the Fellowship and the General Service Office.

Newcomers

Stories in this department focus on the experiences of newcomers to AA, as well as on the basics of staying sober in our early days.

Your Move

This collection of opinions addresses such concerns as singleness of purpose, profanity at meetings, closing prayers and others. It provides an opportunity for publishing a balanced selection of opinions, usually written in response to an article published in the magazine.

What's On Your Mind?

Readers share their thoughts and opinions about meetings, recovery and AA. They can also join our chat forum of the same name to share their thoughts with other recovering alcoholics. It often includes more controversial material than appears in the rest of the magazine.

Emotional Sobriety

Stories by members with some sober time and experience that illustrate how we use the Steps and tools of AA in our daily lives.

Our Personal Stories

Members share their experience, strength and hope, how they had a problem with drinking and how they found AA.

Singleness of Purpose

Members share their thoughts and personal experience on the topic of singleness of purpose in AA.

Alcoholism at Large

Current research and news about drinking and alcoholism.

Victor E.

The creation of Jack M., a Grapevine editor, Victor E. made his debut in the July 1962 Grapevine. For more than forty years, Victor has stood before the saloon, looking longingly past its swinging doors, but every time his Higher Power has intervened and kept him from drinking. Some readers wonder how strong Victor E.'s sobriety is, since he keeps showing up at a bar. Others feel he is no different from any other alcoholic facing this cunning and baffling disease. Whatever his shortcomings and however strong his desire to drink, Victor E. hasn't picked up a drink in all these years. And that's how he earns his name. Victor still appears in the magazine from time to time.

In Every Issue

Dear Grapevine

Dear Grapevine is the letters section of the magazine, where readers share their thoughts about recent articles as well as matters of current interest in AA.

Discussion Topics

Every issue of the magazine includes a group of discussion questions, based on an article in the issue. They are designed to give groups an AA topic to focus on at meetings and to guide discussion of Grapevine articles. Readers can also share their thoughts on the topic on Grapevine's online forum, at www.aagrapevine.org.

Cartoons and Jokes

A sense of humor is a staple of recovery for many AAs and a mainstay of the magazine. The first cartoon appeared in the magazine's third issue, and a humorous feature—"Barleycorn"—was launched the second year. The current humor column, "At Wit's End," is a collection of new jokes and "oldies but goodies" that poke gentle fun at alcoholic shenanigans and the lighter side of life in AA.

If Walls Could Talk

Featured in the front of the magazine, this is a display of photographs of AA meeting places around the world sent in by Grapevine readers.

Chapter Two: La Viña: AA's Spanish-Language Magazine

The Origin of the Magazine

The Spanish-speaking AA Fellowship in the United States, Canada, and other countries has grown dramatically in the last two decades. While several other AA bulletins and magazines—some of them modeled on Grapevine—have appeared in Spanish-speaking countries over the years, most are geared to their national community. For some time, many Spanish-speaking members in North America have wanted to read and submit articles to Grapevine reflecting their own experience. Stories also come in from every corner of the Hispanic AA community. These needs were taken to the General Service Conference in 1991, and a recommendation was issued that Grapevine begin publishing at least one article in Spanish every month. These articles appeared regularly between September 1991 and June 1996.

The Fellowship brought a request for a Spanish-language edition of Grapevine within the United States and Canada to the General Service Conference again in 1995. The Conference endorsed the idea, and three months later, a special edition of Grapevine was produced in Spanish. After a plan for the new magazine was approved by the trustees' Finance Committee, Grapevine began working on a regular bimonthly publication for Spanish-speaking members of Alcoholics Anonymous in the U.S. and Canada. Called *La Viña* to echo the title of the English magazine, the first issue came off the press in June 1996. Copies were distributed to subscribers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Europe.

The General Service Conference had asked Grapevine to publish *La Viña* on a trial basis for five years, and when that period expired in 2001, the response to the magazine was so positive that the Conference recommended that *La Viña* continue to be published by AA Grapevine and supported by the General Service Board as a service to the Fellowship. Today, the print run is 11,000 magazines every other month. The number of subscribers has grown slowly but steadily every year and now tops 9,400.

La Viña Does Not Compete With Other Magazines

Like Grapevine, *La Viña* reflects the diversity of our Fellowship, including its geographical and cultural richness, and has international appeal. Even though *La Viña* was created at the behest of the United States/Canada General Service Conference, it carries the message to Spanish-speaking alcoholics anywhere they reach out for help.

Initially, most of the stories that appeared in *La Viña* were translations of stories published in Grapevine. But today, *La Viña* publishes original material in Spanish. In keeping with the Seventh Tradition, *La Viña* strives to be self-supporting, and as it moves toward that goal, it receives financial support from the General Service Board.

La Viña Comes of Age

The first issues of *La Viña* were almost indistinguishable from Grapevine. The overall format was the same; most stories were translated from the English magazine; and Grapevine covers and illustrations were frequently reproduced in *La Viña*. Shortly after the magazine was endorsed by the 2001 General Service Conference, a new *La Viña* editor and a dedicated freelance art director were hired, and they began to develop a separate graphic and editorial identity for *La Viña*. *La Viña* is now designed taking

into account the specific needs of the Spanish-speaking reader.

La Viña also has a letters section (Cartas del lector), a forum where members of our Fellowship share their views about recovery, AA-related matters, and articles they've read in the magazine.

La Viña has the same basic "meeting" format as Grapevine. It contains the Preamble and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in its pages, and ends with the Serenity Prayer on the back cover. Most of the departments that appear regularly are similar to Grapevine's: El aspecto espiritual (Spiritual Awakenings), El rincón de los veteranos (Old-Timers), Servicio en AA (Service), Pasos y Tradiciones (Steps and Traditions), Si las paredes hablaran (If Walls Could Talk) and Jóvenes en AA (Young People).

La Viña's Calendar of Events (Available in Print and Online)

The calendar features AA-related events that take place in the United States, Canada, in Spanish-speaking countries, or anywhere else, provided they are conducted in Spanish. Members can publish and find their local events by going to the main La Viña page online. Like Grapevine, La Viña does not publish contact names or phone numbers.

And although the majority of listings are for conventions and other large events, the magazine does print announcements for smaller gatherings such as group anniversaries when space allows.

Chapter Three: The Making of the Magazines

Who Writes Grapevine and La Viña?

Each issue of Grapevine consists of about 18 articles and eight to 10 letters written by AA members from all over the world. Each month, 200-250 manuscripts arrive by the website, via mail, and email, which means the editors can select the best, most solid AA experience from a wide range of submissions. In every issue of the magazine, at least half of the articles are written by first-time contributors.

Upon occasion, Grapevine receives manuscripts from nonalcoholic friends of AA, or will seek out articles about a specific topic from AAs who have written in the past. Articles of a more informational nature, such as a report on AA online or an International Convention, may be researched and written by editorial staff, as are interviews.

La Viña receives about 100 submissions every month, including stories, letters to Cartas del lector, photographs, cartoons, and art. Manuscripts are received in many formats: as electronic files, typewritten, or hand-written.

The materials are organized by a part-time bilingual editorial assistant, who sorts them by general topic and date of arrival, and sends acknowledgment letters to all contributors.

The manuscripts are then read by La Viña's editorial staff. In selecting manuscripts for publication, they follow the same editorial guidelines used for Grapevine. Some texts require significant editing for length and clarity, but an effort is always made to respect the voice and regional flavor of the writer. Local vocabulary from different parts of the Spanish-speaking world is left intact. If a word is not widely used, a helpful definition is provided.

The editors of both magazines meet regularly to exchange ideas. Occasionally, a story that is determined to have a powerful impact may be translated in both magazines.

Steps of Magazine Production

- 1 – Manuscripts come in from AA members every day.
- 2 – Editors read, select, respond, and file by subject.
- 3 – Articles are selected for each issue.
- 4 – Manuscripts are copyedited for style, grammar, and spelling.
- 5 – The issue is designed by the art director.
- 6 – The issue is proofread, sent to printer, and checked at all stages of production.

Who Illustrates Grapevine and La Viña?

The magazines and other items are designed by a professional art director. Whenever possible, the art director chooses contributions from volunteer artists (AA members who give their time and talent to the magazines in the spirit of service), as well as gifted amateurs. The pool of artists includes AA members from all over the U.S. and Canada.

How Is Material Selected for Publication?

Each manuscript received is read and evaluated by the editorial staff. As the editors read a manuscript, they ask: “If I heard this at a meeting, would it help me?” “Is this in line with AA’s Twelve Traditions?” “Will this help someone struggling with alcoholism?” Some articles are “success” stories, while others deal with problems, but in all cases, an honest expression of experience, strength, and hope is more important than professional writing or AA “expertise.” Since the emphasis in both magazines is on first-person accounts of lives reclaimed from alcoholism, the focus is always on recovery through the AA program and issues within AA—and not, for example, on the wider field of alcoholism.

Guidelines For Contributing to Grapevine: Share your story, jokes, photos and art

AA members around the world have been submitting their personal stories, their experience, strength and hope, their ups, downs and in-betweens to Grapevine since 1944. Why not join them? You don’t need to have had prior publishing experience.

All you need is a little willingness and the desire to share. Here are some suggestions to help you. Grapevine is published both as a monthly, print magazine and frequently updated website.

Here are suggestions and tips for submitting your art, photos and writing:

Writing Articles

Before writing, you might want to leaf through a few issues to see what kinds of articles are published. Most are first-person accounts of the writer’s experience with alcoholism and AA. Grapevine publishes stories for special departments such as Emotional Sobriety, Sponsorship, Newcomers, What’s On Your Mind?, Young People, Old-Timers, Spiritual Awakenings, Into Action, and Home Group, as well as articles about each Step and Tradition, jokes for “At Wit’s End” and letters for “Dear Grapevine.” But you are not confined to these topics. The editors are always looking for innovative material, as long as it relates to AA experience and reflects an awareness of AA’s singleness of purpose. Articles are reviewed by the editorial staff and selected by consensus.

What Grapevine Does Not Publish

Poems, prayers, song lyrics, tributes to individuals, plays, previously published material or anything unrelated to AA or that violates the principles of AA.

Length and Format

Grapevine publishes work of different lengths, from snappy one-liners and one-paragraph anecdotes to five- or six-page articles. Suggested manuscript length is 300 to 1800 words or three to five double-spaced typed pages. Handwritten manuscripts should be written clearly on one side of the paper.

Timing

The process of article selection for any issue begins about five months before the cover date. Take the December issue as an example: Articles are selected around the beginning of August; the editing and production process takes three months; and the issue comes off the press in early November, in time to be mailed to subscribers by the cover date. As a result, a holiday-themed story mailed to Grapevine in November, would arrive after the December issue is already printed. (It might, however, be saved for the following December issue.)

Submitting Articles, Letters, and Jokes

To submit your story, letter or joke, go to www.aagrapevine.org/contribute and follow the easy directions. If you need, you may also mail your submission to: Grapevine, Editorial Dept., 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. Include your full name, address, phone number and email address. Important: Please keep a copy of your work, as manuscripts cannot be returned.

Submitting Photos, Illustrations and Cartoons

Grapevine uses members' photographs, drawings and paintings when they relate to specific articles. We are also looking for photos for "If Walls Could Talk," Grapevine's gallery of AA meeting places around the world; original cartoons, never published elsewhere; and photos for the annual Wall Calendar Photo Contest. We also are interested in working with artists who can create professional-quality images from assigned storylines.

IMPORTANT: Photos and art must be sent as high resolution (300 dpi) jpgs

Go to www.aagrapevine.org/contribute to submit your work. If needed, prints or CDs of your photos can be mailed to Grapevine, Editorial Dept., 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. If you are mailing prints, each photo or piece of artwork should be clearly marked with your name, address, phone number and email address. "If Walls Could Talk" submissions also should include the AA group's name and location.

Criteria for Annual Grapevine Photo Contest

- Any AA member may submit photographs. Both amateur photographers and professionals are eligible.
- Digital files must be high-resolution—300 dpi minimum. Submit digital images on CDs, along with printouts, or email to gveditorial@aagrapevine.org. Include your contact information.
- Subject matter: landscapes and seascapes, animals and flowers, small towns and big cities, close-ups and long shots, unusual effects, and seasonal shots. Entrants are encouraged to be creative, to capture the ordinary in new and different ways, to strive for the dramatic, to capture a mood or an unusual composition, and to be sure there is a strong focal point.
- No portraits or identifiable faces.
- The location of the photograph and the name and address of the photographer should be noted clearly on **each** submission.
- Any number of photographs may be submitted.
- Entries become property of AA Grapevine and cannot be returned.
- The deadline for the next year's calendar is posted in the magazine and on the website.
- Mail entries to: Production Associate, Grapevine, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. For information, visit [aagrapevine.org/photo contest](http://aagrapevine.org/photo%20contest).

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Other websites may decide to contain a link to our website, but this does not indicate either our endorsement of or our affiliation with those sites.

When corresponding with us about these matters, please provide your postal address in addition to your email address.

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We respect the intellectual property rights of others, and require that the people who use the Archive do the same. If you believe that your work has been copied in a way that constitutes copyright infringement, please forward the following information to the Copyright Agent named below:

- Your address, telephone number, and email address;
- A description of the copyrighted work that you claim has been infringed;
- A description of where the alleged infringing material is located;
- A statement by you that you have a good faith belief that the disputed use is not authorized by you, the copyright owner, its agent, or the law;
- An electronic or physical signature of the person authorized to act on behalf of the owner of the copyright interest; and

A statement by you, made under penalty of perjury, that the above information in your Notice is accurate and that you are the copyright owner or authorized to act on the copyright owner's behalf.

Copyright Agent

Controller
AA Grapevine, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115
controller@aagrapevine.org

For any inquiries regarding AA Grapevine, Inc., Website Copyright and Reprints Policy, please contact:

Controller
AA Grapevine, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115
controller@aagrapevine.org

Chapter Four: How the Magazines Carry the Message

Our Primary Purpose

AAs have been using Grapevine to carry the message to active alcoholics, AA members, and the general public since 1944. Today, with La Viña, established in 1996, they can carry the message to Spanish-speaking alcoholics as well.

A Twelfth-Step Tool

The personal stories tell what it was like to help new and prospective members recognize their illness by harnessing all the power of one alcoholic talking with another. Stories of “what we are like now” in recovery often offer readers their first glimmer of hope, while articles on the Steps and Traditions keep readers grounded in the principles of AA. The magazines are a regular reminder of the help available, even when a subscriber slips; as one GVR put it, “Grapevine keeps coming, even when the alcoholic doesn’t.”

Many subscribers make a point of passing along each issue after they read it; others use subscriptions as gifts to sponsees or newcomers. Individuals and groups give subscriptions to hospitals and treatment centers, and current magazines can be found in the waiting rooms of those who work with alcoholics—doctors and lawyers, for example.

The magazines give new and prospective members a chance to get acquainted with AA in a low-key, no-pressure way, in private, and offer professionals a fuller understanding of the principles of the program and what meetings are like.

A Lifeline for Loners, Homers, Internationalists, and AAs on the Road

Grapevine and La Viña are vital links to AAs who cannot go to meetings and have little contact with their fellow AAs. Homebound AAs and those in nursing facilities, as well as AAs who live in remote settings or in places where there are no meetings in their language often rely on the magazines and the website (aagrapevine.org, aagrapevine.org/español) or use them along with the Loners and Internationals Meeting (LIM) newsletter published by AAWS.

AAs who attend meetings regularly find the magazines, books, eBooks, audio recordings and website useful on vacations, business or family trips, when they commute to work, when they are home caring for their families, or when they are ill.

An Aid to Emotional Sobriety and Spiritual Growth

Grapevine and La Viña have a great deal to offer old-timers, middle-timers, and others in recovery. The magazines can be an effective guard against complacency, reminding readers of what alcohol can do to alcoholics and of the importance of keeping it green. With their emphasis on the principles of AA, they can enrich a member’s understanding of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts and be powerful tools of spiritual and emotional growth as well.

A Resource for Groups

The magazines provide groups with many of the basic ingredients for a well-rounded meeting:

- the essential AA texts for meetings—the Steps, Traditions, Preamble, Serenity Prayer, and Responsibility Declaration
- discussion topics each month on the principles of AA and the tools of the program, which stand alone or can be discussed after the group reads an article
- a steady supply of AA stories
- updates on major AA events
- AA material to give to newcomers or to institutions where group members serve
- articles about AA history and about other groups, which may help a group function more smoothly and better carry the message of AA

A Mirror of the Current Fellowship

Publishing hundreds of new stories a year, *La Viña* and *Grapevine* provide an up-to-date picture of AA's current membership and reflect the enduring principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. At the same time, they try to respond to changing times with reports on how AAs are carrying the message online, or reaching out to alcoholics around the globe.

And today, with the growth of the website and forums like “What’s On Your Mind?” forum, and the addition of the Spanish-language pages, *Grapevine* allows AA members to share their experience in recovery sooner and offers an immediate mirror of the diverse Fellowship of AA.

The Free Press of AA

Grapevine and *La Viña* offer the Fellowship a platform to air their divergent views, to share their often contradictory opinions, and to say what is on their minds. Such freedom of expression is as important to personal recovery as it is to the Fellowship as a whole, fostering the honesty and self-respect vital to spiritual growth.

As Bill put it in a letter to AA groups, *Grapevine* should express “the widest differences of opinion on all topics of a strictly AA nature,” helping to create “a powerful AA tradition so that no individual or single group of individuals ever dominate our National Organ.” The chorus of opinion printed in the magazines reminds us that “... there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express himself in our group conscience,” and helps the Fellowship adhere to the Traditions.

Reflecting on *Grapevine* in *AA Comes of Age*, Bill W. described *Grapevine* as “our biggest and best means of communicating current AA thought and experience in staying sober, in hanging together, and in serving. ... The *Grapevine* was seen as the monthly mirror of AA in action, always the same principles yet ever growing and ever finding better ways of doing and thinking on new fronts of our exciting adventure in living and working together.”

A Tool for Public Information

Through its direct, first-person stories, Grapevine helps inform the general public and members of the professional community about the way AA members stay sober. Copies of the magazines and subscriptions are donated to schools and libraries as an important part of this outreach.

A Touchstone of the Past

Much of AA's history has played out in Grapevine. As a result, early issues and Grapevine books are a rich resource for those who want to learn more about the origins of the program, the Conference, or the Concepts. Members and historians can look up the first version of the Traditions, or they can learn about what early AAs thought about discussing problems of addiction or money, or explore how much (and how little) AA has changed by requesting past issues of Grapevine or by going to the Grapevine Story Archive at www.aagrapevine.org.

Magazines Patterned After Grapevine

Quite a few AA entities in other countries have used Grapevine as the prototype for their own AA magazines. Often, these efforts start off relying heavily on Grapevine for translated articles and for artwork, cartoons, and jokes. Then, as the individual publications mature and develop material of their own, their reliance on Grapevine diminishes, and their own unique AA personalities begin to emerge. About two dozen AA magazines are now published around the world, including Scotland's Roundabout, Mexico's Plenitud, South Africa's Regmaker, French Canada's La Vigne, Japan's Box 916, France's Partager, Russia's Alcoholic, Spain's Akron, Colombia's El Mensaje, Brazil's Vivência, Guatemala's Compartimiento.

Chapter Five: AA Grapevine Online

www.aagrapevine.org

A Mirror of the Fellowship on the Internet

When it was launched in 1997, the Grapevine website consisted of general information about Grapevine and La Viña magazines. By 1999, it had grown to include selected articles from present and past issues and a catalog describing all of Grapevine's publications in English and Spanish. In 2002, a special section for Grapevine and La Viña representatives, was created, offering Grapevine and La Viña reps an abridged version of this workbook.

AA Grapevine Website

In 2011, the website was re-launched on a new platform designed to be more flexible and to better serve the Fellowship. The new site makes available to subscribers thousands of stories printed in Grapevine as well as current editions of La Viña and 20 web-only stories a month.

Free to the general public are the online forums, events calendars, a monthly iPoll and cartoon contest, as well as a wealth of information on how to be a Grapevine or La Viña representative and how to share your experience, strength and hope with the Fellowship by publishing your story or artwork in the magazines.

The website is continually updated to increase user friendliness and offer new features for reader engagement.

Today, visitors may purchase all AA Grapevine products and subscriptions at the online store and also manage their accounts.

For those interested in staying connected via email, Grapevine offers a free daily quote and a monthly e-newsletter. Sign up is easy from the www.aagrapevine.org homepage.

AA Grapevine Store

Subscribing or buying gift subscriptions has never been easier. Simply visit the website and click on one of the subscribe buttons and follow the instructions. You can also order books and other products while you're there!

Store.aagrapevine.org

Story Archive

All the content from Grapevine magazine since the first edition in June 1944 is now available online to subscribers. Stories are organized by relevant topics such as the Twelve Traditions and Steps, emotional sobriety, spirituality and many others!

www.aagrapevine.org/stories

Grapevine Audio

We offer a multitude of audio products including recordings of Grapevine magazine, audio books and collections on CD. In 2013, Grapevine began collecting original stories recorded by members of the Fellowship. To hear a sample of the stories collected or to learn how to submit your own story visit our audio portal.

www.aagrapevine.org/audio-portal

Share — Send Us Your Story or Art

The website offers an easy way to learn more about sharing your story, art, events, and your thoughts with the Fellowship via Grapevine. There you will find both guidelines and forms to upload your information.

www.aagrapevine.org/share

Resources/GVR

Are you interested in becoming a GVR? Or perhaps you already are a GVR and want to learn more? On the website, you can find registration forms, news and updates from AA Grapevine, Inc., complimentary materials, and helpful tips from other reps and the GrapeNet Forum. On this forum, you may exchange ideas with other reps.

www.aagrapevine.org/gvr

What's On Your Mind? Forum

Want to share on a particular topic? Visit the moderated online forum where you can exchange ideas and thoughts with other members of AA.

www.aagrapevine.org/whats-on-your-mind

Calendar of Events

Going on a trip and want to attend an AA event? Or maybe you're looking for something local. We now offer an expanded online events calendar.

www.aagrapevine.org/calendar

Some Fun Things

Want to check your sobriety day count? Use the sobriety calculator at www.aagrapevine.org/sobriety-calculator.

Each month, we run a cartoon contest with winners featured in the magazine. Visit the homepage to learn more: www.aagrapevine.org

Tell us what you think in our monthly iPoll on the homepage: www.aagrapevine.org

Grapevine Emails

Stay in touch with sobriety in your mailbox. Sign up for emails from Grapevine. We currently offer the Grapevine Quote, an inspirational daily email drawn from the deep well of Grapevine stories dating back to 1944; a monthly news update; and a weekly stories email to subscribers.

www.aagrapevine.org/email-sign-up

La Viña

Each issue of La Viña is now published online and available to subscribers. We offer one story—both the written version and the audio recording—free to the general public bimonthly. In the La Viña section, you will also find information about La Viña's history and statement of purpose, and news and updates, a calendar of events, instructions on sharing your story, art, and events as well as upload forms. www.aagrapevine.org/espanol

Chapter Six: AA Grapevine, Inc.

AA Grapevine, Inc., and the General Service Structure

Grapevine was incorporated as one of two independent publishing divisions of the Alcoholic Foundation in 1946. In 1971 it was reincorporated as one of the two operating arms of the General Service Board; the other is AA World Services, Inc. (see the chart on page 27).

The primary business of AA Grapevine, Inc. is to publish AA Grapevine and La Viña content for print magazines and online. In addition, it produces anthologies, ebooks, and audio versions of the stories.

AA World Services, Inc. publishes the Big Book and other Conference-approved and service literature. It also has oversight of the General Service Office, which is a resource to groups throughout the U.S. and Canada.

AA Grapevine and AAWS are organizationally entirely separate, with their own boards of directors, offices, and financial operations. But there is an informal working relationship and the staffs meet to exchange ideas. Both offices are in the same location at 475 Riverside Drive, in New York City.

Why Are the Two Corporations Separate?

Bill W. addressed this question in his essay on Concept XI in *Twelve Concepts for World Service*:

Every new generation of workers will raise certain questions about these two corporate questions: "Why can't both of them be consolidated into the General Service Board?" Or, "Why can't the Grapevine be merged into AA World Services, Inc., thus placing all active Headquarters operations under a single management?" These questions have already been discussed under previous Concepts. We have concluded that the General Service Board is an unsuitable vehicle for an operating corporation; that because the Grapevine is such a dissimilar operation, and because we ought not concentrate too much money and executive authority in a single entity, there should be no merger of AA World Services and The AA Grapevine. Upon these points we seem well agreed—at least, as of now.

But this question has some other variations. It will often be asked, "If it is desirable to separately incorporate dissimilar enterprises, why then shouldn't the AA Publishing division of AA World Services be separately incorporated and managed by a board of directors specially skilled in book and booklet publishing?" Offhand, this looks logical.

Today, however, AA Publishing is mostly a business operation. Unlike a commercial publisher, we do not have to ensure the selection, writing, and publication of a lot of new books each year. Most of our AA books are already written, and it is probable that not many more will be published. Of course, we shall issue new pamphlets now and then, and revisions of older material occasionally are desirable. But this relatively small amount of creative publishing work can be handled easily by the Literature Committee. Hence the operation of the AA publishing division of AA World Services, Inc., is now mostly a matter of printing, distribution, accounting, and finance. For management purposes there is therefore no present need for a separate corporation; it is only required that the books of AA World Services, Inc., show a separate accounting for its AA Publishing division. Only in the highly unlikely event of a large and protracted entry into the new book business would we really ever need a separate corporate management.

Another question will be this: "Why don't we merge AA publishing with The AA Grapevine,

so placing all of our literature under a unified management?" The answer here is based on the complete dissimilarity of the two enterprises. The Grapevine has to produce a brand-new quality product every month, on the dot. By contrast, AA publishing success largely depends upon what has already been written.

In the Grapevine the paramount activity is therefore the creative. The Grapevine requires several paid staff members and the constant aid of a large number of specialized volunteers without whose help it could not operate. Why, then, should we load up these people with a lot more straight business activity? Obviously we should not.

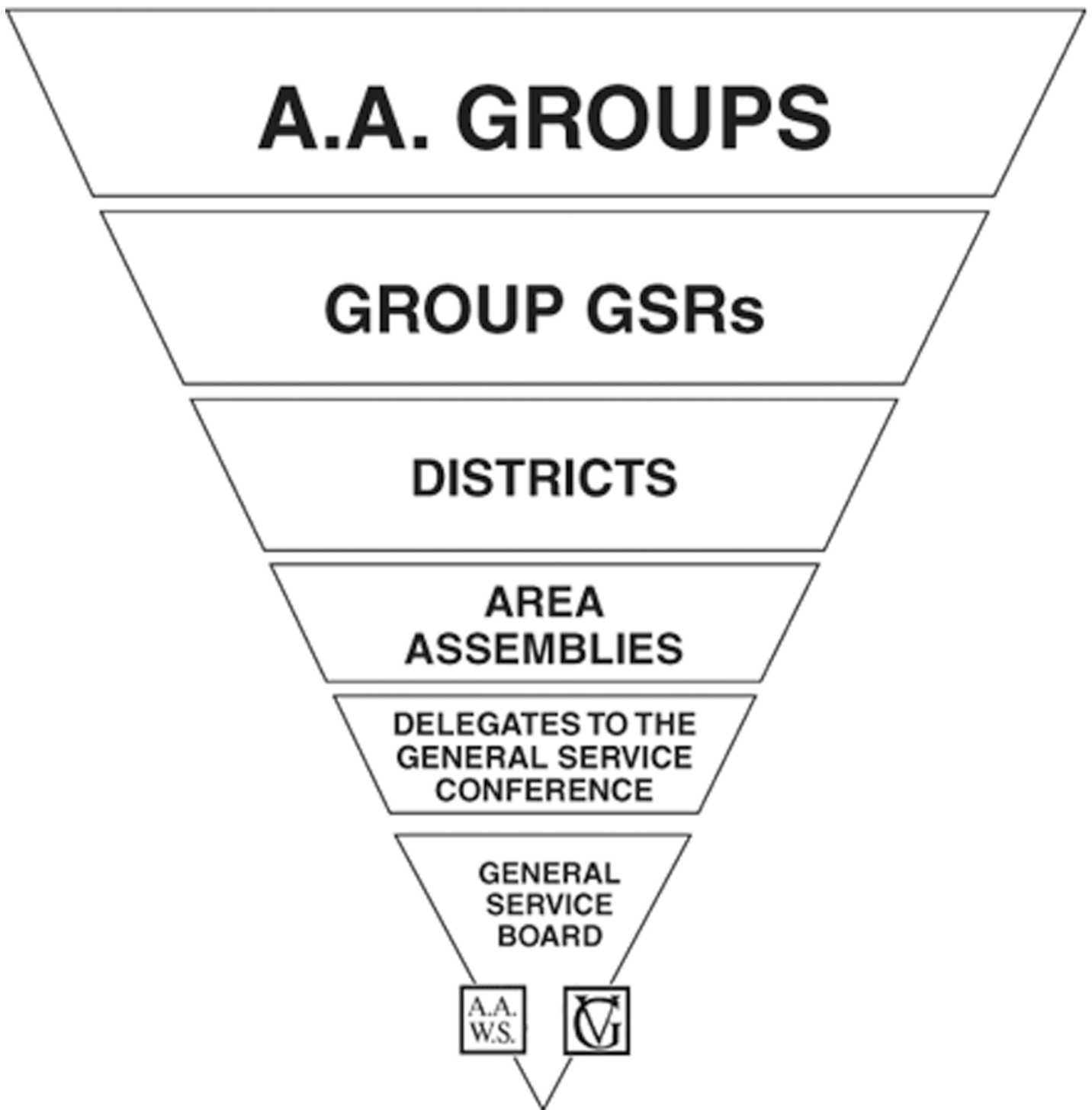
Another question is posed, "Why should AA World Services, Inc., not take over all the Grapevine's accounting, finances, promotion and distribution? Would not such a consolidation of financing, employees and routine business be more efficient and economical? Would not this relieve the Grapevine of all business headaches?"

This plan, too, looks reasonable at first glance. Nevertheless the chances are it would work poorly. It has serious structural defects. It would violate the basic good-management principle that whoever has the responsibility for a given task must also have the needed authority, funds, personnel and equipment to carry it out. The AA Grapevine, Inc. unquestionably holds full responsibility for its own solvency, promotion, policy, and the management of its circulation. It is supposed to have four business directors, expert in these phases of magazine operation. The Conference and the General Service Board will always hold them accountable. If, therefore, any large part of the Grapevine business functions are transferred to a completely different corporate management over which the Grapevine has no authority, what then? This certainly would be a double-headed management and a source of continuous conflict. The Grapevine would become virtually impotent.

Such a situation also would tend to demoralize the editor, his staff, and the Editorial Board. This group now [in 1962] has a representation of three directors on the Grapevine Board. In such a corporate body it is now possible to reconcile the editorial desire for excellence in the magazine with the financial realities of the Grapevine situation. But if the business function of the Grapevine was transferred to AA World Services, Inc., the status and influence of the Grapevine editorial people would be reduced to almost nothing. World Service directors would be mostly interested in business efficiency and solvency, while the Grapevine editorial representatives would still be looking for quality and magazine improvements. There would be no practical way of reconciling these differences. The business directors of AA World Services, Inc., would dominate the editorial workers and therefore the editorial policy. The editorial group would find that they had become a mere committee, taking directions from AA World Services. "Who pays the piper calls the tune" would become the actual working arrangement. Having so split the management of the Grapevine in halves and having abandoned the principle of "Participation," it is doubtful if we could make this setup work at all, especially with all those volunteers. We might save some money, but we probably could not save the magazine.

Joint arrangements between AA Grapevine and AA World Services for routine operations (such as billing, mailing, etc.) are not necessarily precluded. To a lesser degree, the same kind of frictions described above can be expected to develop unless there is the clearest possible understanding of "who controls what and when."

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



Are Grapevine and La Viña Conference-Approved?

This is a frequently asked question about AA Grapevine's magazines. General Service Conference approval is a lengthy review process. Conference-approved literature represents the widest possible consensus of experience of the Fellowship to ensure its adherence to Traditions and sound AA principles. The process can take years for longer projects, with several stages of committee evaluation along the way. Ultimately, the General Service Conference as a whole must approve the final product before it can be published with the "Conference-approved" seal.

Since Grapevine magazine comes out twelve times a year, and the Conference meets only once a year, the magazine would never be published if it had to go through the Conference review process. Thus, no individual issue is considered "Conference-approved." The AA Grapevine by charter must also, as Bill W. put it, "be free to print articles expressing the widest differences of opinion on all topics of a strictly AA nature." They are not intended to be endorsements of AA policy.

At the same time, the Conference has always supported the concept of the Grapevine and encouraged its distribution at meetings and other AA gatherings. In 1986, a Conference Advisory Action specifically addressed the issue of Conference approval of the Grapevine directly with the following statement:

"Since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes the Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous."

The Conference has been equally supportive of La Viña. In 1995, it recommended that AA Grapevine begin publishing a Spanish-language magazine on an experimental basis, and then gave the continuation of La Viña whole-hearted approval in 2001.

And of course AA Grapevine is part of the Conference itself. Grapevine staff members and directors are voting members of the Conference. A Conference Committee on Grapevine was formed in 1954, and any AA Grapevine matter of importance to the Fellowship as a whole is brought to the Conference through that committee. The Conference Charter recognizes Grapevine's place in the general service structure and guarantees the right of the Grapevine editor to accept or reject material for publication.

More information about AA Grapevine, the General Service Conference, and the AA Grapevine Conference Committee can be found in *The A.A. Service Manual*.

The Grapevine Corporate Board

The Grapevine Corporate Board oversees the business affairs of the corporation. While it doesn't manage the day-to-day functioning of the office, it is ultimately responsible for ensuring that Grapevine and La Viña operate in the best interests of the Fellowship.

The major responsibility of the Corporate Board is, of course, the fiscal health of the corporation. In contrast to AA World Services, Grapevine does not (by charter cannot) accept group contributions. It must be self-supporting entirely through sales of the magazine and related materials.

Any donations that may be received are kept in a special fund that is never used for operating expenses. Called the Carry the Message account, this fund is designated to provide subscriptions for AA members who cannot afford them—for example, AAs in correctional programs. Grapevine's finances and annual budget, like those of AA World Services, are reviewed by the trustees' Finance Committee, and every year, cash in excess of current operating needs is transferred to and invested with the General Service Board Reserve Fund.

Grapevine is obligated to keep in the General Service Board Reserve Fund enough money to cover

its liability for unfulfilled subscriptions. This means that if Grapevine were suddenly to fold, there would be enough money to refund all subscribers the cost of issues they paid for but had not yet received. In lean years, the corporation can borrow from those funds to meet operating needs.

Composition of the Board

The Corporate Board has up to nine directors. Under this design, five of the directors serve as trustees on the General Service Board: one Class “A” nonalcoholic trustee, two general service trustees, and two regional or at-large trustees. The remaining three directors consist of up to three nontrustee directors selected for their business and publishing expertise, and the executive editor as a nonrotating member.

The chairman of the Corporate Board is always a trustee, and the chairmanship rotates each year between a general service trustee and a regional trustee. Directors are elected each year and may serve four consecutive one-year terms, with two exceptions: regional trustees serve for two years, and nontrustee directors who are elected trustees may serve four additional years in that capacity.

All directors are voting members of the General Service Conference, which meets for one week in April, and serve on two trustees’ committees. The Grapevine Corporate Board meets quarterly and holds an additional planning meeting each quarter.

The Editorial Advisory Board

Formerly called the Editorial Board, the Editorial Advisory Board is an informal body comprised of AA members with a minimum of four years sobriety, with experience in multi-media communications, publishing, communications technology, and digital and graphic arts, along with members of the Grapevine editorial staff and the art director. Members serve for three years. Grapevine staff members do not rotate.

The idea of creating an Editorial Board was first discussed by the AA Grapevine Corporate Board in October 1953, but it was not until September 1958 that the Editorial Board became a reality. In its early years, the Board helped ease the workload of the overburdened volunteer editor. Board members wrote many of the articles, read and copyedited submissions, helped plan future issues, and assisted with layout and artwork. The Editorial Board became, in Bill W.’s words, “the chief guarantor of the magazine’s quality and editorial continuity.”

However, with the eventual hiring of a paid editorial staff who could work full-time, the role of the Editorial Board changed. It ceased being involved in hands-on production and evolved into a nonvoting advisory body, which functions as a sounding board for editorial decision-making.

Similarly, La Viña has its own Editorial Advisory Board comprised of AA members who besides having publishing expertise represent the AA Hispanic community from different parts of the US and Canada.

The editors meet regularly with the boards to discuss a wide range of practical issues facing the magazines and website.

The Grapevine Office

In June 1944, the Grapevine office consisted of a half dozen volunteers working out of an apartment. In

1945, Grapevine hired its first paid employee—a combination typist, clerk, secretary, and circulation supervisor—for \$40 a month, and paid its first editor in 1962. Today, the corporation has nine full time employees working on the twelfth floor of 475 Riverside Drive in New York City.

The AA Grapevine, Inc. Team

As chief executive of AA Grapevine, Inc., the executive editor/publisher has oversight responsibility for Grapevine and La Viña operations and reports directly to the Grapevine Corporate Board. Other members of the team include the controller, senior editor, the editor of La Viña, the web editor, office manager, junior accountant, production associate, customer relations coordinator and two part-time editorial assistants. Freelancers are used often.

Editorial

Like staff positions at the General Service Office, the editors are AA members, however, their jobs are more specialized and cannot be rotated. The editors represent the journals and website at regional forums and, when invited, at other events. The executive editor/publisher also serves on the Grapevine Corporate Board, and is a voting member of the General Service Conference, as are the senior and La Viña editors.

The Grapevine senior editor oversees all material for publication in Grapevine, selects the content of each issue and works with the art director in designing the issue. The editor also directs the website, future books, products and other items.

The editor of La Viña has responsibility for evaluating and selecting material for La Viña, and works with the art director in designing the issue. The La Viña editor organizes and inspires La Viña reps (RLVs.)

The web editor is responsible for the development of the website, web content, the digital archive, and special projects. In addition, the web editor selects, edits and publishes online weekly web-only stories and uploads the monthly Grapevine and bi-monthly La Viña magazines.

The production associate works with the editors and is responsible for coordinating the production schedule for the magazines, the books, ebooks, the wall calendar, pocket planner and any new products.

The part-time editorial assistants help the editors with their work.

Financial Management

The controller reports to the executive editor/publisher, manages all business aspects of the corporation, with the assistance of a junior accountant. The controller shares responsibility for budget and financial planning with the executive editor/publisher as well as the smooth running of all business operations, including oversight of production and customer service. This department also keeps track of all incoming and outgoing funds and prepares the financial reports required by the Corporate Board, the General Service Board, and the Grapevine's outside auditor. The controller also serves as the Assistant Treasurer on the Corporate Board.

Customer Service, Shipping, and Office Management

Other key personnel include the office manager, the customer relations coordinator, and production associate. The office manager assists the executive editor/publisher, acts as Assistant Secretary to the Board of Directors, liaises with AAWS and GVRs/RLVs, and coordinates daily office administration, as the primary office contact for representatives and AAWS. The office manager also processes registrations and complimentary material requests. A bilingual assistant is also available.

The in-house customer service coordinator is kept busy with subscriptions, special orders of books, audio

products, and other Grapevine items, along with being the contact for Intergroups and Central offices. The magazine and bulk orders are mostly distributed by outside mailing houses.

Contact Information

For matters concerning Grapevine corporate policy
Executive Editor/Publisher eep@agrapevine.org

Editorial content of specific Grapevine issues
Senior Editor senioreditor@agrapevine.org

Grapevine manuscript submissions and queries
general correspondence, and Calendar of Events
agrapevine.org/share

Editorial content of specific La Viña issues
La Viña Editor editorLV@agrapevine.org

La Viña manuscript submissions, art, Calendar of Events
agrapevine.org/español

Illustrations, cartoons, photos
agrapevine.org/share

GVR/RLV materials and GVR Coordinator questions
gvrca@agrapevine.org

Web content, website, digital archives and Grapevine email issues
webeditor@agrapevine.org

Reprint Permissions
controller@agrapevine.org

Subscriptions, orders, billing, customer service, and shipping
jeff@agrapevine.org

PART TWO: A Workbook for Grapevine and La Viña Representatives

How the GVR and RLV Programs Began

In the early years, it was mostly up to individual enthusiasts to carry the word about Grapevine, though there have been Grapevine representatives, or GVRs, at the group level since the early fifties. By 1977, there were 286 group GVRs, or one GVR for every 66 groups. In order to increase the ratio of GVRs to groups in the United States and Canada, that year the General Service Conference recommended: “that delegates be responsible for establishing area Grapevine committees, using the area and district structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group.”

Conference Actions in 1978, 1979, 1980, 1984, and 1987 have been passed to encourage delegates to work through the service structure. The 1985 Conference recommended that Grapevine committees work with Public Information and other service committees to increase the use of Grapevine as a tool for carrying the AA message.

When Grapevine began publishing La Viña in 1996, many GVRs took it upon themselves to let the Fellowship know about AA’s Spanish-language magazine. Soon the magazine had its own advocates, known as “representantes de La Viña,” or RLVs. Today, virtually all 93 delegate areas have Grapevine committees. The group GVR/RLV program always has room to grow. If you’d like to be of service, volunteer at your group and then register online. Click on Resources/GVR and then click on the link that says: Sign-up to be a Grapevine rep.

Note: See Appendix V for more information on Conference Advisory Actions.

Chapter Seven: Group Grapevine and La Viña Reps

GVRs and RLVs act as advocates for Grapevine and La Viña at the group and district level, alerting their groups to the use of the magazines as recovery tools. It is, many say, the best service job they've ever had. Originally GVRs focused on Grapevine, and RLVs on La Viña. But as awareness of the needs of Spanish-speaking AAs throughout the United States has grown, some reps have begun to work with both magazines and refer to themselves as GVR/RLVs.

What Do GVRs and RLVs Do?

Group GVRs and RLVs:

- make sure that copies of the magazines are available and displayed at meetings
- announce the arrival of each new issue
- encourage members to visit aagrapevine.org and aagrapevine.org/español
- share about articles in the magazines or the websites
- encourage individual subscriptions
- encourage the group to buy subscriptions in the group's name

In addition, a GVR or RLV may:

- stock Grapevine items on the literature table
- announce the publication of new items
- encourage members to submit articles and humor pieces
- initiate efforts to donate subscriptions to public and school libraries, hospitals, prisons, doctors' offices, churches, or to the place where the group meets
- suggest a Grapevine or La Viña topic meeting for the group
- encourage the use of Grapevine or La Viña subscriptions as gifts
- announce new features on the Grapevine website
- refer members to the Grapevine Story Archive for articles about AA history or discussion topics
- visit the Resources/GVR page on aagrapevine.org and the Esquina del RLV on aagrapevine.org/español for information and access to the GrapeNet Forum
- work with all other reps, including RLVs

The GVR may receive the magazine subscription on behalf of their group. Some GVRs also order back issues to give away. Making Grapevine and La Viña order subscription cards available or posting them on the bulletin board can be part of the job as well.

In Their Own Words – What It's Like

Getting involved in service with La Viña was a gift I received from my group. I began by distributing the complimentary copies I got and I had many headaches getting my fellow members interested in the magazine. Luckily, I was able to get some subscriptions and that's how my service began.

Today the magazine practically sells itself and people come to me asking for subscriptions. Two years ago, I began working at the district level. Previously we had no La Viña committee in my district. Today I am happy to be the district committee chairman for La Viña. I am about to finish my two-year period of service and am grateful to my fellow AAs for giving me the opportunity to serve. Because of their love and trust, I feel like a true leader in AA.

RLV, El Centro, California

Suggestions for Group Grapevine and La Viña Reps

Ways to Encourage the Group to Subscribe

Most GVRs and RLVs simply describe how other groups use Grapevine or La Viña to carry the message of AA. Groups may use the magazines in one or more of the following ways:

- give an issue to the newcomer
- use a topic from the magazine for a discussion meeting
- begin a meeting by reading an article
- give a magazine instead of a card at anniversaries
- share back issues
- use the magazines or Grapevine items as door prizes and raffles at special events

(Some groups say this adds a little suspense to the event and carries the message at the same time.)

In Their Own Words—One GVR Reports

We try to make a practice of giving first-timers one or two recent copies of Grapevine, and write several members' phone numbers inside. This gives them the Twelve Steps and Traditions, the Serenity Prayer, some humor, and a lot of valuable information, and it's a little more personal and a lot more interesting than a matchbook or business card.

“The New Issue Is Here!” Ways to Announce the New Issue

To announce the arrival of a new issue, some GVRs and RLVs describe the highlights of that month’s magazine or read a title or two from the table of contents. Others like to read:

- the opening paragraph of an article
- a quotation from the topic of discussion for La Viña
- a short letter or part of a letter
- a joke from At Wit’s End

How Reps Encourage Individuals to Subscribe

After describing the contents of the magazine, some GVR/RLVs mention the advantage of having an individual subscription: the convenience of having one’s own copy arrive in the mail every month and the assurance of having an instant meeting whenever needed. To make it easy, some reps describe how to subscribe on aagrapevine.org.

Additional Resources for GVRs and RLVs

Grapevine Forum on aagrapevine.org

Share your questions and/or ideas with other reps on the GrapeNet Forum. Connect, share, and request ideas about how to be an effective GVR or RLV. Go to the Resources/GVR tab on the website and look for the box on the right entitled GrapeNet Forum.

For RLVs, please visit aagrapevine.org/español and look for La Esquina del RLV (RLV Corner) on the top right corner of the web page, featuring:

- downloadable informational material
- RLV Handbook in Spanish
- RLV Registration Form
- ... and more

Downloadable Free Materials

Please refer to your Welcome Kit letter for samples of available downloadable complimentary materials.

Ideas for Setting Up Displays

This can be as simple as putting a stack of magazines and a few Grapevine items on a table or creating a poster highlighting one of the stories in the current issue. Contact the Grapevine office for complimentary materials listed in the Display Gallery under Tools & Resources on the main GVR page.

Important Contact Information

GVR/RLV Coordinator
Grapevine
475 Riverside Drive, Room 1264
New York, NY 10115
Telephone (212) 870-3018
Customer Service (212) 870-3404
Fax (212) 870-3301

From AA World Services

A General Service Conference-approved pamphlet about Grapevine and La Viña and their place in the AA service structure is available from the General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. The title of the pamphlet is "The AA Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print." In addition, *The A.A. Service Manual* contains a helpful chapter on Grapevine, and Bill W. gives a brief account of the magazine's history in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*.

(Note: Grapevine and the General Service Office are separate corporations, with their own separate records. So it's important that Grapevine receive GVR or RLV information directly to avoid delays.)

How Reps Answer Questions About Grapevine and La Viña Subscriptions

Group members with questions about their subscriptions often turn to the GVR or RLV. The GVR and RLV Handbooks, sent to every new representative, have the information needed to answer most of them. However, if problems persist, please urge the subscriber to contact Grapevine's bilingual customer service department at once.

For subscription questions or problems call or contact:

Phone: 1-800-631-6025 (U.S.)
1-800-640-8781 (español)
[Note: off hours phone message is in English]
1-818-487-2091 (International)

Fax: 1-818-487-4550

Email: customerservice@aagrapevine.org

Address: 475 Riverside Drive, 1264
New York, NY 10115

If You Are New: Getting Started

Register as a Grapevine or La Viña Representative:

After volunteering or getting elected for this important service by your group, please register with us so we can send you all the materials and information you'll need to fulfill your service commitment.

Please contact us via:

Fax: 212-870-3301

Email: gvr@agrapevine.org

Mail: GVR Coordinator, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1264, New York, NY 10115

Online: Click on the Resources/GVR tab on AAGrapevine.org and click on Victor E. box on the upper right for the form or click on the La Viña tab and then click on La Esquina del RLV in the upper right corner for the form in Spanish.

What You Will Receive

New GVRs and RLVs are sent a Welcome Kit which includes a welcome letter, a GVR or RLV handbook, and samples of all available complimentary materials. Grapevine area chairs and RLVs get a complimentary subscription for the term of their service.

Keeping Information Up-to-Date Is Crucial

We want to keep GVRs and RLVs up-to-date on what is happening at Grapevine, so it's extremely important that Grapevine be advised of any changes (rotations, resignations) of group and district GVRs/RLVs.

If Your Group Wants a GVR/RLV and Doesn't Have One

The procedure for acquiring a GVR or RLV is simple. First, submit the idea to your group at a business meeting, reading aloud the description of what a group GVR does in this workbook or in the AA Grapevine/La Viña pamphlet published by AAWS. GVRs and RLVs may be chosen from volunteers or through elections. Larger groups may ask the group's alternate GSR to serve as GVR/RLV. Most groups set a minimum sobriety requirement for GVRs and RLVs—say, six months or one year. Once the GVR/RLV is selected, follow the instructions for new reps above. The new GVR or RLV will receive an informational welcome kit—and your group will be on its way.

Why Become a Grapevine or La Viña Representative?

Why should an AA member take on the job of GVR/RLV? Service in AA is a time-honored way to maintain and enhance sobriety, and in that light, being a GVR or RLV is just one of many avenues available to AAs. But some of us think that representing Grapevine or La Viña offers a number of special advantages.

1. The GVR/RLV performs a service for AA members—informing them about the international monthly journal of Alcoholics Anonymous in print, audio and online.
2. The GVR/RLV performs a service for Grapevine and La Viña, linking the journals to members of the Fellowship who might not otherwise read them or even be aware of them.

3. The GVR/RLV is engaged in practical hands-on work. The GVR/RLV's basic job is to work at the group level, informing members, promoting the issues, and encouraging subscriptions or product sales.

4. The GVR/RLV is engaged in active Twelfth Step work. The magazines' readable style and up-to-date stories are particularly useful to beginners in AA.

5. The GVR/RLV becomes more aware of AA history. The magazine has been an important part of AA since 1944. Learning about the magazine is a good way to learn about AA history as well.

6. The GVR/RLV gets a chance to be involved in wider circles of service. In many areas, GVRs/RLVs meet with district representatives and area chairpersons to swap ideas, problems, and solutions. GVRs/RLVs often attend regional forums and area assemblies.

7. GVRs/RLVs are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Grapevine and La Viña— an advantage all by itself! Grapevine and La Viña are a mix of inspiration, personal stories, history, humor, diverse opinions, reporting, and good solid AA tools, all rolled into one resource. For over sixty-five years AA's magazine has helped thousands of AAs stay sober, carry the message, and keep connected to AA principles and practices.

If someone in your group is interested in becoming a GVR or RLV, see the forms on the following pages.



GVR Registration Form

Please send the person's name and address to the Grapevine office so you can receive your WELCOME KIT.

Name of GVR _____

Address _____

City/State/Province _____

Zip Code/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Phone Number _____ E-mail _____

Group Name _____

Area _____ District _____

Group Service Number _____

(Available from your group's General Service Rep.)

Group Location _____

Name of previous GVR _____

Please mail to GVR Coordinator, 475 Riverside Dr., Ste. 1264, New York, NY 10115 or fax to 212-870-3301. You may also register on-line at www.aagrapevine.org by going to the Resources/GVR tab on the home page. Click on the "Sign up to be a Grapevine Rep." link.



¿Por qué ser un representante de La Viña?

¿Por qué debería un miembro de AA asumir la tarea de RLV? Hacer servicio en AA es una forma consagrada para mantener y mejorar la sobriedad. Servir como RLV es sólo uno de los muchos caminos disponibles para los AA. Algunos de nosotros pensamos que representar a La Viña ofrece una serie de ventajas especiales.

1. El RLV realiza un servicio para los miembros de AA – los informa acerca de la revista internacional de Alcohólicos Anónimos – impresa, en audio y por el internet.
2. El RLV realiza un servicio para La Viña, uniendo a la revista con los miembros de la comunidad que de otro modo no podrían leerla ni ser consciente de ella.
3. El RLV está involucrado en un trabajo práctico y directo. El trabajo básico de los RLVs es trabajar al nivel de grupo informando a los miembros, promocionando los temas, y fomentando las suscripciones y las ventas de productos.
4. El RLV trabaja activamente el Paso Doce. Las historias de La Viña, actuales y diversas, son particularmente útiles para aquellos que son nuevos en AA.
5. El RLV se vuelve más consciente de la historia de AA. El Grapevine ha sido una parte importante de AA desde 1944. La Viña desde 1996 es el reflejo de la evolución y recuperación de la comunidad hispana en AA. Al informarse acerca de la revista también se aprende de la historia de AA.
6. El RLV tiene la oportunidad de ampliar su círculo de servicio. En muchas áreas, los RLVs se reúnen con representantes del distrito y coordinadores del área para intercambiar ideas, problemas y soluciones. Los RLVs también asisten frecuentemente a foros regionales y asambleas de área.
7. Se le recomienda a los RLVs que se familiaricen con La Viña – ¡una ventaja en sí misma! La Viña es una mezcla de inspiración, historia, humor, relatos personales, diversas opiniones, informes y buenas herramientas para tener éxito en el programa de AA – todo esto en un solo recurso. Durante estos diecisiete años La Viña ha ayudado a miles de miembros de AA a permanecer sobrios, llevar el mensaje, y mantenerse conectados a los principios y las prácticas de AA.

Si alguien en su grupo está interesado en convertirse en un RLV, por favor llene el formulario adjunto o envíe un email a gvrc@aagrapevine.org.

AAGRAPEVINE, Inc.

Formulario para registrar al RLV

Por favor envíe el nombre y la dirección de la persona interesada a la oficina del Grapevine para que pueda recibir su kit de bienvenida.

Nombre de RLV _____

Dirección _____

Ciudad / Estado / Provincia

Código Postal / Código Postal _____ País _____

Número de teléfono _____ Correo electrónico _____

Nombre del grupo _____

Área _____ Distrito _____

Número de servicio del Grupo _____
(Obtégalo del representante de servicio de su grupo)

Ubicación del grupo _____

Nombre del RLV anterior _____

Por favor enviar a: Coordinador de RLV, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1264, New York, NY 10115 o por fax al 212-870-3301. También usted puede registrarse en nuestra página Internet www.aagrapevine.org/español. Haga clic en el enlace "Formulario para registrarse".

Chapter Eight: District Reps and Area Chairs

District Grapevine and La Viña reps and area chairs are active parts of AA's general service structure. Here is an overview of the services they provide.

The District GVR/RLV

What District GVRs/RLVs Do

The district GVR and/or RLV serves as the link between group GVRs/RLVs and the area service structure. The district representative also has the practical goal of encouraging every group to have a Grapevine and/or La Viña rep.

District Reps:

- Keep an up-to-date list of group GVRs/RLVs in the district
- Encourage groups in the district to elect or appoint a GVR/RLV via phone, email, mail, or personal visits
- Chair the district Grapevine/La Viña committee
- Stay in contact with all GVRs/RLVs in the district and share ideas with them
- Hold meetings for GVRs/RLVs in the district
- Make sure that GVRs/RLVs have magazine flyers and order forms
- Keep the area Grapevine/La Viña chair up to date on progress in the district
- Send the new GVR's/RLV's name, address, and group to the Grapevine office, if the rep hasn't already done so. (See aagrapevine.org. Click on Resources/GVR and click on the Register for Service link.)

In keeping with Tradition Four, it is up to the district to decide how to organize the district Grapevine committee and what to call it. Some districts have separate committees, one for Grapevine and another for La Viña. Others have a single GVR/RLV district committee.

Suggestions from District GVRs and RLVs

Suggestions When Visiting Groups

Some district Grapevine and La Viña reps visit groups, usually after contacting the group secretary or chair. Here are some suggestions of what to do on such a visit.

When you get to an AA meeting, set up a display of the magazine and other Grapevine/La Viña items. At the end of the meeting, give a short talk about the history of Grapevine or La Viña, describe the magazines and website, and explain how Grapevine or La Viña can be used for Twelfth-Stepping.

Then get to the main purpose of the visit—see to it that the group is informed about the many advantages of having a group GV/RLV. Ensure that the group has a supply of magazines and

other tools for recovery, and knows about aagrapevine.org. Encourage registration with the Grapevine office, and highlight opportunities for service that strengthen the group's connection with the service structure of AA.

Organize Special Grapevine Events

Many district GVR/RLV committees set up Grapevine and La Viña displays at district meetings and make sure the magazines are included in district workshops or Share-a-Days, monthly intergroup speakers' meetings, and yearly banquets. These events are described in the following chapter.

Hold Meetings for Group GVRs and RLVs

Most committees meet at regularly scheduled district meetings. To welcome new GVRs/RLVs, one district chair had her committee make "Welcome" kits with information about the GVR's/RLV's duties, a registration form (with a stamped and addressed envelope) to send to the Grapevine office, and subscription forms. Another district GVR had the Grapevine committee make up folders of information about the magazine and websites and popular Grapevine postcards to give to group GVRs at the monthly general service meeting.

One district GVR regularly holds informal, idea-swapping brunches at a local restaurant for the twenty-five GVRs in his district.

The Area AA Grapevine Chairperson

The area Grapevine chairperson is a part of the AA service structure. In most areas, the job is similar to that of the chairperson of any other standing committee. Area chairs may be elected or appointed, depending on the area's practice. In some areas, the area Grapevine chair is drawn from the existing service structure: the outgoing delegate automatically becomes the area Grapevine chairperson, for example, or another officer, such as the alternate delegate, doubles as the area chairperson. Area autonomy prevails as to whether chairpersons have a vote at the area assembly.

In areas that are geographically large, area chairpersons may have co-chairs to cover the territory.

The Area Grapevine and La Viña Chair's Basic Duties

Once district GVRs/RLVs are in place and an area Grapevine committee has been established, the area chair:

- Creates enthusiasm for Grapevine and La Viña in the area by sharing the Grapevine news with area reps
- Holds Grapevine/La Viña committee meetings
- Meets with district GVRs/RLVs to exchange ideas on how to encourage groups to elect Reps and how to help them. (See the GrapeNet Forum on aagrapevine.org for some good ideas.)
- Keeps an ongoing list of GVRs/RLVs and keeps the Grapevine office up-to-date on their addresses
- Leads Grapevine or La Viña workshops or holds other special events
- Makes sure that Grapevine and La Viña are included in the planning of workshops and presentations for area events
- Sets up displays, sells subscriptions, keeps a supply of Grapevine items on hand for sale

Suggestions from an Area Grapevine Chair

One Area Grapevine chairperson helped to "restart" her Area's Grapevine Committee when she had just a few months of sobriety and was a newly elected Grapevine rep. She and a few other local GVRs got together to form a local Grapevine committee.

The result was the annual Field Day. AA's service committee's go out "into the field" to spread AA's message to reach the suffering alcoholic. Grapevine goes into the field with those other committees, whether it's into correctional institutions, treatment centers, hospitals, health fairs, doctor's offices, or the general public. Even the Archives committee holds a special place for Grapevines, as so much of our history is contained in its pages. So, the Field Day event is hosted by the Grapevine committee—but all of the other local standing committees are encouraged to bring their display boards and pamphlets and have a chance to give short presentations about their committees and how they use (or could be using) Grapevine. A Grapevine committee is never a stand-alone committee—for it to be effective it has to cooperate with the other standing committees to share Grapevines and ideas about where Grapevine is needed.

"We have the greatest opportunity to reach all GSRs in the state at the fall assembly, so the first thing we do is have an eye-catching Grapevine and La Viña booth. But the most important thing is the distribution of information by the Grapevine committee to all GSRs in their district.

"We're each allowed five minutes to promote the spirit and purpose of Grapevine and La Viña. There will be follow-ups at future GSR meetings, to continue the interest and to get reading the magazines to become a good AA habit."

Spread the Word

Use these regularly updated communications and tools to keep the Fellowship informed:

Grapevine News

Grapevine News is an essential monthly communication from AA Grapevine, Inc. It's available online to anyone on the top left corner of the Resources/GVR page on AAGrapevine.org.

Noticias desde La Viña

Noticias desde La Viña is an essential bi-monthly communication from AA Grapevine, Inc. specifically about La Viña and Spanish-language products. It's available online to anyone on the top right corner of the La Viña page on AAGrapevine.org.

Emails

AA Grapevine, Inc. also publishes a monthly update email about the latest issue, products and offers, as well as the Grapevine Quote, a daily inspirational passage taken from members' stories. Pass it on by forwarding to friends in the Fellowship.

Flyers: Share Them With Your Area

- Become a Grapevine Rep Flyer
- Grapevine Today/La Viña Hoy
- Support Your Grapevine Postcard
- Become a RLV Flyer
- The Twelve Ways of Using La Viña

If You Are New: Getting Started

All GVRs/RLVs

Send in your name, address, the district and area numbers and the district email address, if there is one. Also send in the name of the former district GVR/RLV. Or register online at www.aagrapevine.org. Many areas send the names and addresses of all area officers—including the Grapevine area chairperson—on the form that GSO provides. There may be a delay in Grapevine's receiving this information, so please register directly with the Grapevine office so that you receive materials promptly.

What You Will Receive

All Reps will receive all the materials listed on the Grapevine/La Viña Complimentary Materials Form (see next pages), along with a monthly letter from the executive editor to keep them up to date on Grapevine events.

"The Grapevine is a monthly vision of world-wide thought, feeling, and activity of our whole Fellowship."

— Bill W.

AA Grapevine Complimentary Materials Form

Return to:

AA Grapevine, Inc.

475 Riverside Dr., Suite 1264, New York, NY 10115

Attn: GVR Coordinator Or Email: GVRC@aagrapevine.org

.....Or Fax: 212-870-3301.....

A Guide To The AA Grapevine - Story of the International Journals of AA and a workbook for Grapevine and La Viña Representatives - **Downloadable at www.aagrapevine.org**

Qty Items Requested

- ___ AA Grapevine Catalogue or Price List **ZZCATALOG**
- ___ Why Should I Be an AA Grapevine Representative? GVR Registration form **ZZGVFORM**
- ___ Guidelines for Contributing to the AA Grapevine/Editorial Policy **ZZGUIDELINES**
- ___ AA Grapevine Complimentary Materials Form **ZZGVCOMPATERIALFORM**
- ___ GV promotional cards *(if available)* **ZZPROMOCARDS**
- ___ GV Today/La Viña Hoy Flyer *(if available)* **ZZGVLVFLYER**
- ___ AA Grapevine By-The-Month Order Form **ZZBYTHEMONTHFORMS**
- ___ Assorted Package of 30 Grapevine Back Issues Order Form **ZZBACKISSUES30FLYER**
- ___ AA Grapevine Subscription Card/Gift Subscription Card **ZZGVSUBCARD**
- ___ AA Grapevine Subscription Pads/Gift Subscription (packs of 50) **ZZGVSUBPAD50**
- ___ La Viña Subscription Card/Gift Subscription Card **ZZLVSUBCARD**

Date Needed _____

Send to _____

Street or P.O. Box _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip Code _____

T e l e p h o n e () E - M a i l _ _ _ _ _

Visit our website at: aagrapevine.org

Revised: 01.2013

RLV COMP FORM

Chapter Nine: Special GVR and RLV Activities and Events

GVRs and RLVs have developed a number of innovative ways to spread the word about Grapevine and La Viña and to create enthusiasm for using them to carry the message of AA. Here is a sample—all based on actual GVR/RLV activities, which can be adapted for either magazine. We hope you'll find a few of them useful to your district, area, or group.

Working With Your Groups

Start a Grapevine or La Viña Meeting or a Meeting Based on *The Language of the Heart*

Groups report that there are many advantages to having discussion meetings based on Grapevine or La Viña, or on the stories included in the ebooks, books and CDs. The magazines keep the discussion centered on solid AA sharing and the principles of AA. Says one member: “The most attractive thing about these meetings is that they use a theme or idea of someone outside the group, which is like having a new visitor at every meeting.”

Formats vary

Many groups pass the magazine around and members take turns reading a story before sharing. Others use a quote, the theme of a special section, or one of the questions in the Discussion Topics section of the magazine as a springboard for sharing. Some listen to an audio story and talk about that. At *Language of the Heart* meetings, the chair often reads a few paragraphs out of the book, which members reflect on, or the group might read an entire article out loud.

Spread the Word in Local AA Newsletters or Websites

Newsletters—either general AA newsletters or Grapevine ones—are a great way to get the word out about Grapevine and La Viña. One, for example, runs a “Grapevine Corner” in every issue. Area websites have opened up even more ways to carry the message to the Fellowship.

What Can Go in a Newsletter or an Area Website?

GVRs and RLVs say they get copy from various sources:

- Stories from current issues, the Grapevine website, Grapevine books and pamphlets, and the Grapevine Story Archive
- Announcements of upcoming local Grapevine and La Viña events
- “Coming Attractions” from each issue
- News about the Grapevine website and new Grapevine items
- Brief excerpts of Grapevine history
- Discussion topics
- Grapevine Daily Quote
- Reprints of useful literature like the Traditions Checklist
- Articles by GVRs, RLVs, and the area chair

Some newsletters reproduce Grapevine and La Viña subscription forms.

Encourage Groups to Give Subscriptions to Those in Need

Donating gift subscriptions is often the most effective way to reach AAs and potential AAs in institutions. Here are some institutions that might be grateful to get them:

- Jails, police departments, prisons, holding facilities, juvenile correctional programs
- Libraries: public and private, middle school and high school, college, university, vocational school
- Counselors' offices in schools
- Community centers
- Hospitals, clinics, VA hospitals
- Doctors' and dentists' offices
- Detox units, treatment and rehabilitation facilities
- Senior citizen centers and residences
- Youth shelters
- Homeless shelters and soup kitchens
- Churches, synagogues, retreat centers

There may be a place right in your neighborhood in need of an AA meeting in print. A sample letter that could be sent to such an institution can be found below. In many areas, district and area Grapevine committee members work together and coordinate campaigns; they are eager to work with new GVRs and share their experience.

Sample Letter from your Group to Libraries and Other Institutions

Dear Ms. or Sir:

Enclosed you will find recent issues of AA Grapevine, the monthly international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous, and La Viña, AA's Spanish-language magazine. These magazines emphasize first-person accounts of AA experiences with alcoholism, recovery, and service. Like AA meetings themselves, Grapevine and La Viña are tools to help the recovering alcoholic stay sober.

We hope that after you've reviewed the magazines, you will want to have them available for your readers. If this is the case, an AA member or group will be happy to sponsor a subscription for you, making it possible to add the magazines to your periodicals collection at no cost to you. If you decide you'd like to receive Grapevine or La Viña, please let us know and we'll enter a subscription in your name. The magazine will begin arriving in four to six weeks.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pass It On: Share Back Issues

Because most of the stories in Grapevine and La Viña are timeless, giving away back issues can be another effective and economical way to carry the message—one which the Grapevine Committee encouraged at the 1990 General Service Conference:

In an effort to help area treatment facilities, correctional facilities, public information, and cooperation with the professional community committees carry the AA message, the committee suggested that when available the Grapevine periodically distribute back issues through the delegate for the use of these committees.

Today, many groups and committees purchase packs of back issues from Grapevine or La Viña for use in prisons. Others collect back issues to use as sample copies for new members, hospitals, institutions, and the military. In another area, GVRs and RLVs put back issues in reading rooms of the mens' and womens' prisons, in city and county jails, treatment clinics, and VA hospitals.

Work with Other AA Service Committees

A 1985 Conference Action recommended that "Grapevine committees seek ways to work with Public Information, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Correctional Facilities, Treatment Facilities, and other service committees, with the aim of increasing the use of the Grapevine as a tool in carrying the message."

These committees can be terrific resources, as they are familiar with the local institutions that need AA support and with the people one needs to contact to donate subscriptions or back issues. In turn, GVRs and RLVs have been able to provide committees with information about the magazines and website and to suggest ways they can be used in Twelfth Step work.

Here are a few of the projects that Grapevine and other service committees have developed by working together:

Treatment Facilities Committees

AA Grapevine, Inc. and treatment facilities committees have worked together in several areas to provide Grapevine and La Viña subscriptions to alcoholics newly discharged from treatment.

Public Information Committees (PI)

Members of the Grapevine and PI committees in one area set up programs encouraging groups to contact high schools and to offer one-year subscriptions of the magazines and website. (See sample letter for libraries.)

Hospitals and Institutions Committees (H & I)

One Grapevine committee distributed back issues to an emergency room in a local hospital after contacting each hospital by phone to explain the purpose of the project, with the help of H & I committee members.

Correctional Facilities Committees (CF)

In addition to helping GVRs and RLVs with campaigns to send Grapevine and La Viña subscriptions to people in correctional programs, several committees have held dances. They collect AA literature as an admission fee, and donate it to area and intergroup correctional facilities committees, who then pass it along to jails and prisons. The donated literature always includes a large number of Grapevine and La Viña back issues.

Central Offices or Intergroups

Occasionally, Grapevine and literature committees are invited to participate in the monthly meetings and quarterly booking exchanges at their local intergroup.

Include Grapevine and La Viña at AA Events

As part of the AA service structure, the magazines and website do need to be represented at area and district general service events. Regional or state gatherings, conventions, roundups, all-city or all-state meetings, district and area assemblies, and group or state anniversary celebrations are excellent places to let the Fellowship know about the magazines as well.

Ways to Highlight Grapevine and La Viña at Events

Create Displays and Posters

Setting up Grapevine and La Viña tables and displays is a good place to start. Stocked with current and back issues of the magazines, books, the website aagrapevine.org and other Grapevine items, the displays introduce members to a full array of Grapevine publications. Posters about the current issue or tied to the theme of the event bring the magazines to the immediate attention of members. See aagrapevine.org/gvr, that shows many creative ideas for displays and events related to Grapevine and La Viña magazines.

Most displays also contain the following handouts and give-aways:

- Subscription cards
- Back issues
- Guidelines for contributing stories
- Grapevine Today/La Viña Hoy
- Informational postcards
- Grapevine catalogue

Quick Tip For Displays

Highlights of Grapevine or La Viña History

One Grapevine chair had a set of magazines dating from 1956 bound and added to a traveling Grapevine display to give people a sense of what early Grapevines were like.

Conference Approval

Another chair put a poster listing in large type all the General Service Conference recommendations and Advisory Actions concerning Grapevine. It was a fast, graphic way to present significant Grapevine and La Viña history.

Special Topics Kits

Still another rep wrapped groups of Grapevine or La Viña items addressing special themes in plastic bags. A package for the home group, for instance, contained the Slogans, the Serenity Prayer, a back issue,

and the book *Into Action*. A special bag for beginners contained a current issue, a copy of *Beginners' Book*, and the Preamble.

For more ideas, check out Grapevine area displays at: www.aagrapevine.org/display-gallery

Workshops

AA Grapevine and La Viña workshops can be held at almost any AA event or celebration. They are almost always on the agenda at regional forums, and many areas and districts now make the magazines one of the topics to be discussed at service workshops, inviting someone knowledgeable about Grapevine to give a presentation.

Formats for workshops vary. Here is a short list followed by 2 examples:

- General introduction to the magazine(s)
- aagrapevine.org — navigating the website
- La Viña or Grapevine writing workshop
- Record your story workshop

An Introduction to the Magazine

The moderator opens the workshop with an introduction to one or both of the magazines, highlighting the circulation of the magazines, the fact that they are AA's international journals, the types of stories they contain, and how groups use them. The editorial Statement of Purpose can be read to close the presentation. Then, to get the discussion rolling, the moderator may ask a few questions:

- How has Grapevine or La Viña helped your sobriety?
- Do Grapevine and La Viña mirror AA as a whole?
- What kinds of articles are most useful to you? Least useful? What do you read first?
- What are your favorite departments of Grapevine or La Viña?
- Have you ever wanted to write an article for one of the magazines? Well, maybe the time has come!

How do you go about it?

- What can you do to let AAs in your area know about La Viña?

Attracting New GVRs/RLVs: An All-Day Workshop

Breaking the Ice. Information packets put together from complimentary material sent by the Grapevine office were handed out at one event by greeters as participants arrived. The packets included a special cartoon drawn up by a local member for a caption contest; winners were awarded Grapevine subscriptions for their efforts.

Spotlight on Service. *The workshop opened with our chairperson talking about what Grapevine meant to her and how she had gotten involved with this form of service work. Then our area chairperson spent a few minutes talking about his job and answering questions from the audience.*

Skits and Panels. *At periodic intervals throughout the workshop, enthusiastic members acted out Grapevine skits. There was also a panel discussion on certain aspects of the magazine: humor, article selection and publication, history. Questions from the audience were fielded by the panel. Grapevine audios and other related items were covered in another presentation.*

We're Not a Glum Lot. A workshop can be part of a fun celebration.

How the Grapevine Office Can Help

Anyone needing help or suggestions in setting up a Grapevine or La Viña workshop or other Grapevine event may write or email gvrca@agrapevine.org. A staff member will be happy to make suggestions. Grapevine and La Viña staff members are also available as speakers for AA events, whether they are strictly Grapevine events or other AA functions. Staff members can give presentations on Grapevine or La Viña, or tell their AA stories. It is understood that when such invitations are extended, the staff person's expenses are paid by the committee that issued the invitation.

Please contact the GVR/RLV Coordinator

Telephone: 212-870-3018

Email: gvrca@agrapevine.org

Celebrating Grapevine and La Viña with Special Events

Grape-A-Thons

A Grape-A-Thon is a day-long series of discussion meetings on the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, group problems, spirituality, and other topics of concern to AAs based on articles from Grapevine. The idea for the marathon came from an area chair in Colorado. The first Grape-A-Thon took place in Denver, Colorado, on January 4, 1986.

Grapevine or La Viña Week

One event culminated in a Grapevine Roundup featuring an open speakers meeting, a dance, a hayride, a bonfire, and a barbecue, with free Grapevines for all and a prize of a year's subscription for the best-dressed cowpoke and cowgirl. To date, a La Viña Week has not been attempted, but the best dressed gaucho and gaucha can also win a year's subscription.

Grapevine and La Viña Awareness Month

An anniversary event was launched when an area assembly voted to designate June as "Grapevine Month" and the idea has since been tried in other areas. La Viña celebrates its anniversary during the month of July. Throughout the month, special efforts were made to encourage subscriptions and to encourage groups to elect a rep if they didn't have one. Group officers were asked to help increase awareness of the magazine.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

How AA Grapevine Began

“Go to It!”

In the spring of 1944, six members of AA—four women and two men—got together in an apartment in New York City and considered the idea of publishing a local AA newsletter. A newsletter was exactly what was needed in those early days of AA, when the Fellowship was only nine years old and still finding its way. There was plenty of news to report. There had been a dramatic increase in membership from 2000 to 8000 after Jack Alexander’s article about AA appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1941. New groups were being formed, new meeting formats were being tried out, and new ways of twelfth-stepping were being debated.

AAs were talking about how to practice the Steps (the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* hadn’t been written yet), groups were struggling to stay in existence, and recovering drunks were struggling to stay sober.

What was needed, the six decided, was a way to open up lines of communication among AA’s far-flung membership. As one of the original editorial staff later recalled, “It’s hard to remember that in 1944 AAs themselves had little opportunity of communicating with each other outside of their own small groups; that an AA group in Arkansas had little idea of how an AA group in Ohio or New Jersey conducted its meetings; that many AA groups were so small and anonymous they couldn’t be found by traveling AAs who had not taken the precaution of getting names and addresses from the Central Office [now called the General Service Office]; that there were no AA publications beyond the Big Book and one or two pamphlets.”

Inspired by the local AA newsletters that had sprung up across the country, particularly one put out by the Cleveland Group in Ohio, the editors conceived a newsletter that would cover the activities of AA groups in the New York metropolitan area. The publication would clear up what some felt was “a lack of understanding” among groups, and bring news of the Fellowship to AA men and women serving in the armed forces.

The editors wanted the go-ahead from AA co-founder Bill W. So one day in April 1944, one editor, Lois K., made her way to Bill and Lois’s home in Bedford Hills, New York.

“Bill,” she asked, “how about a magazine for the groups around New York?” As the story goes, Bill, who was sprawled out in front of his cobblestone fireplace, turned to face her: “What, exactly, is on your mind, Sister Lois?”

“Harmony between groups,” explained Lois, “through knowledge and understanding.”

“Go to it,” he told her, with characteristic enthusiasm, “and blessings on you!”

The First Issue

The six volunteers (whom Bill affectionately dubbed the “six ink-stained wretches”) worked long hours and hard. On the evening of May 22, 1944, they met in a small Manhattan apartment to inspect Volume 1, Number 1 of the new eight-page, large format newsletter. It was called the Grapevine and cost a total of \$187.10 to design, print, and mail. Of the 1,200 copies printed, many were sent free of charge to AAs

in the U.S. and Canadian armed forces, and to each of the approximately 300 groups registered with the Central Office. The first issue claimed 165 subscribers. Sixteen months later, that number had climbed to 3,500.

At the heart of the early Grapevines, then as now, were first-person stories. For several years, these took the form of informal letters and commissioned articles. There were also news and notes on current happenings at the Central Office.

Because World War II was still very much in progress, an entire page was devoted to the letters received from AA servicemen and women called “Mail Call for All AAs in the Armed Forces.” Another feature, “Along the Metropolitan Circuit,” described meetings in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the suburbs in New Jersey and New York. The explosion of new meetings—from Alaska to Arkansas, from Ireland to Australia—was reported with particular excitement: “70 New Groups in Two Months!” read the headlines, or “33 New Groups Added in Less than a Month.”

In an effort to serve the rising number of AA groups, another section, entitled “Do You Know ...,” offered advice for both groups and newly sober individuals. Articles like “How to Use the Closed Meeting,” the “AA Telephone Technique,” and “How to Spot the Danger Signals” passed on the shared experience of the early members. Monthly columns, with titles like “Time on Your Hands” and “The Pleasures of Reading,” suggested what to do with the hours readers once spent drinking. Also mindful of the dangers of complacency, a writer in the September 1944 issue urged that special groups be formed for AA’s “older members”—old-timers who had been sober one or two months!

Articles by AAs and Others

In addition to AA news, there was an eclectic mix of pieces written expressly for Grapevine by non-AA writers. These included such literary lights as journalist Fulton Oursler, humorist S. J. Perelman, novelist Charles Jackson, and essayist Philip Wylie.

Articles by Jack Alexander, the Reverend Samuel Shoemaker, Sister Ignatia, Dr. Harry Tiebout, Bernard Smith, Lois W., and other friends of the Fellowship were published as well.

There were also articles on alcoholism education and research, book reviews of everything from murder mysteries to Hindu psychology, excerpts from published books, reprints from magazines and newspapers, notices of radio programs covering alcoholism or AA, and articles by relatives of AA members relating what AA meant to them. Cartoons and drawings made their appearance in the third issue. A humor column—“Barleycorn”—was added in the second year. No poetry was published (though plenty was received!); the editors confessed to “an incurable allergy” to it. A series of editorials on the Steps began in the sixth issue and ran for several years.

Burning Issues: Women, Old-Timers, and Cross-Addiction

The early Grapevines also discussed such things as the place of women in AA, problems of old-timers (those with a month or more!), returning veterans, and whether or not to applaud a speaker. Issues that still concern contemporary AAs were often addressed—for example, cross-addiction. The third issue carried a letter requesting a special “hophead’s corner” for alcoholics also recovering from narcotics addiction.

There were subsequent articles on the “sleeping pill menace” and what to do about pill problems when twelfth-stepping. Bill’s article, “Those Goof Balls,” was published in the November 1945 issue.

Autonomy, Diversity, and Our Primary Purpose

By the fourth issue, the magazine began printing this description of itself under the masthead:

“A Monthly Journal devoted to those seeking further knowledge on the problem of alcoholism, in the hope that it may prove a unifying bond to all alcoholics everywhere. Individual opinions expressed here are not, necessarily, those of AA as a whole.”

Grapevine was in fact appealing to “alcoholics everywhere,” and it quickly caught on around the United States. In 1945, the membership was asked by the Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation (now the General Service Board of AA) whether Grapevine should become the national magazine of AA, the answer was a resounding “yes.”

Grapevine reached another important milestone when Bill and the trustees began to discuss what its formal relationship to the groups and the General Service Board should be. As Bill imagined it, the magazine would be a nonprofit corporation, connected to the Alcoholic Foundation but financially self-supporting and editorially independent. Laying out some basic tenets of how the magazine should operate in a March 1946 letter to the lawyer who was drafting the papers of incorporation, Bill stressed the importance of the Grapevine’s independence and suggested the following:

- Grapevine should be the voice of the Fellowship;
- the trustees of Grapevine should be able to suggest and advise—but not command;
- no individual or single group should ever dominate the magazine; and
- Grapevine should print articles expressing the widest differences of opinion on all AA topics.

Bill also suggested that Grapevine should not publish any pieces on politics or religion, should not carry outside advertising, and should not engage in propaganda concerning outside causes. In other words, the primary purpose of the magazine—like that of individual members—was to carry the AA message to alcoholics and to practice the AA principles in all its affairs. With this in mind, Grapevine was incorporated as one of two publishing divisions of the Alcoholic Foundation in 1946, and was reincorporated in 1971 as one of the two operating arms of the General Service Board.

The spirit of these guidelines—autonomy, diversity, and our primary purpose—continues to be central to Grapevine to this day. After the 2009 redesign a special section on diversity appeared in Grapevine’s pages in October 2009, while stories of recovery from alcoholism were published from the gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual community in February 2011.

Bill W.’s Role

Officially, Bill was the Grapevine’s “senior editorial advisor.” Unofficially, he was its mentor, spiritual guide, chief booster—and a major contributor. Early on, Bill saw in Grapevine a way to communicate effectively and rapidly with the Fellowship as a whole. Over the years, he wrote more than 150 articles for the magazine, setting forth his hopes, fears, and practical ideas about the Fellowship. In the forties, as AA struggled to find its place in the larger society, Grapevine became an important source of information on the vital issues of anonymity, membership, professionalism, public relations, and singleness of purpose.

As AA groups tried to clarify the basic principles that would guide them, Bill W. hammered out his thoughts in the pages of Grapevine.

He recognized the necessity to preserve the “powerful unity” of AA in the face of “ever pressing questions of leadership, money, and authority.” In subsequent articles, Bill examined individual Traditions—for example, the principles behind the “safe use of money” in the Fellowship (Tradition Seven), good public relations policy (Tradition Eleven), and the practical and spiritual aspects of anonymity (Tradition Twelve).

The Traditions and the Preamble

In August 1945, in response to these pressing questions, Bill began writing a series of Grapevine articles reflecting on group experience. Then in the April 1946 issue, he wrote the “Twelve Suggested Points for AA Tradition,” laying out the framework of what would become the Traditions. In subsequent issues, he wrote more than thirty additional articles about the Traditions before 1952, when he published the series of essays in the Grapevine now found in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

As interest grew in the new Fellowship, the Grapevine editors decided to write a brief definition to make the nature of the Fellowship clear to both members and to nonalcoholics. Thus, the AA Preamble—setting forth in two concise paragraphs what AA is and is not—made its first appearance in the June 1947 issue. It was written by the first editor of Grapevine, using portions of the Foreword to the first edition of the Big Book. The Preamble was quickly adopted, and today it is an integral part of the format of many AA meetings.

(For more on the history of the Preamble and Traditions, see Appendix II.)

The Jellinek Chart and the National Council

AAs were also able to make a valuable contribution to science through the Grapevine, when a questionnaire identifying different phases of alcoholism was published in the April 1945 issue. Over one hundred readers responded. Eager to help alcoholics recognize early warning signs of the disease and spare them years of its excruciating effects, Grapevine editors asked E.M. Jellinek, head of the Yale School of Alcohol Studies and one of AA’s most enduring friends, to analyze the data. It proved to be the springboard for his famous studies of the phases of alcoholism and the chart that has helped scores of professionals better understand and diagnose the disease.

The alliance between Dr. Jellinek and one of the Grapevine editors (Marty M., one of the original ink-stained wretches) resulted in the formation of a national health organization on alcoholism—the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism, which Grapevine reported in 1945. Dedicated to educating the public and professionals about alcoholism in a way that AA, adhering to its Traditions of anonymity and attraction, does not, the Committee, now known as the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, has made tremendous strides against the disease of alcoholism, engaging in activities such as public education, research, and affiliation with medical and other resources.

A New Look

In 1948, Grapevine changed its format from a newsletter to its present digest size. As a digest, the magazine was so anonymous that for several years it didn’t even print its title on the cover: only the date of the issue appeared, superimposed on a cluster of grapes.

As Grapevine gained readers, it gained contributors as well, and it was able to trust its pages more and more to the voices of recovering alcoholics. It gradually abandoned book reviews and reprints and

general-interest articles, and reduced the number of articles written by nonalcoholics.

In March 2009 Grapevine and La Viña premiered a new look designed by a professional designer and member whose creativity gave the journals a fresh and relevant feel.

AA History in the Making

Grapevine was also the source of many of the stories and articles that have been useful to the Fellowship over the years. More than a dozen stories in the second, third, and fourth editions of the Big Book were first published in Grapevine, as were the stories in *AA in Prison: Inmate to Inmate* and many quotations in *As Bill Sees It*. It has provided articles for several AA pamphlets including “Problems Other Than Alcohol” and the Traditions Checklist. Its December 1950 article, “Leadership in AA: Ever a Vital Need,” became the core of the essay on Concept IX: “Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety.”

Later issues of Grapevine reported on the birth of the General Service Structure and the growth of the Fellowship worldwide. In the December 1950 issue, Bill and Dr. Bob issued a call for their successors (as it happened, in the same issue that contained the sad tidings of Dr. Bob’s death). They suggested that the AA membership as a whole should take over the leadership of the Fellowship through a General Service Conference.

In effect, groups should assume responsibility for the management and continuity of the Fellowship, by sending representatives to an annual Conference to meet with the trustees and staff of AAWS and Grapevine. Over the next five years, while experimental Conferences were held, Grapevine kept AAs up to date on their progress. After 1955, when the Conference became the permanent embodiment of AA service, the magazine began reporting on each annual Conference. And in May, June, and July 1955, the magazine published three essays that would eventually comprise the original version of the history section of *The AA Service Manual*. The controversial plan to increase the ratio of alcoholics to nonalcoholics on the General Service Board of Trustees was discussed in the magazine in 1966, and voted into being that year by the 16th Conference.

Grapevine has tracked important developments at AA World Services ever since, reporting on the publication of the Third and Fourth editions of the Big Book, World Service Meetings, and the development of AA service centers in countries around the world.

The magazine has also celebrated special AA occasions, reporting on conventions. In the case of AA’s 25th anniversary, Grapevine published *AA Today*, an anthology of articles by AAs and such prominent supporters as Reinhold Niebuhr, Aldous Huxley, and Carl Jung.

The history of Grapevine is the history of the growth of Alcoholics Anonymous—from its early struggles for survival to the worldwide Fellowship it is today, undergoing the struggles associated with success and growth.

Appendix II

The Origin of the Traditions and Other Landmark Publications

The Twelve Traditions (1950)

Bill began writing a series of articles about the early AA groups' experiences in the August 1945 Grapevine, laying out the framework of what would become the Traditions. These "Twelve Suggested Points for AA," as Bill called them in his historic April 1946 article, were not invented by him, but "forged on the anvil of experience"—the experience of groups often started by members with only a few months' sobriety, frequently torn apart by dissension or diverted by members mingling AA recovery principles with other doctrines. Still, they were struggling to stay sober, and letters flooded into AA's central office begging for advice, or even demanding expulsion of members who wouldn't do things the way the letter-writers thought they should.

Once the "Suggested Points" were published, discussion waged hot and heavy both in local groups and in the pages of Grapevine for the next four years: Should we drop anonymity? they wondered. Should we accept substantial sums of money left to us in wills? What should be done about clubhouses? Should we have rules for membership, and if so, which ones? Then in 1950, at the First International AA Conference in Cleveland, the official twelve points were adopted by acclamation as the Twelve Traditions.

"The Twelve Traditions are the distillate of our experience of living and working together; the platform upon which we expect to stand in unity for so long as God may need us. . . . I held the pen that wrote the words, but the words are yours because they are but a mirror that reflects the experiences we have had over the years."

*Bill W., First International Conference of AA,
Cleveland, Ohio, April 1950*

The Preamble (1947)

The Preamble was introduced to the Fellowship and the public at large in the June 1947 issue of Grapevine. In those days, Grapevine was often the first introduction to AA that many alcoholics and nonalcoholics had, and the Grapevine editors felt that a brief definition of what AA is and is not might be helpful. The result was the AA Preamble, written by the first editor of Grapevine, Tom Y., and based on the Foreword to the first edition of the Big Book. Originally called "the AA definition," the Preamble was quickly adopted by the Fellowship. Today, it is an integral part of the format of many AA meetings and is printed on all Conference-approved literature. It is also an important part of the material prepared for the public.

However, the Preamble seen at most meetings today is not exactly like the one first published in 1947. The original version differed in two ways: 1) It stated that "the only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking," and 2) its description of self-support consisted only of the brief phrase "AA has no dues or fees."

People often ask why the word “honest” was deleted. At the 1958 General Service Conference, a delegate questioned the words “honest desire to stop drinking,” since the word “honest” does not appear in the Third Tradition. In the discussion that followed, most Conference members felt that as AA matured, it had become almost impossible to determine what constituted an honest desire to stop drinking. They were also concerned that people interested in the AA program could be confused by the phrase.

The Conference voted that the phrase be dropped from the Preamble. That summer, the General Service Board ratified their decision, and the Preamble has read simply “a desire to stop drinking” ever since.

At the same time, the phrase “AA has no dues or fees” was clarified and revised to read: “There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.”

[Footnote] *When it is reprinted, the Preamble should carry the following credit line: Copyright © by AA Grapevine, Inc.

The Serenity Prayer

After seeing the Serenity Prayer in a newspaper in 1942, Bill W. and the early AAs had it printed on cards and began including it in all AA correspondence. By publishing it in early issues, Grapevine helped usher the prayer into general use. The January 1950 issue ran Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr’s account of the origin of the Serenity Prayer, and his part in its authorship. The prayer has been a regular part of the magazine’s format since July 1967.

Man on the Bed (1955)

Originally entitled *Came to Believe*, this oil painting of two early AAs carrying the message was first reproduced in Grapevine as a center spread in the December 1955 issue. It accompanied Bill W.’s Christmas message of gratitude for the gift of sobriety. It proved so popular that single reproductions were made available. In 1973, the book *Came to Believe* was published and to avoid confusion, Grapevine editors changed the name of the reproduction.

The artist, Robert M., was a volunteer illustrator for Grapevine. In May 1956, he presented the painting to co-founder Bill W., who wrote back:

Dear Robert:

Beautifully framed, your representation of the *Man on the Bed* hangs in my studio at Bedford Hills. It is a wonderful thing to have; I don’t see how it could have been better done. The whole heart and essence of AA can be seen just looking at it. . . . Please know that to my great thanks, Lois adds hers.

Ever yours,
Bill W.

Five AA Slogans (1956-1957)

AA members mention the use of “First Things First” and other helpful sayings in Grapevine as early as the June 1945 issue. However, they didn’t find a permanent place in many AAs’ kit of recovery tools until Grapevine ran a series on all five slogans—“First Things First,” “There But for the Grace of God,” “Easy Does It,” “Think, Think, Think,” and “Live and Let Live”—between September 1956 and February 1957. Each of those issues featured a hand-lettered slogan on the inside back cover of each issue and an

essay about it inside.

Grapevine has published numerous articles on the Slogans since then, and these along with the articles mentioned here can be found in the AA Grapevine Story Archive.

Responsibility Declaration (1965)

The Responsibility Declaration was written for the 1965 International Convention in Toronto by Al S., editor of Grapevine from 1946-1948 and trustee from April 1958-April 1961. *Box 459* ran this account of its origins, based on an interview with Al, in its October/November 1975 issue of *Box 459*:

“A statement was wanted that would be emotionally gripping to AAs without imposing any musts,” Al recalled. “I tried my hand at a flock of them, using ‘we,’ but none came off. Not even Bill or Dr. Bob,” he pointed out, “had ever tried to impose any pledge on all AAs!”

Then it came to Al: “Share your personal experience; say ‘I’; then it becomes a matter of personal choice. It talks about responsibility without institutionalizing it.”

Bill W. expanded on the theme in an essay called “Responsibility Is Our Theme” for the July 1965 Grapevine.

Grapevine Stories and the Big Book

The first edition of the Big Book preceded Grapevine’s first issue. The second edition of the Big Book used the same stories as the first.

Grapevine stories selected for the Big Book, Third Edition, 1971

Those Golden Years
Lifesaving Words
A Teenager’s Decisions
Any Day Was Washday
Calculating the Costs
Growing up All Over Again
Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict (Reprinted in the Fourth Edition as
“Acceptance
Was the Answer”)
Five-Time Loser
Join the Tribe
Belle of the Bar
Another Chance (also in the Fourth Edition)
AA Taught Him to Handle Sobriety (also in the Fourth Edition)

Grapevine stories selected for the Big Book, Fourth Edition, 2001

Building a New Life
A Vision of Recovery

Interviews with Big Book Authors

Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict, Dr. Paul O. June 1994

Physician, Heal Thyself, Dr. Earl M. October 1995
The Independent Blonde, March 1996

Grapevine Articles written by Dr. Bob

On Cultivating Tolerance July 1944
The Fundamentals – in Retrospect September 1948
Your Third Legacy (with Bill W.) December 1950

Appendix III

Grapevine Items: Additional Publications of AA Grapevine, Inc.

What Are Grapevine Items?

AA Grapevine, Inc., began publishing additional material related to the magazine in the early 1950s. The majority of these publications are collections of articles reproduced in different formats—books, eBooks, and audio products. The books, for instance, collect Grapevine stories by subject for convenience and portability on subjects such as Steps, sponsors, emotional sobriety, youth, humor, or spiritual awakening. Grapevine items also include reproductions of significant documents such as the Preamble, that were originally published in Grapevine or that have a close historical connection with the magazine.

Grapevine items serve several purposes. First, they carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to more people by making Grapevine materials available in different formats. There are audio versions of Grapevine for AAs on the go who might have trouble reading, for instance, and perfect bound staple free magazines for AAs in prison. Second, Grapevine items make historic documents such as the articles Bill W. wrote for Grapevine and background on the origins of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts more widely available. And third, these materials are a source of income of AA Grapevine, Inc., and help the corporation achieve its goal of being self-supporting. (Unlike AAWS, Grapevine receives no financial support for its operating expenses from AA members or groups.)

HOW GRAPEVINE ITEMS ARE DEVELOPED

1. Ideas come from AA members, service areas, GV Editorial Advisory Board, staff, or Board members.
2. GV Corporate Board discusses these ideas and forwards a list of suggestions to GV Conference Committee.
3. Conference Committee on the Grapevine selects items from the list to be produced the following year or later.
4. The Committee's choice is reported to the full Conference and published in the Final Conference Report under "Additional Committee Considerations."
5. The Committee's recommendation goes to the GV Board for development and final approval.
6. During the year between the recommendation and final implementation, input is sought from the Fellowship as a whole. One year later, if responses from the Fellowship are positive, a new publication related to the magazine comes off press.

Process established in 1992 by a Conference Advisory Action, and amended in 2002

English-Language Items

BOOKS

The Best of Bill

Called “the greatest social architect of our century” by Aldous Huxley, Bill W. was a co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. These essays, which he first wrote for the Grapevine magazine, discuss the spiritual principles that have helped millions of people recover from alcoholism and enriched the lives of countless others around the world.



Hardcover



Softcover



Large Print



e-book

The Best of the Grapevine, Volume I

Selected from the first fifty-five years of Grapevine publication, includes stories about the beginnings of AA in several countries (Volume I).



e-book

The Language of the Heart

Between 1944 and 1971, Bill wrote 150 articles for AA Grapevine, helping to unite the Fellowship’s new groups and hammering out the principles of AA. These articles give us a living history of Alcoholics Anonymous and the story of Bill W.’s emotional and spiritual growth.



Hardcover



Softcover



Large Print



e-book

Thank You for Sharing

In this lively anthology of letters, spanning seven decades of Grapevine publication, AA members talk about sobriety, the AA program, their Higher Power, the Big Book, and much more as they wrestle with the great questions that concern the Fellowship. Think of it as an AA conversation among sober alcoholics now in its sixtieth year.



Softcover

Spiritual Awakenings

In 1946 Bill W. described Grapevine as a “collective voice” for AA. Here is a collection of those distinct and varied voices, spanning almost sixty years. *Spiritual Awakenings* presents the stories of AAs as they describe with warmth, passion, and humor the diverse ways in which the “sunlight of the spirit” has come into their lives.



Softcover



e-book

Spiritual Awakenings II

Only in the challenging, dynamic daily lives of AA members do the Twelve Steps come to vibrant life. In these stories from the pages of AA Grapevine, the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous published since 1944, sobriety’s message of miracles and redemptions is shared with passion and humor in 74 different colorful voices.



Softcover



e-book

The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA

The stories compiled in *The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA* were published in the Grapevine magazine. This book contains 42 articles written by AA members that offer a moving portrait of AA home groups.



Softcover

I Am Responsible: The Hand of AA

A special collection of stories on the theme of the 2005 International Convention celebrating the 70th anniversary of AA. Written by AA members and eminent nonalcoholic friends of the Fellowship, the thirty-eight stories look at the impact of AA's Responsibility Declaration and what it means to individuals and to the Fellowship as a whole.



Softcover

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier

Growing up in sobriety means different things to each recovering alcoholic, but one idea seems true: The rewards for reaching for emotional sobriety are serenity, emotional balance and an increased joy for living. These selected stories from the AA Grapevine show that when people in recovery have the willingness to work the program to find solutions rather than stay stuck in problems, they can let go of fear, put aside selfish demands, practice outgoing love and become more connected to their Higher Power, family and fellows.



Softcover



e-book

Emotional Sobriety II: The Next Frontier

Only through his own painful, closely observed experience could Bill W. have identified “the next major development in AA ... real maturity and balance.” He was telling us that emotional sobriety is our next frontier. Here are the creative, heartfelt insights of several dozen sober seekers whose articles in the Grapevine offer insights that can light the way to our own “quiet place in bright sunshine.”



Softcover



e-book

In Our Own Words: Stories of Young AAs in Recovery

You are invited to enter the world of Grapevine, a sober world filled with the love, laughter, hard work and spiritual growth that stand at the heart of the life-saving Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. In this Best of the Grapevine, scores of AA members welcome you to a marathon meeting. These stories are examples of hope and personal experience that best nurture sobriety and an understanding of AA principles. Turn the pages, and let the meeting begin.



Softcover

Beginners' Book

In this collection of Grapevine stories, AA members share what helped them in early recovery—a journey sometimes full of bumps and detours, but also new ideas and surprising insights. Full of useful suggestions and solutions to problems common to the newly sober, this book provides solid tools of recovery.



Softcover



e-book

Voices of Long-Term Sobriety

This is a collection of stories from old-timers about how they hit bottom and got sober, as well as vivid descriptions of the early days of AA. But colorful histories are only part of the book. Old-timers have a wealth of lived experience to share with the rest of us. They've stayed sober through good times and bad by depending on the Steps and their Higher Power. They have the gift of perspective and know that sobriety is a journey, not a destination.



Softcover

A Rabbit Walks Into A Bar

Rule #62 —“Don't take yourself too damn seriously”—is at the heart of this Grapevine collection of humor. Sometimes staying sober calls for a good laugh, so that we don't take our situations or ourselves too seriously. Humor tends to put things in perspective. And the Grapevine has, from its beginning, published jokes and cartoons. Here are some of the best.



Softcover

Step by Step: Real AAs, Real Recovery

Step by Step: Real AAs, Real Recovery shows how AA members of all ages, from all lifestyles and from around the world, followers of mainstream religions and atheists, newcomers and old-timers, have recovered and found a new way of life by working the Twelve Steps. Here is a variety of experiences that AAs have written about the Steps and sent to the Grapevine over the course of its existence, from the 1940s to the present.



Softcover



e-book

Young & Sober

In this collection of Grapevine stories about the joys and challenges of getting sober at an early age, AA members talk about recognizing their disease even though their drinking may have only lasted a few years. Written by members who got sober in their teens, 20s and 30s, the stories in this book are about growing up young in AA, finding ways to connect when feeling different, getting involved in service and learning how to live a sober life joyously.



Softcover



e-book

Into Action

This collection of Grapevine stories shows the many ways members work the program of AA. Written by men and women, young and old, with different lengths of sobriety, the articles in this book highlight how we practice the Twelve Steps, use our literature and slogans, and get into service, sponsorship and fellowship. The stories demonstrate the various ways members get active in AA to stay sober, carry the message and live rich and rewarding sober lives.



Softcover



e-book

Happy, Joyous & Free

Getting sober can be painful and amazing, but it also can be pretty darn amusing. This collection of stories from the Grapevine shows how, in recovery, AAs have learned to laugh. It's full of light and humorous stories about our early mistakes, navigating drinking events, funny things sponsors say, interesting Twelfth-Step calls, holiday adventures and more. They remind us to not take ourselves so seriously and to always strive to be “happy, joyous & free.”



One on One: AA Sponsorship in Action

In this collection, AA members write about their experience with sponsorship, including how to choose one, getting the courage to ask someone to be a sponsor, sharing their past and present with them, working with those having trouble staying sober, dealing with the loss of a beloved sponsor and more. From the early days of the program, this special one-on-one bond of sponsorship has been considered vital to getting sober, staying connected, and living a full, happy life.



Softcover



e-book

No Matter What: Dealing with Adversity in Sobriety

All recovering alcoholics have had to deal with adversity throughout sobriety ... a serious illness, an ugly divorce, the death of a child, the loss of a house to fire or to the bank. Despite the fear, pain or self-pity we are in when these tragedies strike, drinking is not an option. The stories in this book show how AA members use the tools of the program and embrace the Fellowship to deal with tough issues.



Softcover



e-book

Grapevine Daily Quote Book: 365 inspiring passages from the pages of AA Grapevine

This pocket-sized book captures the first 365 days of the Grapevine Daily Quote, which first appeared in June 2012. The quotes—contributed by AA members, with many written by AA's co-founders—were selected by the Grapevine staff. All of these passages first appeared in the pages of Grapevine as part of members' stories and other submissions, and many of them can now be found in Grapevine's themed book anthologies. Each page offers an inspiring passage of experience, strength and hope to bring into your daily life.



Softcover



e-book

AUDIO

The Best of Bill

This new audiobook contains five of Bill W.'s most powerful Grapevine articles sharing his thoughts on faith, fear, honesty, humility, and love. The essays contained in this audiobook discuss the spiritual principles that have helped millions of people recover from alcoholism and enriched the lives of countless others around the world. (Originally published in the first edition of the *Best of Bill*.)



CD

Attitude Adjustment

A collection of stories about changing in sobriety. Includes: "And Then There Is Self-Pity" and "Anger! ... A Symptom of Wrong Thinking" (Remastered from the tapes: Around the Tables, Character Defects and Attitudes plus 2 new stories from recent issues.)



CD

Emotional Sobriety Vol. 1

There are many paths to emotional sobriety. In this collection of Grapevine stories, sober women and men describe their personal experiences as they practice the principles of AA in all aspects of their lives. Many discover that happiness is a by-product of giving without demand for return. Others embrace the present with gratitude and claim moments of real peace? "a quiet place in bright sunshine," as Bill W. put it in the essay that

gave impetus to the book *Emotional Sobriety* and these CDs. We invite you to join the journey. (This CD contains selections from the book, *Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier*, Sections 1-3.)



CD

Emotional Sobriety Vol. 2

We invite you to continue the journey experienced by listening to Emotional Sobriety, Volume 1 and listen to how more AAs embrace the present with gratitude and claim moments of real peace - "a quiet place in bright sunshine," as Bill W. put it in the essay that gave impetus to the book *Emotional Sobriety* and these CDs. (This CD contains selections from the book, *Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier*, Sections 4-6.)



CD

Spiritual Awakenings Vol. 1

These Grapevine stories are from AAs relating the different spiritual paths they have taken in the course of their recovery. Paths that led them from the darkness into a new kind of light. (This CD contains selections from the book, *Spiritual Awakenings - Journeys of the Spirit*.)



CD



CDs

Pathways to Spirituality
Classic Grapevine Vol. 2
Classic Grapevine Vol. 3
Not For Newcomers Only
Story Of AA
What It Was Like
The Twelve Traditions
It Works If We Work It
Home Group Vol. 1
Home Group Vol. 2



Cassettes

Classic #1
Classic #2
Classic #3
Youth Enjoying Sobriety
Old-Timers Corner
Back to Basics, Vol. 1
Back to Basics, Vol. 2
Sponsorship Vol. 1
Sponsorship Vol. 2
History Lights Way

What We Were Like
Not for Newcomers Only, Vol. 1
Not for Newcomers Only, Vol. 2
Around the Tables: Attitudes
Around the Tables: Character Defects
Pathways to Spirituality
Maintaining Spirituality
Our Experience Has Taught Us
Practice These Principles
French
Les Sons de la sobriété

ITEMS

Victor E. Poster

This colorful poster celebrates the Grapevine's 60th anniversary and reminds us of what our primary purpose is today. (Poster measures 11" × 17") (Spanish out of print, French available, but not on web store)

Wall Calendar

Full-color photographs taken by our readers, accompanied by brief quotes selected from Grapevine articles. The quotes aren't directly related to either AA or alcoholism, so the calendar may be displayed anonymously. Trilingual (English/Spanish/French)

Pocket Planner

A companion to the Wall Calendar, the Planner (annual) features a month-at-a-glance spread and quotations from the Calendar. Great for keeping anniversary dates. Trilingual (English/Spanish/French).

Co-Founders Issues

Newly reprinted editions of the original 1951 and 1971 Grapevines published in honor of Dr. Bob and Bill W. upon their deaths. The magazines contain the story of each co-founder's life, plus articles from their friends and early AA members reflecting on the extraordinary character of each man and their contributions to the worldwide Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. The magazines come in a protective sleeve.

Traditions Checklist

These lists of questions first appeared in the Grapevine over twenty-five years ago, and they're still a thought-provoking way to relate sobriety to the working principles of the Traditions.

Facsimile of First GV

This is an exact reproduction of the June 1944 Grapevine, the first issue of the magazine, with the flavor of early AA. (Oversized newsletter format)

Five Slogans Poster Set

Five familiar slogans, reproduced from the versions that first appeared in the Grapevine in late 1956 and early 1957. (Measures 12" × 9") (Also available in Spanish and French)

Serenity Prayer Poster

The Serenity Prayer often appeared in early Grapevines and has been a regular part of the magazine's format since July 1967. (Measures 7 1/2" × 5 1/2")

AA Preamble Poster

The Preamble was composed by an editor of the Grapevine and introduced in the June 1947 issue.

Man on the Bed Poster

Capturing the rich colors of the original, this is a newly restored reproduction of the popular oil painting. It was first created for the AA Grapevine and appeared as a center spread in the December 1955 issue.

Back Issue 30-Packs

The AA Grapevine pack of 30 is intended to be used for hospitals and institutions. Packs contain 30 assorted back issues. (There are always multiple copies of the same issue in the pack).

75 Years of AA History (Convention Special Issue)

Drawing from 65 years of Grapevine history, this special edition of the magazine celebrates the people who helped kindle the AA beacon, lighting the way to recovery for millions of alcoholics worldwide.

Appendix IV

Spanish- and French-Language Items

SPANISH

BOOKS

El Lenguaje del Corazón

There are now over 1,650 registered Spanish-speaking groups in the U.S. and Canada, and a few thousand more in other countries. The number of Spanish-speaking members of AA continues to grow every year. To serve this growing AA community, the Grapevine offers *El Lenguaje del Corazón*.



Softcover

Lo Mejor de Bill

This new edition in Spanish includes the five classic essays written by Bill W. for the Grapevine on basic themes in our recovery program (Faith, Fear, Honesty, Humility and Love), plus Bill's famous essay on Anonymity.



Softcover



e-book

Lo Mejor de La Viña

The 53 articles contained in this book chart the evolution of La Viña magazine over its first ten years and reflects a rich diversity of AA experience from both English and Spanish speaking members of the Fellowship. This book is entirely in Spanish.



Softcover

El Grupo Base: Corazón de AA

This new edition in Spanish includes 42 articles from the AA Grapevine about the importance of the home group for individual recovery, and the unity and vitality of AA.



Softcover

AUDIO

Historias de La Viña Vol. 1

Historias de La Viña is our first audio CD in Spanish. It includes 10 stories selected from the pages of La Viña, written by men and women in AA. The stories focus on the first two steps and the journey of personal transformation in recovery.



CD

Historias de La Viña Vol. 2

A collection of stories from La Viña on the practice of the first six Steps reflecting the experience of AAs.



CD

Historias de La Viña Vol. 3

This CD with personal stories about the practice of Steps 7 to 12 completes the series on the Steps.



CD

Lo Mejor de Bill en CD

An audiobook in Spanish containing the original five articles in *The Best of Bill: Faith, Fear, Honesty, Humility and Love*.



CD

La Historia de AA

A translation of a compilation of articles which appeared in the Grapevine, recreating the first years of our Fellowship as told by their protagonists—Bill W., Lois, Dr. Bob, Reverend Shoemaker and some of the first delegates, among others up to the creation of the General Service Conference.



CD

Despertares Espirituales Vol. 1

A translation of a compilation of articles from the book, *Spiritual Awakenings, Journeys of the Spirit*. Volume 1: stories from AAs relating the different spiritual paths they have taken in the course of their recovery.



CD

Despertares Espirituales Vol. 2

A translation of a compilation of articles from the book, *Spiritual Awakenings, Journeys of the Spirit*. Volume 2: more stories from AAs sharing their discovery that a life without alcohol can be lived fully and joyfully, whatever comes their way.



CD

Las Doce Tradiciones Vol. 1

This volume contains selected articles from La Viña on how the Traditions 1-6 work in AA groups and in the lives of AA members. Including “La unidad en Alcohólicos Anónimos,” “La puerta ancha y bajita”, y “Un individuo no puede cambiar a AA.”



CD

Las Doce Tradiciones Vol. 2

This volume contains selected articles from La Viña on how the Traditions 7-12 work in AA groups and in the lives of AA members. Including “El eslabón que une lo material con lo espiritual”, “Una sabia protección”, y “No es para hacer alardes.”



CD

El Grupo Base Vol. 1

This volume provides an up-to-date portrait of today's AA groups, along with some experience, strength, and hope of groups from the past. Topics covered: Donde comienza la recuperacion, las alegrias del servicio, las lecciones de la experiencia and aplicando las tradiciones.



CD

El Grupo Base Vol. 2

This volume contains more stories providing an up-to-date portrait of today's AA groups, along with some experience, strength, and hope of groups from the past.



CD

OTHER SPANISH ITEMS

AA Preámbulo

The Preamble was composed by an editor of the Grapevine and introduced in the June 1947 issue.

Lemas (Conjunto de 5)

Five familiar slogans, reproduced from the versions that first appeared in the Grapevine in late 1956 and early 1957. (Measures 12" × 9")

La Oración de la Serenidad

The Serenity Prayer often appeared in early Grapevines and has been a regular part of the magazine's format since July 1967. (Measures 7 1/2" × 5 1/2")

Un Chequeo de las Tradiciones

These lists of questions first appeared in the Grapevine over twenty-five years ago, and they're still a thought-provoking way to relate sobriety to the working principles of the Traditions.

Paquetes de 30 números anteriores

The La Viña pack of 30 is intended to be used for hospitals and institutions. Packs contain 30 assorted back issues. (There are always multiple copies of the same issue in the pack).

Wall Calendar

Full-color photographs taken by our readers, accompanied by brief quotes selected from Grapevine articles. The quotes aren't directly related to either AA or alcoholism, so the calendar may be displayed anonymously. Trilingual (English/Spanish/French)

Pocket Planner

A companion to the Wall Calendar, the Planner (annual) features a month-at-a-glance spread and quotations from the Calendar. Great for keeping anniversary dates. Trilingual (English/Spanish/French).

FRENCH

BOOKS

Les meilleurs articles de Bill

A handsome new edition of five of Bill W.'s most powerful Grapevine articles sharing his thoughts on faith, fear, honesty, humility, and love. This edition also includes "Why Alcoholics Anonymous Is Anonymous," Bill's Grapevine article from January 1955.



Softcover

Le Langage du coeur

Bill W. was the Grapevine's most prolific contributor, writing more than 150 articles, from his first in June 1944 to his last in December 1970. Here in one volume are all of Bill's Grapevine articles, including his first thoughts about the Traditions, his battles with chronic depression and spiritual pride, memories of an all-night drinking spree with Ebby, and a vivid description of how he came to organize the Steps (there were six in the first draft).



Softcover

Le Groupe d'attache: Le battement du coeur des AA

A collection of Grapevine articles illuminating the varied experiences of belonging to an AA group today.



Softcover

En Tête à Tête: Le parrainage AA en action

In this collection, AA members write about their experience with sponsorship, including how to choose one, getting the courage to ask someone to be a sponsor, sharing their past and present with them, working with those having trouble staying sober, dealing with the loss of a beloved sponsor and more. From the early days of the program, this special one-on-one bond of sponsorship has been considered vital to getting sober, staying connected and living a full, happy life.



Softcover



e-book

OTHER FRENCH ITEMS

Slogans (Jeu de 5)

Five familiar slogans, reproduced from the versions that first appeared in the Grapevine in late 1956 and early 1957. (Measures 12" × 9")

Plaquette de Victor E.

This colorful poster celebrates the Grapevine's 60th anniversary and reminds us of what our primary purpose is today. (Poster measures 11" × 17") (Not available on web store)

Les Cofondateurs des AA—le Dr. Bob et Bill W.

Newly reprinted editions of the original 1951 and 1971 Grapevines published in honor of Dr. Bob and Bill W. upon their deaths. The magazines contain the story of each co-founder's life, plus articles from their friends and early AA members reflecting on the extraordinary character of each man and their contributions to the worldwide Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. The magazines come in a protective sleeve.

Wall Calendar

Full-color photographs taken by our readers, accompanied by brief quotes selected from Grapevine articles. The quotes aren't directly related to either AA or alcoholism, so the calendar may be displayed anonymously. Trilingual (English/Spanish/French)

Pocket Planner

A companion to the Wall Calendar, the Planner (annual) features a month-at-a-glance spread and quotations from the Calendar. Great for keeping anniversary dates. Trilingual (English/Spanish/French).

Appendix V

The Conference Committee on the Grapevine History and Highlights of Actions

Over the years, the Conference has encouraged the Fellowship's use of the Grapevine and La Viña in numerous Advisory Actions.

1957

The committee endorsed the decision to increase the price of the magazine from \$.25 to \$.35 for single copies, and from \$2.50 to \$3.50 for yearly domestic subscriptions.

1958

Heavy, intensive promotions were opposed, but it was recommended that some form of continuous "reminders" be used as needed and at the discretion of the Grapevine Board of Directors.

1959

It was recommended that state and area conferences be encouraged to have local Grapevine representatives in attendance to encourage subscriptions by individuals and groups, and that the Grapevine office prepare material to be made available for these representatives, to be used as display material.

1962

It was recommended that retiring delegates will become Grapevine Representatives and recruit other G.V.R.s in their areas, with the objective that each A.A. group have a G.V.R.

1964

It was recommended that the Board of Directors of the Grapevine and the General Service Board explore the possibilities of using Grapevine materials in a French magazine.

That all Grapevine Committee members henceforth be kept informed during the year on all Grapevine matters of Conference importance.

1965

It was recommended that the Grapevine use the services of area committees in promoting the sale of the Grapevine at the group and individual level.

1966

It was recommended a trial selling of binders, which would carry twelve issues of the Grapevine.

1967

It was recommended that delegates suggest to groups the need for sponsoring subscriptions to the Grapevine for prisons, jails, and hospitals in their areas.

That the Serenity Prayer be incorporated into the Grapevine's regular monthly format.

1968

It was recommended that the Grapevine, being the voice of individual AA members, continue to publish the opinions of AA members, provided, however, that the Grapevine did not add its editorial

endorsement to articles, and that it states that the opinions expressed therein were not necessarily those of the Grapevine.

1969

It was recommended that AA World Services Inc., and the AA Grapevine Inc., with the primary purpose of the Fellowship foremost in mind, study their efforts in each other's behalf and extend to each other the fullest cooperation in making the Fellowship aware of the tools of AA.

That all delegates consider it a part of their responsibility to inform the Fellowship about the Grapevine as a tool of sobriety, either through their own efforts or by recruiting others.

1971

It was recommended that the Grapevine Corporate Board be given Conference approval to raise the price of the Grapevine from \$.35 to \$.50 for a single copy, and from \$3.50 to \$5.00 for a yearly subscription if the trend of rising costs indicated that the need was there.

1973

It was unanimously recommended, in view of increasing bad debts, that no new pay-as-you-go groups be accepted after July 31, 1973. Pay-as-you-go groups in good standing, however, would be continued. Recommended prepaid subscriptions.

1974

It was recommended that the Grapevine continue to publish responsible personal opinions of AA members, although the Grapevine does not endorse those opinions.

That the "About Alcoholism" section, the "gray pages" of the Grapevine, continue to report developments in the field of alcoholism, even though they might be contrary to AA philosophy.

Asked delegates to carry back to their areas a proposal that groups institute the practice of giving birthday or anniversary gift subscriptions, with which the Grapevine would mail appropriate greeting cards.

Recommended using full names in correspondence with the Grapevine to facilitate AA communication. (The Grapevine protects your anonymity at all times.)

1975

It was recommended that delegates communicate with the publishers of AA newsletters in their areas, urging them to use Grapevine blurbs, discussion topics, or other notices about the Grapevine regularly in their newsletters.

That a letter be sent to the remaining pay-as-you-go groups, explaining the advantages of prepaid subscriptions and notifying these groups that the pay-as-you-go plan would be terminated as of January 1, 1976.

That all delegates make all AA members aware that they could subscribe to the Grapevine as individuals.

1976

Reaffirmed the recommendation that areas be encouraged to invite the Grapevine staff to visit state and provincial conferences, with the suggestion that the invitation be made to the Grapevine staff

directly. The committee felt that personal contact between Grapevine staff and AA members would stimulate interest in the Grapevine.

Recommended that groups or individuals send Grapevine subscriptions to local libraries.

That groups be encouraged to increase their subscriptions as their membership increases.

1977

It was recommended that delegates be responsible for establishing area Grapevine committees, using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group.

That one copy of the Grapevine, along with a Grapevine order form, be included in every kit mailed out to new groups by GSO.

That the Grapevine continue to publish the "About Alcoholism" section, along with the disclaimer.

1978

It was recommended that delegates continue their efforts in using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group.

That a Grapevine information table be made a regular feature at all conferences, conventions, and assemblies. (A Grapevine Conference Display Kit is available at no cost.)

That committees on public information, cooperation with the professional community, correctional facilities, and treatment facilities explore the use of the AA Grapevine in their endeavors.

That area and state functions consider Grapevine workshops similar to other workshops held at the area level from time to time.

1979

It was recommended that when feasible, groups consider bulk orders as a means of making the Grapevine available at the group.

That Grapevine representatives recommend to their groups that they sponsor subscriptions, where possible, for institutions, treatment facilities, and professionals being "sponsored."

That the Grapevine office make available Grapevine prepaid gift certificates.

1980

It was recommended that shorter-term subscriptions for groups and treatment facilities not be considered at this time.

That delegates continue their efforts in using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group.

That groups make every effort to introduce newcomers to the Grapevine as one of our best tools in sobriety.

1981

It was recommended that the Grapevine provide a discount package of Grapevine miscellaneous items for sale to groups and central offices/intergroups with a reasonable discount.

That delegates, in their continuing effort to achieve GvRs in their groups, work toward establishing district GvRs.

That the Grapevine Corporate Board consider increasing the cover price of the Grapevine.

That the yearly Grapevine income statement reflect the money held in escrow for unfulfilled subscriptions, and the interest accrued by this amount be shown. NOTE: The Conference did not accept this recommendation, but requested that it be tabled and referred to a joint meeting of the 1982 Conference Finance and Grapevine Committees.

1982

It was recommended that the price of miscellaneous items be increased as needed.

1983

It was recommended that a trial tape of articles from the Grapevine classic issues be prepared and made available as a special item, with future taping to be considered by the 1984 Conference.

That delegates research the need for the "About Alcoholism" section in their areas, and that the question of the function of and need for this section be brought to the 1984 Conference.

That all communications to area Grapevine chairpersons also be sent to delegates.

That making the Grapevine available to outside agencies be left for area service structures to handle, in the spirit of autonomy.

1984

It was recommended that because of the positive response to the trial cassette, the Grapevine produce at least one tape a year as a special item.

That the Grapevine continue to publish the "About Alcoholism" section, along with the disclaimer.

That the "Portable AA Meeting" brochure be included in mailings of GSO bulletins.

That a supply of the "Portable AA Meeting" brochure be made available to all area Grapevine chairpersons.

The committee reaffirms the 1977 Conference recommendation that "delegates be responsible for establishing area Grapevine committees, using the area and district service structure to achieve the goal of a Grapevine representative in every group." It also recommends that delegates explore the possibility of utilizing alternates throughout the service structure as Grapevine representatives.

1985

It was recommended that Grapevine committees seek ways to work with Public Information, Cooperation with Professional Community, Correctional Facilities, Treatment Facilities, and other service committees, with the aim of increasing the use of the Grapevine as a tool in carrying the message.

That, since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes the AA Grapevine as an international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.

That a workbook be produced for Grapevine committees.

That sections be added to the Service Manual defining the role of Grapevine representatives at all levels and providing more information about the operation of The AA Grapevine Inc. and referred this item to the Report and Charter Committee, since they have the responsibility for changes in the AA Service Manual, for its consideration.

1986

It was recommended that the draft of the workbook for use by Grapevine committees be approved.

The Grapevine produce a trial tape in Spanish and a trial tape in French, at a price comparable to the Grapevine tapes in English.

That the 1985 Conference Advisory Action #17 be corrected to read: "Since each issue of the Grapevine cannot go through the Conference-approval process, the Conference recognizes the AA Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous."

That because the twelve articles on the Traditions, by B.L. of Manhattan, New York, and the article "The Whisper of Humility" contain the opinions of individuals only, and because they are already reprinted in Best of the Grapevine, these articles not be published as a pamphlet.

That if the Grapevine Corporate Board approves development of the proposed book of Bill W.'s Grapevine writings, a draft be brought to the 1987 Conference for consideration. (Note: The Corporate Board did approve development of this project.)

1987

It was recommended that staff monitor ongoing distribution of Spanish and French Grapevine cassette tapes and report fuller results to the 1988 Conference.

That no changes or additions be made to the Preamble.

That delegates focus their efforts on the district service structure as a means of reaching individual groups, in order to make every group aware of the value of the Grapevine as a recovery tool.

That delegates and area Grapevine chairpersons be encouraged to invite Grapevine staff personnel to attend local, area, and regional conventions, forums, and AA gatherings.

That the Grapevine staff be responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters.

That in view of the need for the entire Grapevine operation to be fully accountable to the Fellowship, the committee recognizes serious management problems and believes them to be the responsibility of the Grapevine Corporate Board.

That the Grapevine Board establish a mechanism for timely communications to all Conference members of actions taken and progress toward resolution of these problems.

That a disclaimer be prepared by Grapevine staff for the calendar of events and be printed before each month's listing of coming events.

1988

It was recommended that the Grapevine not publish a monthly section of daily messages/reflections.

It was recommended that, after careful consideration, the matters of format and editorial policy raised in the "Resolution to AA Grapevine" from Area 70, Vermont, are within the right of decision of the Grapevine editorial staff.

The committee reaffirmed 1987 Conference Advisory Action number 29: "The Grapevine staff be responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters," in order to keep these lines of communication open.

It was recommended that since the Grapevine Corporate Board has fully complied with 1987 Advisory Action number 30, timely communication from the board to all Conference members regarding resolution of the management problems is no longer necessary, though the standing practice of sending quarterly Corporate Board minutes to Conference Grapevine Committee members will be continued.

That the Grapevine proceed with a one-time trial distribution of complimentary Grapevines to nonsubscribing groups (selected on a random basis) in order to make them aware of the Grapevine as an effective recovery tool.

That the Grapevine proceed with publication of Bill W.'s collected Grapevine writings, with brief factual introductory material to be prepared by Grapevine staff and approved by the Grapevine Corporate Board.

That in order to encourage full participation, areas consider establishing a Grapevine awareness month and continue to hold Grapevine workshops, Grape-a-thons, and Grapevine meetings.

The committee recommended, in response to concerns about the elapsed time between ordering and receiving the Grapevine, that the Grapevine Corporate Board investigate the feasibility of early acknowledgment of new subscription orders.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

Based on sales over a two-year period the committee felt that the Grapevine should not produce additional Spanish and French Grapevine cassette tapes but should review ongoing results and explore additional means of distribution.

Since "Best of Bill" is published in English only by the Grapevine, but has already been published by other AA entities in French and Spanish, there is no need for action at this time.

The committee felt that the circle and triangle logo (not Conference-approved logo) should appear on all Grapevine items.

1989

It was recommended that the Grapevine develop an ongoing AA history section, drawing on archival material, including area and regional histories.

Recognizing the necessity for a magazine price increase in the near future, the committee recommended that delegates clarify in their areas the fact that the magazine is supported by subscription income and does not accept group contributions to cover operating expenses.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee reviewed Grapevine special items and took no action. It was agreed that all existing special items have value and that any future special items should continue to carry the AA message.

The committee recommended that the "About Alcoholism" section be discontinued since information on the field of alcoholism is readily available, and since publication of such material, even with a disclaimer, appears to imply affiliation. NOTE: This recommendation received a majority vote, but not a two-thirds majority. Thus, it becomes a suggestion to be considered by the editorial staff, not a conference Advisory Action.

1990

It was recommended that the words "one time trial distribution of complimentary Grapevines to nonsubscribing groups" in 1988 Conference Advisory Action #25 no longer be considered binding.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed the fact that hotel locations have been eliminated from the Grapevine Calendar of Events and, since editorial space is needed for AA sharing and information is available from other sources, the committee agreed that listing hotel locations is not necessary.

In an effort to help area Treatment Facilities, Correctional Facilities, Public Information, and Cooperation with the Professional Community committees carry the AA message, the committee suggested that when available the Grapevine periodically distribute back issues through the delegate for the use of these committees.

1991

It was recommended that the Grapevine discontinue publishing the "About Alcoholism" section.

Because of an expressed need the Grapevine commence as soon as possible to include at least one article in Spanish in each month's issue.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed singleness of purpose as reflected in the Grapevine and affirmed that the editorial policy of the Grapevine is in accordance with our singleness of purpose.

The committee discussed distribution of back issues by delegates and determined that such distribution should continue whenever possible.

The committee discussed placement of the editorial disclaimer and concluded that the page number of the "Editorial Disclaimer" be included each month in the table of contents.

1992

The committee reviewed 1992 Advisory Action #12 and recommended that: a) The Grapevine continue to include at least one article in Spanish in each month's issue. b) As a possible future replacement for the monthly Spanish articles in the magazine, the Grapevine Corporate Board investigate the feasibility of developing a quarterly Spanish newsletter based on original material and translations of current Grapevine articles, and bring cost and format proposals to the 1993 Conference Grapevine Committee.

The committee recommended acceptance of the following proposal from the Grapevine Corporate Board:

In order to achieve some uniformity of procedure and to gain desired Conference input to Grapevine special items, yet not to compromise the Grapevine Corporate Board's "right of decision" to manage the fiscal affairs of the Grapevine, let it be proposed that:

Based on the positive model of mutual Conference and Board involvement in the production of The Language of the Heart, the Grapevine Corporate Board offer to the Conference Grapevine Committee on an ongoing basis, a general list of proposed special items at least two years in advance of possible production, in order that the

Conference could offer any guidance or register any disapproval they might have. Having so presented the conceptual basis of these special items to the Conference

Committee, final approval for the completed items would rest with the Grapevine Corporate Board.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed the results of the questionnaire sent out to all delegate areas by the 1991 Conference Grapevine Committee, and decided to send a similar questionnaire this year. The committee further requested that Grapevine staff mail results of the 1991 questionnaire to all delegates and area Grapevine chairpersons for their information.

The committee discussed a list of possible special items presented by the Grapevine Corporate Board and suggested that in 1993 the Grapevine prepare a booklet of past Grapevine articles on the topic: The AA Group (Our Key to Unity).

The committee discussed a proposal from Area 15 that the Grapevine produce a sobriety token for AA members to receive on AA birthday anniversaries, and concluded that the production of sobriety tokens is inconsistent with the Grapevine's practice of producing items that emanate from the magazine.

1993

It was recommended that after considering 1992 Advisory Action #12 concerning the feasibility of a quarterly Spanish newsletter: a) The current policy of publishing monthly Grapevine articles in Spanish be reaffirmed. b) Because of staffing needs and other cost factors, a quarterly newsletter not be implemented at this time.

c) Delegates and the Grapevine Corporate Board continue to explore different ways of carrying the message to the Spanish community through Grapevine materials.

That the Grapevine Corporate Board not actively pursue the placement of Grapevine materials in commercial (non-AA) outlets.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed the Grapevine's history of self-support and wanted to reestablish focus on the magazine and to affirm the desire that the magazine be self-supporting through subscription income only.

The committee discussed the proposal from the Grapevine Corporate Board that the magazine be taped quarterly, but took no action.

The committee endorsed the Grapevine Corporate Board's proposal for new materials to be produced: in 1994, an AA history tape or tapes of Grapevine articles; in 1995, a book of cartoons/humor taken from the magazine.

The committee recommended that because the Wall Calendars and Pocket Planners do not seem to adhere to the Grapevine's primary purpose, these items be phased out after production and distribution of the 1994 Calendar and Pocket Planner; the committee also recognized that since the Grapevine should be self-supporting through magazine income, the financial impact of this loss must be made up by increased subscriptions, and urges all delegates to work toward this end. NOTE: This recommendation received a majority vote, but not a two-thirds majority. Thus, it becomes a suggestion to be considered by the Grapevine Board, not a Conference Advisory Action.

1994

It was recommended that all AA members be strongly urged to work toward the goal that the AA Grapevine magazine be self-supporting through the sale of magazine subscriptions.

It was recommended that because the Wall Calendars and Pocket Planners do not seem to adhere to the Grapevine's primary purpose, these items be discontinued after production and distribution of the 1995 edition of the Calendar and Pocket Planner. Based on recent experience, the financial impact on the 1995 budget could be an estimated net loss of \$35,000 to \$40,000. NOTE: This recommendation received a majority vote, but not a two-thirds majority. Thus, it becomes a suggestion to be considered by the editorial staff, not a Conference Advisory Action.

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee reaffirmed 1992 Conference Advisory Action #23, regarding the procedure for publishing Grapevine special items.

The committee discussed a suggestion to cease production of all special items that do not contain articles taken directly from the magazine, and took no action.

The committee discussed the feasibility of discontinuing Grapevine special items that no longer seem useful and reviewed the Grapevine Corporate Board's preliminary guidelines for discontinuance of items. The committee encouraged the process of establishing guidelines for the future and suggested the board consider informing the Conference Grapevine Committee prior to any final discontinuance of magazine-related items.

The committee endorsed the Grapevine Corporate Board's proposal for producing an undated, generic Grapevine in 1996, and suggested that the Grapevine Corporate Board also consider producing it in Spanish.

1995

It was recommended that, based on an expressed need, a Spanish edition of the Grapevine be produced, contingent on the following: the Grapevine Corporate Board proceed to gather information and develop a business plan for a bimonthly Spanish edition of the Grapevine, for presentation to the trustees' Finance Committee, and that funding for up to five (5) years be obtained from the General Service Board Reserve Fund, with start-up costs estimated at \$84,000 for the first year. It was further recommended that if a Spanish edition is established, the monthly Spanish articles be removed from the English-language Grapevine, and that if, after five (5) years, the Spanish edition of the magazine is determined to be no longer feasible, publication be discontinued.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed editorial content of the Grapevine and urged that the editorial policy of the Grapevine continue to follow our Statement of Purpose.

The committee discussed a letter regarding the proposed generic Grapevine and unanimously suggested that the Grapevine Corporate Board not produce a generic Grapevine at this time, but rather continue to focus on our Statement of Purpose and increasing subscriptions of the Grapevine.

The committee discussed a list from the Grapevine Corporate Board of proposed related items for production in 1997 and suggested that no action be taken and that an additional proposal be presented to the 1996 Conference Grapevine Committee for possible production in 1998.

1996

It was recommended that a manuscript be developed for a pamphlet providing basic information on the AA Grapevine magazine and its place in Alcoholics Anonymous and be brought to the 1997 Conference for approval.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed returning the "About Alcoholism" section (gray pages) to the Grapevine and felt that no action was necessary. The committee saw no clear need or desire in the Fellowship for the section. Information from the alcoholism field does not promote AA's primary purpose and is readily available elsewhere.

The committee discussed several suggestions for related materials for possible production in 1998 and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate Board for development: 1) a third volume of Best of the Grapevine, and 2) audio recordings by and about young people in Alcoholics Anonymous.

The committee discussed a suggested rewording of the AA Preamble and felt that no change is needed.

The committee reviewed the AA Grapevine Workbook and endorsed it with minor editorial changes and updating.

1997

It was recommended that information about La Viña be included in the 1997-98 edition of the AA Service Manual (chapter XI: "The AA Grapevine").

That the manuscript providing basic information on the AA Grapevine magazine and its place in Alcoholics Anonymous be produced as a pamphlet.

That the Grapevine use mailing lists to provide introductory information about the Grapevine and La Viña to correctional facilities and treatment facilities.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee discussed several suggestions for related items for production in 1999 and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate Board for development two sets of tapes on the topics of a) Carrying the Message; and b) Emotional Sobriety.

1998

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee considered several suggestions for related items for production in the year 2000 and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate Board their suggestion that one item be developed: a softcover anthology, tentatively called AA Around the World, comprised of Grapevine articles.

The committee also wished to suggest to the Grapevine Corporate Board that an anthology of letters previously published in the Grapevine be considered for publication at a future date.

1999

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee considered several suggestions for related items for production in 2001 and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate Board its suggestion that the Grapevine produce a softcover anthology of letters selected from those published in the magazine from 1944 to the present.

The committee liked the idea of an audio form of the monthly magazine produced by the Grapevine, and asked the Grapevine staff to determine the level of interest in the Fellowship and bring back a report to the Conference Committee on the Grapevine in the Year 2000.

The committee discussed the request to establish a committee to review and approve all articles prior to publication in the Grapevine, and determined that the current process for the selection of articles works well.

The committee would like to encourage areas to purchase Grapevine and La Viña subscriptions and back issues for direct placement in treatment facilities and correctional facilities.

Being mindful of the demonstrated effectiveness of La Viña and the need for it expressed by the Hispanic community, and considering its spiritual benefits and benefits as a Twelfth Step tool, the committee wishes to express strong support for its continued publication.

2000

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee reviewed the five-year history of La Viña. Being mindful of the demonstrated effectiveness of La Viña and the strong support for it expressed by the AA membership as a whole,

and considering its spiritual benefits as a Twelfth Step tool, the committee wishes to express strong support for its continued publication.

The committee discussed the advisability of producing the Grapevine magazine on tape and decided this is not a viable project because of the high cost and lack of expressed need.

The committee discussed returning the About Alcoholism section (the “gray pages”) to the Grapevine and felt that no action was necessary. The committee saw no clear need or desire in the Fellowship for the section. Information from the alcoholism field does not promote AA’s primary purpose and is readily available elsewhere.

The committee considered several suggestions for related items for production in the year 2002 or later, and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate board its suggestion that the Grapevine produce a booklet on spiritual experience and a booklet on emotional sobriety.

The committee considered a suggestion that a service position of Grapevine Subscription Chairperson be adopted by AA groups in the U.S. And Canada and concluded there was no need for such a position.

2001

It was recommended that La Viña continue to be published by the A.A. Grapevine and supported by the General Service Board as a service to the Fellowship.

That La Viña continue to be published using A.A. Grapevine resources in order to achieve efficiencies in production and distribution.

Additional considerations which did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee considered several suggestions for related items for production in the year 2003 or later, and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate board its suggestion that the Grapevine produce a softcover anthology of articles that would be helpful to newcomers and which have been previously published in the magazine.

The committee discussed the need for an announcement card about the A.A. Grapevine that could be distributed to A.A. groups and read at meetings and concluded that there was no need to produce such a card at this time. Understanding the importance of raising awareness of the Grapevine in A.A. groups, the committee suggested that information about subscribing to the magazine be included in some of G.S.O.’s regularly scheduled mailings to listed groups and area committees and in some of the Kits and Workbooks offered by G.S.O.

The committee discussed the suggestion that the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., refrain from sponsoring or hosting online meetings, including but not limited to real-time meetings, e-mail meetings, bulletin boards, and forums and, after careful consideration, decided that no action was necessary.

The committee encouraged the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., to approach the use of any real-time online format with caution.

2002

It was recommended that the pamphlet “The A.A. Grapevine: Our Meeting in Print” (P-52) be revised to accurately reflect changes in Grapevine operations and to clarify the text.

It was unanimously recommended that the Conference Committee on the Grapevine annually review a list of proposed related items at least one year in advance of possible production, so that the Conference might provide guidance, recognizing that the committee may request more than one year to review some proposed items.

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee considered several suggestions for related items for production and forwarded to the Grapevine Corporate Board the following items for development: 1) Declaration of Responsibility signs in English and (when feasible) in Spanish and in French, with a facsimile of the art that appears in the Grapevine; 2) Best of Grapevine CDs; and 3) a Spanish-language CD.

2003

In order to emphasize the importance of the Grapevine as a Twelfth-Step tool, the committee unanimously recommended that the first paragraph of the description of the Grapevine representative on page 9 of the pamphlet “The A.A. Grapevine: Our Meeting in Print” be revised to read as follows: [New heading] Grapevine representatives (GvRs) and La Viña representatives (RLVs) perform a service for A.A. members, bringing them two vital tools of recovery — the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous and La Viña. GvRs and RLVs are engaged in practical, hands-on work. Their basic job is to make the magazines available to the group, to encourage AAs to read them, subscribe to them, and use them in Twelfth-Step work.

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee considered several suggestions for Grapevine items to be produced in the year 2004 or later and unanimously agreed to forward to the Grapevine Corporate Board the following items to be developed: Victor E. posters in English, French, and Spanish, celebrating the A.A. Grapevine’s 60th anniversary, and a Spanish-language edition of *The Best of Bill*.

By a substantial majority, the committee agreed to forward to the Grapevine Corporate Board suggestions that the following items be developed: French, Spanish, and English-language editions of a pocket-sized soft-cover collection of Grapevine stories focusing on A.A.’s Responsibility Declaration, titled *I Am Responsible*, and a new Spanish-language audio CD of stories previously published in La Viña.

The committee expressed deep concern about information from the Grapevine Board received during the committee meeting that the Board had failed to observe the 1993 Conference Advisory Action stating: “The Grapevine Corporate Board not actively pursue the placement of Grapevine materials for resale in commercial (non-A.A.) outlets.”

Following lengthy discussion, the committee strongly suggests that the Grapevine Corporate Board:

1. Establish a one-year moratorium on initiating the sale of Grapevine items, including the Grapevine magazine, to any enterprise not identified as an A.A. entity.
2. Outline the sequence of events, meetings, and decisions, as well as the rationale, that led to the Grapevine magazine being sold through an enterprise not identified as an A.A. entity.
3. Provide a full report on the history of the 1993 Advisory Action, including the concerns that led to that Action, as well as the meaning and intent of that Action.

4. Provide to the committee an interim report on the three points above no later than September 30, 2003, followed by a final report to be sent as background to the 2004 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.

The committee also strongly suggests that the Grapevine Corporate Board carefully review Conference Advisory Actions prior to implementing a practice or policy.

2004

The committee recommended that to allow the widest distribution of the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña to all purchasers, while guarding against affiliation with any outside enterprise, a) subscriptions to the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña magazines be issued only by the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., or by A.A. trusted servants directly; and b) the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., adopt standardized sales practices and pricing structures for all purchasers.

Note: This recommendation is to clarify the 1993 Advisory Action stating that “the Grapevine Corporate Board not actively pursue the placement of Grapevine materials for resale in commercial (non-A.A.) outlets.”

That the “The A.A. Grapevine: Our Meeting in Print” pamphlet be revised to include the proposed references to La Viña and La Viña representatives where the Grapevine magazine and its representatives are mentioned.

That the A.A. Grapevine Workbook be designated as service material and be reviewed on an annual basis.

Additional consideration:

The committee reviewed the draft of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook and suggested certain editorial changes be made prior to publication.

2005

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee agreed to forward to the Grapevine Corporate Board the request that a collection of A.A. Grapevine stories for young people be produced in the year 2006 or later.

The committee agreed to forward to the Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that an audio compact disc of La Viña stories on Steps Seven through Twelve be produced in the year 2006 or later.

The committee reviewed the contents of the Grapevine Workbook and suggested that certain editorial changes be made prior to reprinting.

2006

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee reviewed the contents of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook with appreciation and made no changes.

The committee urged the A.A. Grapevine Board to produce a Spanish translation of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook as soon as financially possible.

The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that A.A. Grapevine produce an anthology of La Viña stories in the year 2007 or later.

2007

The committee recommended that the Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer.

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that the A.A. Grapevine produce in the year 2008 or later:

- a) a collection of Grapevine stories by people with 40 or more years of sobriety, and;
- b) a book of classic cartoons and jokes from the A.A. Grapevine.

The committee reviewed the contents of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook with appreciation and suggested that the sample presentation in Appendix IV be updated.

The committee encouraged the Grapevine to explore less expensive formats for production of the workbook.

The committee again urged the A.A. Grapevine Board to produce a Spanish translation of the A.A. Grapevine workbook as soon as financially possible.

2008

Additional considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

- The committee reviewed the contents of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook and agreed that no changes were needed at this time.
- The committee discussed the staff report addressing the 2007 Additional Consideration to “explore less expensive formats for the production of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook” and requested that the Grapevine:
 - (a) Produce a portable GvR (Grapevine Representative) Handbook similar to the recently revised RLV (La Viña Representative) Handbook in size and format for ease of use by the GvR network and for cost containment.
 - (b) Update and revise the A.A. Grapevine History booklet.
 - (c) Continue to offer the current A.A. Grapevine Workbook as a free download at the Grapevine Web site.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that the A.A. Grapevine produce in the year 2009 or later two CDs of stories from La Viña on Traditions One – Twelve.

- The committee reconsidered the 2007 General Service Conference Committee Advisory Action recommending that “the Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer” and took no action.
- The committee discussed the Grapevine’s legacy of self-support and encouraged the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. to uphold that legacy.
- To increase use of the Grapevine and La Viña and awareness of their roles in A.A. today, the committee made several suggestions, including the following:
 - That delegates challenge each of their Areas to increase circulation of the Grapevine by at least 100 subscriptions and circulation of La Viña by as much as possible
 - That groups buy bulk subscriptions or 50-Packs of back issues for distribution in treatment facilities, correctional facilities, and other institutions
 - That districts buy subscriptions for local libraries
 - That GvR/RLVs use laptops to take subscriptions at AA events
 - That delegates and Area Grapevine/La Viña chairs exchange information about successful efforts to increase awareness of AA’s magazines
 - That groups put copies of the magazines in grocery stores, laundromats, and other public places where they might help alcoholics
 - That groups hold Grapevine or La Viña meetings

2009

Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

- The committee discussed the contents of the A.A. Grapevine workbook with appreciation and noted that the new portable GvR Handbook requested by the 2008 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine is scheduled for publication.

The committee also requested that the current A.A. Grapevine workbook, A Guide to the A.A. Grapevine, continue to be posted on the A.A. Grapevine Web site as a free download. The committee suggested that the location and description of the Workbook/Guide be reviewed to improve visibility and accessibility on the Web site.

- The committee considered a request that “the 2007 Conference Advisory Action recommending that ‘the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical, legal, and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer’ be rescinded” and after lengthy and thoughtful discussion took no action.
- The committee requested that the disclaimer in the section on medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism in the A.A. Grapevine (Alcoholism at Large) be placed more prominently and distinctively and that the language of the disclaimer in the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña be reviewed for both clarity and consistency.

- The committee considered a request that the 2004 Conference Advisory Action—“*To allow the widest distribution of the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña to all purchasers, while guarding against affiliations with any outside enterprise, a) subscriptions to the A.A. Grapevine and La Viña magazines be issued only by A.A. Grapevine, Inc., or by A.A. trusted servants directly; and b) the A.A. Grapevine, Inc., adopt standardized sales practices and pricing structures for all purchasers. Note: This recommendation is to clarify the 1993 Advisory Action stating that the Grapevine Corporate Board not actively pursue the placement of Grapevine materials for resale in commercial (non-A.A.) outlets.*”—be rescinded and took no action. The committee noted that rescinding the 2004 Advisory Action would not have an impact on the 2009 subscription price.
- The committee supported the spirit of communication between the Grapevine Board and Conference members, as recommended in 1987 and reaffirmed in 1988 that: “The Grapevine staff be responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters.”
- The committee expressed concerns regarding several changes and decisions made by the A.A. Grapevine office and Board in the last year, concerning items produced by A.A. Grapevine, Inc. The committee requested that the A.A. Grapevine Board review the history of advisory actions pertaining to the relationship between the A.A. Grapevine Board, A.A. Grapevine office and the Conference Committee, on the decision-making process of matters that affect the fellowship (i.e. pricing, redesign, name change and promotional items) and forward a report to the 60th General Service Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine for their review.

2010

After thoughtful and lengthy discussion, the Committee recommended that La Viña achieve spiritual parity with the A.A. Grapevine, beginning in the following manner:

- Publishing La Viña as a bimonthly, perfect-bound, black-and-white, 68-page issue at an additional estimated cost of \$21,400 per year for one year beginning in 2011 followed by a year of review and assessment in 2012. The results of this review and assessment will be brought to the 2013 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine.
- Content and substance be of primary importance.
- An announcement will be published in La Viña magazine beginning immediately and throughout the trial year, encouraging increased submissions and subscriptions, moving toward the goal of being self-supporting.

It is recommended to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board that, in order to reach the broadest spectrum of the Fellowship, sharing on the following items be gathered from the General Service Conference delegates on behalf of the 2010 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine:

- What is the value of the ?
- How do you use the Grapevine magazine?
- What would you like to change about the Grapevine magazine?
- What do you think the purpose of the Grapevine magazine should be?

Note: Responses are to be submitted to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board by 12/31/2010 and included as background material for the 2011 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine.

Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions::

- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's History of Advisory Actions Report pertaining to the relationship between the A.A. Grapevine Board, A.A. Grapevine office and the Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine with appreciation and encourages this ongoing partnership and the continuation of the quarterly Conference Committee calls with the Board and office, along with all of the Board's recommendations in the Report, especially the Board's recommendation for an annual report to the Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook and suggested that electronic updates be made to outdated material, while still preserving a digital version of the historic document, and these updates should be brought to the 2012 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine.
- The committee discussed at length and agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that the A.A. Grapevine produce in the year 2011 or later:
 - Step by Step (working title): A collection of AA Grapevine stories on the Steps.
 - The Sponsorship Book (working title): A collection of stories on sponsorship.
 - Staying Sober Through Adversity (working title): A collection about handling the rough patches in sobriety.

2011

After thoughtful and lengthy discussion, the Committee recommended that, in the spirit of being self-supporting while also protecting our Traditions of attraction, anonymity, and non-affiliation, A.A. Grapevine be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products. The committee requests that the Board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The Committee requests that a status and financial report be submitted to the 2012 Grapevine Conference Committee.

The Committee reviewed a request for discussion on how to best support the Grapevine magazine and recommended that the A.A. Grapevine Board, in consultation with the A.A. World Services Board and under the guidance of the General Service Board chairman, continue to investigate what efficiencies and objectives can be accomplished by combining services and sharing resources, including reviewing Concept 11, while still maintaining editorial and corporate independence.

After extensive review and discussion of the results of the surveys conducted per the 2010 Conference Advisory Action, the Committee recommended that, in order to encourage unity and to support A.A. Grapevine, Inc., the A.A. Grapevine Board establish an ad hoc committee to review and determine actionable items from the A.A. Grapevine Fellowship Sharing Report and that the ad hoc committee have a proportional representation similar to the General Service Conference and be chaired by the Chair of the General Service Board.

The Committee recommended that the editorial revisions made by the A.A. Grapevine staff to "The A.A. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print" pamphlet be approved with minor suggestions.

Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

- The committee considered permitting A.A. Grapevine, Inc., to accept contributions limited to the same General Service Board contribution policy, to be used for operation expenses with excess funds continuing to be forwarded to the Reserve Fund and agreed to take no action. The committee noted that the current financial structure is appropriate.
- The committee reviewed the contents of the A.A. Grapevine Workbook with appreciation.
- The committee discussed at length and agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that the A.A. Grapevine produce in the year 2012 or later:
 - Working the Program (working title)
A collection of AA Grapevine stories on recovery from alcoholism
 - Happy, Joyous, and Free (working title)
A collection of AA Grapevine stories reflecting experience, strength, hope and humor
 - Young and New to AA (working title)
A collection about getting sober young from those who have done it
- In order to adhere to our spiritual principle of self-support, the Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine suggests that the A.A. Grapevine Board only propose balanced operating budgets to the General Service Board.
- A single issue of Grapevine, La Viña and/or La Vigne magazine be included, with an introductory letter that offers AAGrapevine.org information, in the GSR packet for all new GSRs. Format and costs are to be determined jointly A.A. Grapevine and AAWS.
- Encourage each home group to purchase annual subscriptions.
- The A.A. Grapevine Board look at distribution techniques of journals similar to the Grapevine, including La Vigne, as well as other General Service structure journals.

2012

It was recommended that:

A.A. Grapevine, Inc. move forward with an audio strategy to have members call in and record their story on 3rd party recording technology.

- The stories will be subject to the same editorial process as print stories.
- The Audio endeavor will, at a minimum, break even financially.
- The committee requests that the board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time.
- The committee requests that a status and financial report be submitted to the 2013 Conference Committee on the Grapevine as background.

A.A. Grapevine, Inc., carry out the “Sunset” proposal for Grapevine items. The “Sunset” proposal is a plan to phase out older or slow-moving Grapevine items and archive them digitally or make them available in another format.

Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

- The committee agreed with the proposal to update, proofread, and digitize the Grapevine Workbook. The revised workbook will be available on the Grapevine website for downloading. The workbook will no longer be printed. Note: The cost of this project is estimated to be \$5,000.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2013 or later:
 - Attitude of Gratitude (working title)
 - Voices of Long Term Sobriety II (working title)
 - Women’s Stories in AA (working title)
 - GLBT in AA — We are all the same or Sober & Out (working title)
 - Relationships in Sobriety (working title)
 - Having Fun in Sobriety (working title)
 - Daily Grapevine (365 inspirational passages as originally published in GV’s thought of the day in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org)
 - Mid Sobriety Crisis (working title)
 - The Best of La Viña II
 - AA Inside the Walls (working title)
- The committee considered incorporating the service responsibilities and duties of the service position “Grapevine Representative” in the service responsibilities and duties of the “General Service Representative” and took no action.
- The committee requested that the AA Grapevine Board incorporate into all appropriate literature the 1962 Advisory Action that: “retiring delegates become Grapevine Representatives (GvRs) in their areas, with the objective of a GvR in each group.”
- The committee requested that groups that do not have a GvR or RLV consider incorporating these duties into the duties of the GSR.
- The committee requested that the AA Grapevine Board look into the feasibility of producing one book in ASL format.
- The committee requested that the AA Grapevine Board provide a report to the 2013 Conference Committee on the Grapevine as background, on the cost of reformatting Grapevine magazine from its current design to black/white interior, non-glossy, minimal photos and increase the font size.

2013

Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions::

- The committee reviewed the 2013 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy with appreciation and made the following requests:

- That Grapevine communications regarding the Grapevine Audio Project specify that GV is not recording meeting speakers at AA events.
- That an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future, be provided to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the results of the 2012 assessment of La Viña as a bimonthly, perfect bound, black and white, 68-page magazine and concluded:
 - The committee recognized that funding La Viña as a service, through the General Fund, is an issue affecting the overall Fellowship.
 - The committee acknowledged the increase in circulation by 8.6% from January 2011 to December 2012 may be tied to the changes in format and additional content.
 - The committee acknowledged that the 2012 increase in La Viña deficit results in large part from allocation of pension funding expense.
 - The committee expressed concern that funding La Viña through the General Fund of the General Service Board while AA Grapevine Inc. has responsibility for the production of La Viña may suggest an imbalance between responsibility and authority.

The committee requested that the GV board submit a proposal to the 2014 Conference Committee on the Grapevine that would significantly reduce the La Viña deficit.

- The committee considered discontinuing the requirement for the current format of the La Viña print magazine (i.e., 68 pages, perfect bound) and took no action. The committee needed more background regarding La Viña's financial history and information regarding what a new format would be.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Corporate Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2014 or later:
 1. Making Amends (working title)
Members share their experience about making Ninth Step amends from stories previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 2. How I Found My Higher Power (working title)
A collection of stories by AA members sharing their experience with their personal journeys with Step Two, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
- The committee reviewed the revised workbook with appreciation and approved the draft copy with the following suggestions:
 - Expand Appendix V to include all past advisory actions about the Grapevine.
 - Look into the feasibility of hyperlinks and a live table of contents to facilitate ease of navigation of the electronic workbook.
- The Committee requested a report from the A.A. Grapevine Board on the feasibility of producing one book in ASL format.

2014

Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

- The committee reviewed the 2014 Grapevine Office Report on Audio Strategy and requested that an updated status and financial report on the project, including practices, financials, metrics and plans for the future, be provided to the 2015 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's suggestion that a new business plan is required for La Viña and requested that a new business plan be developed for La Viña and be brought back to the 2015 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine for review.
- The committee reviewed the report from the A.A. Grapevine Board on the feasibility of producing one book in ASL format. The committee agreed with the conclusion of the report that it is not feasible at this time to produce one book in ASL format due to cost considerations and a lack of expressed need.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2015 or later:
 1. The 12 Traditions—Our Experience (working title)

Members share their experience with each of our 12 AA Traditions, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 2. Cartoon Book II (working title)

A collection of cartoons by AA members, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 3. Special Needs (working title)

Stories by members who are wheelchair-bound, blind, deaf, ill or with other special needs. How AA reaches out to everyone. Previously published stories in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 4. Diversity in A.A. (working title)

A.A. members of color share their own stories of getting sober—from previously published stories in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
- The committee discussed the request to reconsider publishing the “Alcoholism at Large” section of the Grapevine and took no action.
- The committee reviewed suggested changes from A.A. Grapevine Board to the pamphlet “A.A. Grapevine and La Viña: Our Meetings in Print” (P-52) and made the following suggestions:
 - Re-edit the pamphlet for consistency and grammar.
 - Use the subtitle “Our Meetings in Print and Other Media” on the cover of the pamphlet and on page 5.

The committee requested that a revised draft be presented to the 2015 Conference Committee for review.

- The committee reviewed the Grapevine Workbook.

2015

Committee Considerations:

- The committee reviewed the 2015 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 2016 Conference Committee on the Grapevine.
- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's 2015 Office Report on La Viña and agreed that La Viña is published as cost effectively as possible given existing parameters and conditions. The committee agreed with the A.A. Grapevine Board's suggestion to develop and implement a communication plan that utilizes (but is not limited to) A.A. Grapevine, Inc.'s newsletters, Forum presentations, and *Box 4-5-9* to clarify to the Fellowship La Viña's unique status as a hybrid entity that is at once a service to the Fellowship and is also required to strive to become self-supporting.
- The committee encouraged the support and purchase of Subscription Gift Certificates by local service committees, groups and members as a way to carry the A.A. message. These subscriptions would be used to provide magazines to people in correctional facilities, treatment centers, nursing homes, and other facilities or locations. This work would be accomplished at the local area level.
- The committee discussed ways to increase organization-wide support for Grapevine and La Viña and suggested that:
 1. Areas champion and embrace Grapevine/La Viña as the International Journals of A.A. through consistent narrative support in all relevant presentations, reports, announcements, newsletters and letters.
 2. All A.A. entities be offered the opportunity to include a GV/LV link (with or without images) on local/area websites.
 3. All areas participate in AAGV Inc.'s 2015 Subscription Challenge.
- The committee agreed to forward to the A.A. Grapevine Board the suggestion that Grapevine produce in the year 2016 or later:
 1. Armed Forces Members' AA Stories (working title)

Members who have served in the military share their experiences with getting sober or staying sober in AA, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.
 2. Voices from Early AA (working title)

A collection of stories from the earliest days of Alcoholics Anonymous and Grapevine, previously published in Grapevine magazine and/or AAGrapevine.org.

- The committee reviewed the Grapevine Workbook.

Revised: 05/15

Glossary

AREA A geographical division within a state or province. Some states or provinces have only one area; in heavily AA-populated places, there may be two, three, or more areas in the state or province. For example, Illinois is divided into three areas: Chicago, Northern Illinois, Southern Illinois.

AREA GRAPEVINE CHAIRPERSON Sets up a Grapevine committee and coordinates Grapevine activities at the area level; establishes district GvRs where needed; acts as a resource for all district GvRs within the area; plans workshops, gives talks, etc., on the Grapevine; often, but not always, an area officer.

ASSEMBLY A meeting of GSRs, district committee members, and area officers to discuss area affairs and, every other year, to elect a delegate and committee officers.

DELEGATE Man or woman elected at the assembly to represent the area at the annual meeting of the General Service Conference, and to bring back to the area the results of the Conference meeting.

DISTRICT Division of groups within an area, represented by a district committee member.

DISTRICT GVR/RLV Grapevine/La Viña representative at the district level. Serves as a link between group GVRs/RLVs and the district and area structure.

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM) An experienced GSR elected by the other GSRs to represent the groups of their district in area committee meetings and to coordinate service activities in the district.

GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 1) The structure involving committee members, GSRs, and delegates in an area; 2) the annual meeting of Conference delegates each April in New York.

GSR General Service Representative. Elected to represent his or her group at the area level. GSRs vote for the district committee member and for the delegate and other officers at the area level.

GVR Grapevine representative.

GRAPEVINE ITEMS Formerly called “special items.” Grapevine and La Viña books, eBooks, wall calendar, pocket planner, tapes, reprints, etc. originate in the magazine and aagrapevine.org.

REGION A geographic grouping of several states or provinces from which a regional trustee is elected to serve on the General Service Board.

RLV La Viña representative

[Some of the definitions above were adapted from *The AA Service Manual*, 1992-1993 Edition.]

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