

## Report from the June 26, 2016 Area 55 General Service Assembly

John started out by thanking everyone in the body for sending him to the General Service Conference in New York on April 16<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> as our Delegate. He arrived Friday evening and said he and his wife Connie had a convenient time getting in. He said he attended and voted in all sessions and that the days started at 8:00am and ended at 9 or 10:00pm. He has a PowerPoint presentation of his report that he is working with some computer savvy people to get to us. The committees meet early in the week and the Conference reports begin on Wednesday. The first day on Saturday was considered pre-Conference and they took a bus trip to Stepping Stones. This helped to break the ice with some good fellowship on the way there and back. Saturday evening there were some meetings including the Remote Communities meeting, the 1728 meeting and the first Delegates only meeting. Afterward he met with his CPC/PI committee's Chair and other committee members. There were 93 Delegates from the US and Canada plus 25 Trustees and Directors and 16 Grapevine and GSO staff members. The full Conference began on Sunday morning with roll call. There was immediately a floor action to change the agenda and avert it to the original agenda. There was a poll vote in December of 2015 to postpone the Anonymity workshop until 2017 and replace it with a discussion workshop devoted to the General Service Board's Strategic Plan and brainstorming about the future of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Chairman of the Board admitted that the poll vote process was handled improperly. There was much discussion for and against. Finally, the question was called and John voted to restore the agenda. He was in the minority but did not go to the mic. The motion failed and the Conference moved on. Sunday afternoon was the Treasurer's Report. John will give everyone the highlights from this report. The opening banquet took place Sunday night. There were 5 speakers, 10 minutes each. One was a French speaking man and John got a feeling of what he and others who don't speak English must go through trying to interpret the whole week of the Conference. This is why it is very important that we get our literature printed in other languages. There is a new General Manager at GSO, his name is Greg T. One focus on the Board has been on strategic planning and A.A.'s future. AAWS Report: Big Book sales in 2015 were down about 500,000 from 2014. In 2015, publishing sales were about \$2 Million below estimate. In 2016, budget shortfall for AAWS is about \$26,000. The largest International Conference held so far was in Atlanta but they had a \$210,431 shortfall because they had 7,000 more people than expected. We have to stop being last minute people and we have to get our registrations in ahead so they can plan properly for these Conferences. 2015 Contributions were up 3.71% over 2014 but there are fewer groups contributing with each contributing a greater amount. Grapevine report: 2015 circulation is down 2,034 copies from 2014. Grapevine had budgeted losses of \$14,614 but came out with a net income of \$245,204. In March 2016, Grapevine, Inc. transferred \$260,000 into its Reserve Fund and this is the third consecutive year they've had to do this. Overhead costs came in at \$227,899. Financial report overall was that General Service Board and Grapevine both operated in the black but LaVina operated at a loss. The total amount we were in the black for 2015 was just over \$300,000. Self-supporting bottom line is that we are supporting 73.4% of the services we receive. This will become even more acute as the sales of print literature go down. We are looking at the question that if contributions don't go up, how are we going to make up the difference? We can see that group contributions have been going down over the last 10 years. On the International Convention, they discussed keeping the funds for the International Conventions in a separate fund so that they can just draw out of there if necessary. They are talking about raising the registration fees again. Wednesday morning featured the breakout groups followed by an open sharing session. John introduced having a fund raiser with a \$50.00 Big Book Campaign. He said they used electronic voting and it was extremely beneficial. He will get to how all the voting turned out in the next session. Karen M. asked if John's report could be put on the Website and John said he would look into this. Bob S. asked if John had gotten an answer from Greg T. about why he didn't send a rep

from GSO to our last Mini-Conference and John said he has yet to get an answer from Greg but will get one because we have the Delegates/Past Delegates Conference and our next Mini-Conference coming up. Jim S. asked if we have the capability to see a PowerPoint presentation and we voted to have the Group Services committee look into this. We have a computer and a screen (at the Senior Center) but we need a projector. Group Services will look into what we have and what we need.