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AA GRAPEVINE

AGENDA

Conference Committee on AA Grapevine

Monday, May 20, 2019 – 9 a.m. - Noon

Room 405

Chairperson: Roger W.

Secretary: Jon W.

Conference Committee Members

Panel 68

Don B.

Earl C.

Allen D.

Sara P.

Roger W.

Panel 69

Jeff B.

Jenny D.

Rhonda F.

Stephen S.

- A. Consider the list of suggested AA Grapevine book topics for 2020 and later.
- B. Consider request to remove the "Alcoholism at Large" section from AA Grapevine.
- C. Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.
- D. Review AA Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey and summary.

Note: 1989 Conference Advisory Action

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their Agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

2019 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine

ITEM A: Consider the list of suggested AA Grapevine book topics for 2020 or later.

Background Notes:

From 2002 Advisory Action:

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.

From 1992 Advisory Action:

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 should 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.

Background

1. Staff Report for 2019
2. List of Conference approved titles for Grapevine and La Viña
3. A.A. Grapevine Catalog (mailed to committee members; online at www.aagrapevine.org)
4. A.A.W.S. Catalog (mailed to committee members; online at www.aa.org)

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Staff Report
AA Grapevine Items
Suggestions for production in the year 2020 or later

AAGV items are published for several reasons: first, to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous stories from members and friends of the Fellowship; and second, to help GV maintain its self-supporting status. Furthermore, GV items provide a service to the Fellowship by making GV and LV articles available in a wide range of formats: print, audio and digital. They also introduce both magazine titles through these anthologies to those who are unfamiliar with them; and help deepen member's interest and understanding of the Steps, Traditions, and history of Alcoholics Anonymous.

1.

The Early Days of AA (working title)

Classic stories by members from the 30's, 40's and 50's about what AA was like from the pages of Grapevine.

Softcover: Approx. 120-200 pps
Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)
\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)
Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.
Price: \$9.99

2.

Getting Involved in General Service (working title)

Inspiring stories of experience by AA members who got involved in service below the group, from the pages of Grapevine.

Softcover: Approx. 100-200 pps
Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)
\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)
Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.
Price: \$9.99

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3.

Surrender and Hope (working title) (La Viña Book)

Spanish-speaking AA members share how they came to surrender and join AA for a new life, from the pages of La Viña.

Softcover: Approx. 100-200 pps

Projected unit cost (includes printing and design)

\$2.50 per book (10,000 piece print run)

Price: \$11.50

eBook

Estimated project cost: \$2,000.

Price: \$9.99

PREVIOUSLY APPROVED GRAPEVINE AND LA VIÑA BOOK TITLES

— as of Jan 2019

GV BOOKS:

Fun in Sobriety

Voices of Long-Term Sobriety 2

Special Needs (Accessibilities)

Diversity in AA

Gratitude

Mid-Sobriety Crisis

AA Inside the Walls (Prison)

How I found My Higher Power

Steps 4 & 5

Our 12 Steps II

All About GV Reps (doing service with GV & LV)

Prayer & Meditation

AA & Families

LV BOOKS:

Stories by Hispanic Women in AA

Stories from LV Workshops

Carrying the Message into Institutions

2019 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine

ITEM B: Consider request to remove the "Alcoholism at Large" section from AA Grapevine.

Background Notes:

- **2014:** Additional Committee Consideration
The committee discussed the request to reconsider publishing the "Alcoholism at Large" section of the Grapevine and took no action
- **2009:** Additional Committee Considerations
The committee considered a request that "the 2007 Conference Advisory Action recommending that 'the AA 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 AA Grapevine (Alcoholism at Large) be placed more prominently and distinctively and that the language of the disclaimer in the AA Grapevine and La Viña be reviewed for both clarity and consistency.

Background

1. Office Report for 2019
2. Letter from Area 64
3. Bill Wilson letter to Royal Shepard

Office Report

Alcoholism at Large

History:

Set forth below is a historical summary of the publication of information on alcoholism in the magazine in the 54 years from 1946 to 1991.

- **1946-1959:** The magazine published excerpts from the general press about alcoholism research and treatment. These sections had different titles, known variously as "The Clip Sheet," "Helping Hands," and "Outside AA."
- **1960-1966:** During this period there was no formal section in the Grapevine; however, there were occasional excerpts and articles pertaining to the subject matter at hand.
- **1966:** "About Alcoholism" debuted. Known to Grapevine readers as "The Gray Pages," this section carried information on the legal, social, and medical aspects of alcoholism. It is important to note that this section attempted to formalize the magazine's previous efforts to respond to readers' requests for more of this type of information.
- **1989:** An agenda item was presented at the Conference suggesting that the "About Alcoholism" section be dropped and a section on AA history be developed to replace it. It did not pass.
- **1991:** "About Alcoholism" discontinued. The recommendation that the Grapevine discontinue publishing the "About Alcoholism" section was voted yes by the Conference.
- **2007:** Per the recommendation of the 2007 conference a section on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer was developed. This section was called "Alcoholism At Large."

The "Gray Pages" have had a long history of actions and inactions at the Conference:

1974 It was decided that the "Gray Pages" stay in the magazine

1984 Yes, stay in

1991 Take out

2007 Put back in

2008 Stay In

2009 Stay In

2014 Stay in

The Grapevine's Charter and purpose:

1. Publishing articles on alcoholism is congruent with AAGV's charter.

It is important that the AA community be informed about research being undertaken in the field of alcoholism. First, we are sanctioned and encouraged by our Corporate charter to fulfill this mission. Our Charter states that the duties of AA Grapevine, Inc. are:

"To prepare, edit, print and publish...written material concerning generally the subject of alcoholism and related matters and dealing with the various means, methods, techniques and procedures available or proposed for the treatment, relief, rehabilitation and recovery of persons suffering from or potentially subject to alcoholism."

2. As Bill W. wrote in "On the Alcoholism Front" (March 1958):

"We are glad of any kind of education that accurately informs the public and changes its age-old attitude toward the drunk. More and more we regard all who labor in the total field of alcoholism as our companions on a march from darkness into light. We see that we can accomplish together what we could never accomplish in separation and in rivalry."

From: Area Delegate
To: Conference
Cc: Area Alternate Delegate; ROGER W/ ; Cathy B
Subject: Agenda Item Proposal from Area 64
Date: Monday, October 22, 2018 9:55:14 PM
Attachments: GV AAL D30 Motion and Background.pdf

Patrick,
I hope this email finds you fully adjusted to your new job as Conference Coordinator at GSO. I am messaging you today to inform you of the decision made by our Area 64 Assembly Body at our 2018 4th Qtr. Assembly held on October 19-21. The Area 64 Assembly voted with substantial unanimity to propose that the following item be included on the Agenda for the Conference Committee on Grapevine at the 69th General Service Conference.

"Remove the Alcoholism at Large page from the AA Grapevine"

This was brought to Area 64 in the form of a motion by District 30 / Area 64. Attached is background that was compiled by District 30 and presented to the Area 64 Assembly Body. Thank you for your work Patrick and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Love & Service
Jon P
Panel 68 / Area 64 TN Delegate

MOTION FROM DISTRICT 30 TO AREA 64

Motion: Area 64 to send an Agenda item to the 69th General Service Conference to remove "Alcoholism at Large" from Grapevine.

District 30 voted unanimously to bring this motion for Area 64's support in sending an Agenda Proposal to the 69th General Service Conference to remove the "Alcoholism at Large" page from Grapevine.

BACKGROUND

We want to see the "Alcoholism at Large" page removed from Grapevine as the content on that page clearly has nothing to do with Alcoholics Anonymous and our primary purpose. The content undoubtedly falls into the realm of "outside issues" and is in conflict with Traditions 6 and 10.

The Grapevine is popularly called "A.A.'s meeting in print." At our in-person meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, we don't discuss outside issues, including topics containing scientific opinion on alcoholism from medical journals or the use of club drugs like ecstasy as an aid to alcohol addiction — topics that have been on the "Alcoholism at Large" page during the past 8 months. (See synopsis sheet and pages from Dec. 2017 - July 2018)

On page S87 of The A.A. Service Manual, the opening paragraph states: "Grapevine mirrors the Fellowship by publishing members' stories of recovery from alcoholism in print, audio and online."

On page S88 of The A.A. Service Manual, under "Nature of the Magazine," Bill W. shares when Grapevine was 1-year-old: "We of the Grapevine once more affirm that this is your periodical. It will be the vehicle for your thoughts, your feelings, your experiences and your aspirations — if you care to make it that. ... Always wishing to reflect A.A. and nothing but A.A., it will be the ideal of the Grapevine to always serve, never to dictate or command."

Further, The A.A. Grapevine Statement of Purpose in each issue states, "Written, edited, illustrated, and read by A.A. members and others interested in the A.A. program of recovery from alcoholism, Grapevine is a lifeline linking one alcoholic to another." It also says, "A.A. Grapevine communicates the experience, strength, and hope of its contributors and reflects a broad geographic spectrum of current A.A. experience with recovery, unity and service."

Finally, the Grapevine Statement of Purpose closes with: "Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be but one central purpose: The Grapevine will try to carry the A.A. message to alcoholics and practice the A.A. principles in all its affairs."

While the content of "Alcoholism at Large" may be interesting material, it does not belong in our "meeting in print."

GRAPEVINE "ALCOHOLISM AT LARGE" TOPICS
DECEMBER 2017 - JULY 2018

DECEMBER 2017

- MDMA (club drug ecstasy) studied as aid in alcohol addiction (The Guardian, U.K.)
- Stress Hormone Linked to Alcoholism (Molecular Psychiatry, U.S.)

JANUARY 2018

- Campus programs help curb binge drinking in college students (Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, U.S.)
- Hospital screening and interventions; risk score assignment (Science Daily, U.K.)

FEBRUARY 2018

- Parents' attitudes can curb teen drinking (BMC Public Health, Australia)
- Huge rise in U.S. alcoholism rates; due to increased stress/despair (JAMA Psychiatry, U.S.)

MARCH 2018

- Online tool for alcohol abuse help; an easy-to-use tool to help choose treatment (NIAAA, U.S.)
- Update on alcohol abuse drugs in Europe (Addiction, Europe)

APRIL 2018

- Hard liquor and aggression (BMJ Open, U.K.)
- Youth drinking and marijuana use can stunt achievement (American Public Health Association, U.S.)

MAY 2018

- Increase in alcohol-related ER visits (Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, U.S.)
- Treating fetal alcohol defects (Neuroscience, U.S.)

JUNE 2018

- Teen drinking and adult liver problems (Journal of Hepatology, Sweden)
- MRI study on alcohol and aggression (Cognitive, Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience, U.S.)

JULY 2018

- Heavy drinking big risk factor for dementia (The Lancet Public Health, France)
- Study on alcohol cravings; neurological factors to alcoholism and other addictions (Alcohol and Alcoholism, U.S.)

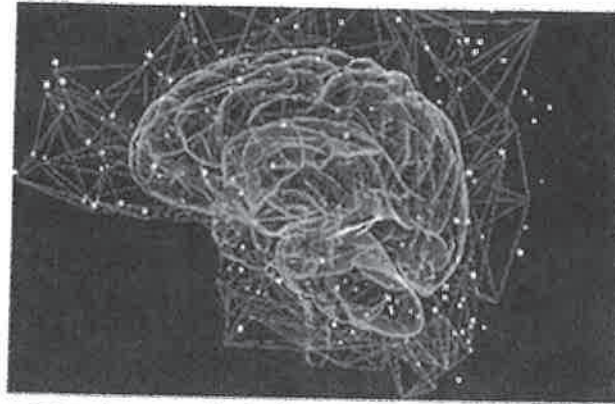
Alcoholism At Large

The purpose of this page is to offer information that may further readers' understanding of the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism; the severity and international scope of the illness; and the worldwide efforts being made to combat it. Publication here does not imply endorsement or affiliation. AA does not conduct or participate in research, nor does it hold any opinion on research conducted by others.

Stress hormone linked to alcoholism

A hormone produced in the adrenal glands may contribute to the development of alcoholism, according to a new study from researchers at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

The hormone, aldosterone, helps regulate a number of important physiological processes, including regulation of the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex, two key brain areas involved in the development and maintenance of what scientists call "alcohol use



Researchers on alcoholism look to the brain.

disorder."

The study supports previous findings that amygdala dysfunction heightens activation of brain stress systems resulting in anxiety and other negative emotions, while disruption of the prefrontal cortex impairs executive control systems involved in the ability to

make decisions and regulate one's actions, emotions and impulses.

"This neuroendocrine pathway may be particularly important in anxiety, stress and stress-induced alcohol drinking," said senior study author Lorenzo Leggio of the NIAAA.

*Source: Molecular Psychiatry,
May 2, 2017*

MDMA studied as aid in alcohol addiction

Researchers at the Imperial College of London are set to begin the world's first clinical study into the use of MDMA (also known as "ecstasy") to treat alcohol addiction. They will test whether MDMA, in conjunction with psychotherapy, could help patients who are heavy drinkers and have been unsuccessful in other treatment programs overcome ad-

diction more effectively than conventional treatments.

"We know that MDMA works really well in helping people who have suffered trauma and it helps to build empathy," said Ben Sessa, senior research fellow at Imperial College of London. "Many of my patients who are alcoholics have suffered some sort of trauma in their past and this plays a role in their addiction."

*Source: The Guardian,
June 30, 2017*

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Young drinkers: good & bad news

The good news is that after many years of rising rates of binge drinking, alcohol-impaired driving and alcohol-related deaths among young adults aged 18 to 24, the rates are coming down, according to a new study.

The bad news is that the decline exists only among college students, not young adults who are not in college. The study also found that alcohol-related overdose hospitalizations and overdose deaths have increased in the same age group.

Study author Ralph Hingson, at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, said that an increased emphasis by college administrators on adopting interventions aimed at reducing problematic



Campus programs help curb binge drinking.

drinking may have played a role. "Among young adults who aren't in college, there aren't the same organizational supports to implement interventions," he said.

The increase in alcohol overdoses in young drinkers may relate to the overall rise in extreme binge drinking, according to Hingson. The problem is particularly common among people who used other drugs, he added.

Source: Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, July 2017

Hospital screening and interventions

A study of over 50,000 hospital admissions has shown that screening for alcohol abuse in hospitals helps identify patients who need help. Patients who need an intervention can be easily identified based on a simple risk score assigned by hospital personnel to people with high rates of emergency room attendance, recurrent hospital

admissions, or high risk of liver disease.

"Many people who die from alcoholic liver disease have a history of alcohol misuse and recurrent hospital admissions, each representing a potential missed opportunity for effective intervention," explained lead investigator Richard Aspinall at Portsmouth Hospitals in the United Kingdom. "We found that patients could easily be categorized based on a simple risk score."

Source: Science Daily, July 27, 2017

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Parents' attitudes can curb teen drinking

A new study by Australian health researchers shows that parents' attitudes around alcohol use strongly influence their children's drinking habits.

"Parental behavior and attitudes toward alcohol really do make a difference, and can help prevent children from drinking at an early age," says Jacqueline Bowden, behavioral scientist at the University of Adelaide.

Across all ages, students



Can parents make a difference in teen drinking?

were less likely to drink if their parents showed disapproval of underage drinking. Countering that trend, the researchers found that smoking and approval of drinking from friends were more likely to result in drinking.

"Our evidence shows that

parents have a significant and substantial role to play, to help their kids develop a healthier relationship with alcohol early," says Bowden. "Parents can set the boundaries and create clear expectations."

Source: BMC Public Health
June 2017

Huge rise in U.S. alcoholism rates

A recent study in the U.S. found that the rate of alcoholism rose nearly 50 percent from 2000 to 2010, which means nearly 13 percent of Americans would meet the clinical criteria of alcoholism. And here's a sobering statistic: Among adults under age 30, more than 23 percent met the criteria for alcoholism; that's nearly 1 out of 4.

The study's findings used data from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcoholism

and Related Conditions, via the National Institutes of Health. There were variations among different sub-populations. Alcoholism rates were higher for men (16.7 percent), as well as for all Native Americans (16.6 percent), people living in poverty (14.3 percent) and people in the Midwest (14.8 percent).

"I think the increases are due to [increased] stress and despair and the use of alcohol as a coping mechanism," said the study's lead author, Bridget Grant, a researcher at the National Institutes of Health.

Source: JAMA Psychiatry
Sept. 2017

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Online tool for alcohol abuse help

A new online resource can help people find effective care for alcoholism. The Alcohol Treatment Navigator, designed by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), is an easy-to-use tool to help people navigate the often-complicated process of choosing treatment for alcohol problems.

"We developed this tool to help address the alcohol



It's an easy-to-use tool to help choose treatment.

"treatment gap," said NIAAA Director George F. Koob, PhD. "People with alcohol use disorder often don't know where to turn for help. The Alcohol Treatment Navigator offers a

comprehensive strategy to help people search for professionally-led, evidence-based alcohol treatment, which should improve their chances for success."

Source: NIAAA, October, 2017

Update on alcohol abuse drugs in Europe

A scientific review of five drugs currently being prescribed by doctors in Europe to treat alcohol abuse found that evidence of their effectiveness is lacking. The researchers looked at trials carried out on nalmefene, naltrexone, acamprosate, baclofen and topiramate. At best, the researchers said, the pills had a low- or medium-level effect on the amount people drank.

"That doesn't mean the drugs aren't effective; it means we don't yet know if they are effective," said study lead author Dr. Clément Palpacuer, of Inserm, the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research.

The use of one of the drugs, baclofen, grew in France after the cardiologist Olivier Ameisen wrote a book describing how he had cured his addiction with the drug. But at high doses, the drug has been associated with patient deaths, and a Dutch study showed it may work no better than counseling.

Source: Addiction, October, 2017

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Hard liquor and aggression

A recent online survey showed that use of hard liquor has the highest association with feelings of aggression. Researchers found that drinking liquor was more likely to produce negative feelings than all the other types of alcohol. Nearly 30 percent of liquor drinkers associated this type of alcohol with feelings of aggression compared with around 2.5 percent of red wine drinkers.

The research team said that understanding the rela-



Are liquor drinkers more aggressive?

tionships between different drinks and their emotional consequences may provide important insights into the prevention of alcohol-related harm.

"For centuries, the history of rum, gin, vodka and other spirits has been laced with violence," said professor Mark Bellis, Director of

Policy, Research and International Development at Public Health Wales, in the U.K. The study cites figures that show an estimated 3.3 million deaths and around one in 20 cases of ill health and injury around the globe are directly attributable to alcohol.

Source: BMJ Open
November, 2017

Youth drinking can stunt achievement

Young adults who may be heading toward dependency on marijuana and alcohol are less likely to achieve adult life goals, according to new research.

Researchers at UConn Health in Connecticut examined data from the Collaborative Study on the Genetics of Alcoholism to track the effect of teenage alcohol and marijuana use. Overall,

individuals who were dependent on either marijuana or alcohol during their teen years achieved lower levels of education, were less likely to be employed full time, were less likely to get married and had lower social economic potential.

"This study found that chronic marijuana use in adolescence was negatively associated with achieving important developmental milestones in young adulthood," said study author Elizabeth Harari.

Source: American Public Health Association
November, 2017

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Increase in alcohol-related ER visits

The rate of alcohol-related visits to U.S. emergency rooms (ERs) increased by nearly 50 percent between 2006 and 2014, especially among females and drinkers who are middle-aged or older, according to a new study at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

"In just nine years, the number of people transported to the ER annually for medical emergencies due to alcohol increased from about 3 million to 5 million," said



More women are arriving at ERs due to alcohol.

NIAAA Director George F. Koob.

"Recent studies suggest that the drinking habits of females and males are becoming more similar in the U.S.," said Aaron White, lead researcher. "The larger increase in the rate of ER visits among females

compared to males provides further evidence of narrowing gender gaps in alcohol use and related harms. This trend is concerning given that females appear to be more susceptible to some of the detrimental health effects of alcohol."

Source: *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, January 2018

Treating fetal alcohol deficits

Lithium chloride, a drug used to treat bipolar disease and aggression, blocks the sleep disturbances, memory loss and learning problems tied to fetal alcohol syndrome, new experiments in mice show.

Researchers at NYU School of Medicine found that lithium chloride-treated mice were much less likely to show the 25 percent drop in memory and cognitive test

scores seen in untreated mice given the same amount of alcohol.

"Our study showed that lithium chloride prevented many of the damaging neurological effects of alcohol abuse on the still-developing brain, especially the impact on the parts of the brain controlling sleep," says co-senior study investigator Donald Wilson, PhD.

Wilson cautions that the drug is "likely far too risky for pregnant mothers."

Source: *Neuroscience*
November 2017

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Teen drinking and adult liver problems

Results of a large, long-term study in Sweden have confirmed that drinking during late adolescence could be the first step toward liver problems in adulthood and that people who had a history of late-teen drinking should talk to their doctors about liver disease prevention.

"Our study showed that how much you drink in your late teens can predict the risk of developing cirrhosis later in life," said Hannes Hagström, MD, of the Centre for Digestive Diseases, Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden.

Data indicated that alcohol consumption early in life was associated with an increased risk of developing severe liver disease. Researchers followed a large group of men for 39 years, after which 383 men had developed severe liver disease,



Study shows that adolescent drinking may cause cirrhosis later in life.

which was defined as a diagnosis of liver cirrhosis, liver failure or death from liver disease.

Source: *Journal of Hepatology*
January, 2018

Study on alcohol and aggression

Researchers have used magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans to better understand why people often become aggressive and violent after drinking alcohol. After only two drinks, the

researchers noted, changes were seen in the way the prefrontal cortex of the brain works. This part of the brain tends to moderate a person's levels of aggression.

In the study, 50 healthy young men were either given two drinks containing vodka, or placebo drinks. While lying in an MRI scanner, they had to compete in a task

used to observe levels of aggression in response to provocation.

Those men who consumed alcohol showed a dip in activity in the prefrontal cortex. The dip means that the brains of men who drank were not as effective at moderating aggressive impulses.

Source: *Cognitive, Affective,
& Behavioral Neuroscience*
February, 2018

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Heavy drinking big risk factor for dementia

According to a nationwide study on over one million adults diagnosed with dementia in France, alcohol-use disorders are the most important preventable risk factors for the onset of all types of dementia, especially early-onset dementia.

This study looked at the effect of alcohol-use disorders, and included people who had been diagnosed with mental and behavioral disorders or chronic diseases that were



Chronic alcohol use is linked to dementia.

attributable to chronic harmful use of alcohol. Of the 57,000 cases of early-onset dementia (before the age of 65), the majority were related to "chronic heavy drinking."

"Alcohol-induced brain damage and dementia are preventable, and known-

effective preventive and policy measures can make a dent into premature dementia deaths," says Dr. Jürgen Rehm, study coauthor and Director of the Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto.

Source: The Lancet Public Health
February, 2018

Study on alcohol cravings

A new study on neurochemical changes associated with alcohol addiction shows that the neurotransmitter glutamate plays a role in some alcohol cravings that contribute to the development of alcohol dependence and alcohol-use disorders, which occur in about 30 percent of Americans.

"This is the first study to document changes in glutamate levels during exposure to alcohol cues in people with alcohol-use disorders," said Sharlene Newman at Indiana University, Bloomington, who worked on the study.

Newman added that this study may shine important light on further brain research into the contributing neurological factors to alcoholism and other addictions.

Source: Alcoholism and Alcoholism
February, 2018

AAGRAPEVINE, Inc.

February 2, 2018

Tony S

Dear Tony:

Warm greetings from chilly New York.

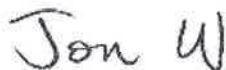
Thank you for sending the request "consider removing the "Alcoholism at Large" section from the Grapevine" be sent to the 68th General Service Conference Committee on the Grapevine.

Your request was presented at the AA Grapevine Board of Directors January 25, 2018 quarterly meeting. The Grapevine Board reviewed this request with great interest and lengthy discussion and made the decision not to take any action noting that this has been considered several times in the recent past.

We at Grapevine truly appreciate your interest and suggestions. We recognize that we publish this magazine on behalf of the Fellowship and make every effort to ensure that it supports recovery and 12th Step work of today's members.

The Fellowship's input is always welcome. Please do not hesitate to contact us, Tony, if you have further suggestions or questions.

Yours in fellowship,



Jon W

Secretary to the Conference Committee on the Grapevine

cc: Rick W , Conference Coordinator; Carole B Chairperson, Grapevine
Board of Directors; Ami B Executive Editor/Publisher, AA Grapevine

12 of 12

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Bedford Hills, N.Y.
March 12, 1946

Mr. Royal S

Dear Royal:

Thanks so much for your prompt and carefully considered response to my request that you draw the rough draft of a Certificate of Incorporation for the AA Grapevine. Though I haven't given it the intensive study it deserves, the first reading tells me that you have done a pretty fine job. While I agree heartily that we shall have to depend mainly on the quality of future Trustees and Grapeviners themselves, I still feel that the corporate structure within which they cooperate may prove vitally important should difficulties arise at some time in the future.

In trying to think the Grapevine matter through, I have asked myself what would be the ideal relationship of the paper to the AA groups as a whole, to the Board of Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, and to the general public. After consulting the Grapeviners and most of the Board of Trustees, our collective thinking about an ideal for the Grapevine has taken on a fairly definite shape:

1. The Grapevine should become the Voice of AA as a whole.
2. The Grapevine staff should be primarily responsive to AA Group opinion and tradition.
3. The Grapevine Editor should be the ultimate judge of what is to be printed. In this respect he ought to enjoy greater freedom than the editor of a commercial newspaper whose owners commonly hire a man favorable to their own opinions and hold over him the power of the purse.
4. The Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation are the final judges of national AA policy. As such, they should have power to intervene in the affair of the Grapevine should the paper go wrong from a fiscal or National policy standpoint. But the Trustees should not have, under normal conditions, any power to dictate to the Grapevine staff so long and the paper conforms to the spirit of the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and keeps its financial house in order. Under ordinary conditions the Trustees should be able to suggest and advise - but not to command. Such a relationship between the Trustees and the Grapevine would soon create a powerful AA tradition so that no individual or single group of individuals may ever dominate our National Organ. The ultimate inspiration of the paper ought to arise from the AA Groups as a whole, the Grapevine staff with its country-wide correspondents being the mirror in which all Groups are reflected.

1 of 7

CONFIDENTIAL: This is background for the 69th General Service Conference, and as such may be a confidential A.A. document. Distribution is limited to A.A. members. Placement of this material in a location accessible to the public, including aspects of the Internet, such as Web sites available to the public, may breach the confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of members, since it may contain members' full names and addresses.

5. The Grapevine should feel free to print articles expressing the widest differences of opinion on all topics of a strictly AA nature. But it should be traditionally, perhaps legally, prohibited from printing anything of a controversial nature on topics having nothing to do with the primary aim of AA. Such, for example, as pieces touching reform, politics, social ideology, or sectarian religion.

6. Propaganda in aid of any person or cause, save AA itself, ought to be avoided. But the Grapevine ought never attempt to influence National or State legislation, even though the legislation might help Alcoholics Anonymous.

7. To further guarantee its integrity, the Grapevine should accept no paid advertising, nor seriously lend itself to any commercial venture however worthy.

8. The Grapevine should have freedom to print news articles relative to the whole field of alcoholism, excepting, however, those which might provoke needless dissension.

9. Though never to be operated for the profit of any individual, the Grapevine ought to be financially self-supporting. To insure its own continuity the Grapevine will need to maintain an office staff and eventually a paid editor. The Grapevine ought to be so priced that these expenses can normally be met without subsidies. In order that the Foundation may keep in close touch with Grapevine finances it is desirable that the Grapevine employ the same auditor as the Foundation.

10. The original Grapevine was wholly a volunteer effort. It is most strongly felt that an able volunteer staff should serve as editorial assistants. Volunteers serving in rotation would always insert new life blood into the Grapevine stream - they would tend to prevent overprofessionalization.

11. The managing directors of the Grapevine Corporation should be composed of two Trustees (or ex-Trustees) of the Alcoholic Foundation, two members of the volunteer Grapevine staff (or ex.volunteers), and the editor of the Grapevine - thus making a Board of five. The corporate stock of the Grapevine might consist of two classes, A and B. Class A would elect three managing directors. The Class B stock, electing two directors, would be donated to the Alcoholic Foundation. It should be stipulated that profit, if any, on the A shares should also go to the Foundation. Each Grapevine member of the Board would, upon his resignation, transfer his Class A share to his successor. His successor would be appointed by himself and his Grapevine associates on the Board. This arrangement should, under normal conditions, give the Grapevine staff managerial control of the paper. If there were ever any financial profit, the Alcoholic Foundation would receive it all. In case of difficulty it could be expected that at least one of the Grapevine staff on the Board would cast his vote with the Alcoholic Foundation Trustees, thus permitting the Trustees temporary management of the Grapevine if necessary.

12. To sum up: 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. The Grapevine will be carried on by a paid editor and a volunteer editorial staff, three of whom would be managing directors of the AA Grapevine, Inc. Under ordinary conditions the Grapevine should be financially self-supporting. The Grapevine Headquarters organization will be assisted by volunteer outlying editors and correspondents representative of all sections of the country, later on of the world. The Alcoholic Foundation, owning 97% of the stock, will guarantee the integrity of the Grapevine but will exercise no managerial control except in time of difficulty. Within the bounds of friendliness and good taste, the Grapevine will enjoy perfect freedom of speech on all matters directly pertaining to Alcoholics Anonymous. But it will be traditionally, perhaps legally, prohibited from taking sides, directly or indirectly, on controversial issues which do not concern AA as a whole. It will take no advertising, it will engage in no propaganda for any cause, however good. While the Grapevine will never become a general newspaper its news columns may cover the whole field of alcoholism on a strictly noncontroversial basis. The Grapevine will be a newspaper written by AAs and friends of AA. Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be but one central purpose, viz.: "The Grapevine will try to carry the AA message to alcoholics and practice AA principles in all its affairs."

While these observations could be better stated, I think they fairly well represent our feeling about the future of the Grapevine. And I'm sure the Certificate of Incorporation you submitted covers practically all the ground that such a Certificate should. Nobody is a prophet, so we surely shouldn't hamstring our Grapevine charter with too many "do's" and "don'ts." Many of the principles set down above would be better confirmed in our general AA literature and in a statement of editorial policy printed in each issue of the Grapevine.

In your letter of transmittal, you raised an important question about the General Policy Committee of the Alcoholic Foundation. You asked whether it was advisable to have our National Secretary and the Grapevine Editor sit with that committee. You felt the National Secretaryship should be a simple administrative job having nothing to do with national or group policy. You thought that both our Central Office and the Grapevine ought to be directly administered by the Foundation. Your feeling is a very natural one. I know it stems from your own sound thinking in the spheres of law and business. Not long ago I would have agreed with you at once. I would have given the Foundation complete authority over the Central Office and the Grapevine. Such a set up would seem to make for good sense and good administration. It would center unqualified authority in one spot.

But I now question that conclusion seriously. In the case of the Grapevine it is already clear that its editor, staff and outlying correspondents should have the privilege of disagreeing with the Trustees if they choose.

Suppose, for example, someone gave the Alcoholic Foundation of the future a million dollars. Suppose the alcoholics then on the Board were of the "sales-

man promoter" type. Suppose they absolutely convinced the nonalcoholic Trustees that the Alcoholic Foundation should, for example, immediately subsidize research, alcohol education, or commence construction of a large AA hospital in New York City. As the Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation nominate their successors (because elections among thousands of AAs are impractical) you can easily see how we might someday have a Board which, if it had enough money, would start thinking just like that - and with the best intentions in the world. If some future Board of Trustees started to spend money in such a fashion there would surely be a great uproar throughout the country. An enormous amount of controversy would develop. Group after group could split wide open on this wholly unnecessary issue. Though the Trustees spent money very wisely with respect to the particular project involved, the loss of group confidence in the Board might nevertheless be so great that the groups would stop sending their contributions to the Foundation. The damage could be immense.

Suppose, under such conditions, that the Trustees were able to control the Grapevine Editor. Suppose they had the authority to make him print what they thought he ought to print. We would no longer be hearing the Voice of AA. We would only be hearing a Board of Trustees trying to promote a project, a project which might encounter little effective resistance because group opposition to it would have no place to focus.

As a lawyer, you know better than anybody that situations like these do arise. The history of religion is full of controversy about authority, prestige and money. The present Board of Trustees are men of such high purpose and intelligence that nothing of the sort could happen now. Our present nonalcoholic Trustees are often a bulwark against doubtful schemes. They have frequently slowed us alcoholics down. But someday the AAs on a future Board might persuade their associates to undertake a well meaning, yet ruinous venture. Especially if the Foundation gets very rich - which God forbid. If that ever happened the Grapevine should be free to speak its mind. Who else could?

Viewed in this light, the structure of our Headquarters setup becomes terribly important. Of course, a legal instrument cannot, of itself, avert future trouble. But publication, in AA literature, of the nature of our Headquarters structure would create such a powerful tradition as to ultimately bind the Board of Trustees, the National Secretary, and the Grapevine Editor into a working unity, each with certain prerogatives. Beyond which, however, none of them would think of stepping.

With some embarrassment, I have drawn these possibilities to the attention of our present Board of Trustees. At first I feared they might feel as though their personal abilities were doubted. Happily that is not the case. All of us realize that we are not talking so much about the present. We are pondering a design for the future which will withstand the utmost strain if the need comes.

The position of the National Secretary is, I thin, somewhat different than that of the Grapevine Editor. As the Foundation received the money from the groups by which the Central Office is maintained, the Trustees are entirely

responsible for its conduct. Theoretically, the National Secretary should be a paid agent of the Foundation, pure and simple. But there are some practical reasons, arising out of the nature of the situation itself, why this can never be quite the case.

To begin with, the National Secretary lives very close to the leadership of our 700 groups. Many hundreds of these she has helped to form herself - sometimes by contact with new leaders as they come to New York, but more often through her huge personal correspondence transmitting scores of thousands of words of suggestion and encouragement. The National Secretary has, therefore, a personal relationship to our national situation which no one else has. In the minds of the groups - though she is linked to the Foundation and represents it - she does have a personal status very much her own. the National Secretary has a dual function. She not only represents the Foundation, she represents the groups also - she is their secretary, too.

Moreover, the National Secretary corresponds with the groups on policy matters all day long - AA policy, public relations policy. Half of her personal mail and conversation involves these subjects. In the nature of the case the National Secretary will always know more (and do more) about our policy than anyone else. In less matters she sometimes has to make policy on the spot because the Board of Trustees meets infrequently and its members cannot be reached quickly. Besides, the secretary has to interpret policy - has to make many decisions in the matter of particular applications. It's in the nature of the situation. There is no other practical way, that I can see, of handling policy at the Central Office. I used to look after many of these policy matters myself. Of course that should not be continued because our national Headquarters ought presently to stand on its own feet.

The actual relations between the National Secretary and the Trustees is, or probably ought to be, about the same that which exists between the president of a large active business and his Board of directors. While no president can run hog wild, and while the directors are the court of final decision on matters of policy, the president has, nevertheless, to be given some real scope of his own. Within fair limits his judgment has to be trusted. And his voice has to be heard in directors meetings. Otherwise his Board of directors would be operating too much in the dark, too remote from the business. The president of a corporation is much more than an employee. Then too, while decision on large policy matters always rests with the directors of the company, it is most often the president who suggests what new policies are needed. He not only administers old policy; he very often initiates new policy in the Board of directors. The directors of a business concern can never actually manage the business. If they try to do so, over the head of the president, they are bound to demoralize the undertaking.

Of course this parallel is not a perfect one. A real business organization works more on the principle of authority than does our national Headquarters set-up. The Trustees, the National Secretary and the Grapevine Editor serve the AA groups. In fact they could not, the alcoholic being what he is, do anything but serve. In the end they must respond to group sentiment and wishes. they could never dictate for long.

Yet I am sure that in considering a future structure we ought to take a good look at sound business practice when we try to determine the relationship that had better exist between the Foundation, the Grapevine, and the National Secretary. Where business principles fit the situation they ought to be adopted. And where business practices do not fit, they ought to be flatly rejected in favor of what will work best. Alcoholics Anonymous is unlike most forms of society. In some respects it operates on the soundest of business and religious tradition; in other respects it has thrown tradition and precedent out the window wholesale. Trial, error, experience - they tell us the final story. One can, however, sympathize with our baffled friends as they observe our paradoxical behavior!

We are still in a process of testing what our eventual Headquarters setup shall be. Take, for example, the proposed General Policy Committee of the Alcoholic Foundation. It is to be composed of three Trustees, the National Secretary and the Grapevine Editor. On the face of it, I confess it looks like nonsense. Yet there are quite practical reasons for its existence. Our Board of Trustees meets quarterly. These dates are too far apart to secure quick decisions on matters which the National Secretary feels too important for her to handle alone. At Policy Committee meetings three of the Trustees will be regularly brought face to face with the Grapevine Editor and the National Secretary. These two know the national situation, they will actually administer most of the policy, and of all people in AA they will be most familiar with our needs for new policy.

At these meetings at least three of the Trustees are bound to get intimately acquainted with those two people who represent the Heart and Voice of our national organization. I feel this personal acquaintanceship to be most important, in fact absolutely indispensable. The personal contact between the Trustees, the National Secretary, and the Grapevine Editor has been, in the past, far too remote. This is because I have been acting as a go-between; meeting now with the Trustees, then with the National Secretary, and occasionally with the Grapevine Editor. An arrangement like this can be no part of our permanent structure.

Someday, perhaps rather soon, I may have to step out of the national picture entirely. In fact the doctors have just taken me out of it for the next six months. Yet it's still a fact that half our Board of Trustees have never met the Grapevine Editor, nor has the Grapevine Editor ever discussed national policy with the National Secretary or the Trustees. It seems most evident that we badly need a common meeting ground for these key people where they will be bound together by mutual activity, acquaintance, and confidence. These important elements of our Headquarters organization cannot live too far apart. Else they will someday be at cross purposes. To my mind the General Policy Committee is the answer.

The General Policy Committee has another important function. All major issues of policy, too large for them to handle alone, will be carefully considered and submitted to the quarterly Trustees' meeting for decision. This should have the effect of presenting the full Board of Trustees with a clear picture of the really important matters at issue. It will eliminate from our Trustees' meetings a certain amount of less important matter which usually

proves time consuming and diverts attention from the things of large importance which the full Board should carefully ponder and decide.

To my way of thinking, the full Board of Trustees is something like the Supreme Court of the United States. Theirs should be the final decision on the few but terribly vital problems which now and then come into our foreground. The Trustees are the Conscience of AA, the Central Office is the Heart of AA, and the Grapevine is the Voice of AA. When these functions are bound together into a working unit, we shall be able to relegate the founders of AA to the sidelines, where probably they long since should have been sitting - interesting antiques, a little ripped at the seams - reminders of a time when AA was very young. That is the place for Dr. Bob Smith and myself. I am utterly convinced.

But I do hope we shall be able to leave behind us a National Headquarters so dedicated to service, so soundly conceived in its checks and balances, so well compounded of good sense and pure spirituality, that the AA movement may dispense with highly personalized national "leaders" forever.

Alcoholics Anonymous faces a coming trial, the trial of great prosperity and success. It will be the greatest test of all. Can we weather that, the ravages of time may never affect us. Our destiny will be secure!

As ever,

William G. W

P.S. Copy to all Trustees, Grapeviners, and ex-Grapeviners.

2019 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine

ITEM C: Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.

Background Notes:

From 2018 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the Grapevine workbook with appreciation and suggests that it undergo a comprehensive review and revision, and A.A. Grapevine Inc. bring back a progress report to the 2019 conference committee A.A. Grapevine.

From 2017 Additional Considerations:

The committee reviewed the Grapevine workbook with appreciation and made the following suggestions:

- *Review the section Links to Other Sites for additional clarity.*
 - *Update Grapevine, Inc.'s location.*
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Background

1. 2019 Office Report
2. Grapevine Workbook (mailed to committee members only; available online at www.aagrapevine.org)
3. GVR Handbook (mailed to committee members only; available online at www.aagrapevine.org)
4. RLV Handbook (mailed to committee members only; available online at www.aagrapevine.org)

2019 Office Report
A.A. Grapevine Workbook

In 2018, the advisory actions section of the workbook were updated.

The Grapevine and La Viña management team reviewed the workbook and concluded that the overall revisions of the workbook should be conducted by a freelancer who is familiar with the history, procedures and products of AA Grapevine, Inc.

2019 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine

ITEM D: Review AA Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey and summary.

Background documents attached:

1. 2019 Office Report
2. AA Grapevine Survey Summary
3. 2018 Grapevine and La Viña Fellowship Feedback Survey questions and results
(mailed to committee members only)

Fellowship Feedback Survey

Office Report

As part of our ongoing strategic planning in 2018 the Board of AA Grapevine, Inc undertook a survey of current, past and non-subscribers to Grapevine and La Vina. The Survey was fielded between Sept and November of 2018 and the initial results were presented to the Board of Directors on December 7th of 2018. The following is the total of that presentation. It is an initial summary and some findings.

The board is still processing this information and would love the Committees general thoughts and feedback on the survey itself and results to date. What stands out to you? Based on the questions in the survey, what other questions might you want to ask the broader data?

Your feedback will be incorporated to our ongoing discussions on action steps as well as possible future surveys and testing.



cocreate COLLECTIVE

Overview

In the Fall of 2018, a 15-minute survey was administered to both readers and potential readers of Grapevine and La Viña with the goal of measuring attitudes towards the existing publication, their current/intended usage, and their preferences for the future.

Methodology

- Surveys were administered in an online format. Survey was open from 9/4 – 10/26 2018.
- The survey link was distributed via email; from the AAGV website, newsletters, and texts; and in a news announcement within the MeetingGuide app.
- Surveys were fielded in both English and Spanish. 10% of respondents completed the survey in Spanish
- A total of 6,516k respondents started the survey and **4,568 completed** it through the end.
- **89%** of respondents were more familiar with Grapevine, **11%** were more familiar with La Viña

Executive Summary

- **Many "firsts" were accomplished with this survey**
 - First survey to report on readers who have never subscribed
 - First to include LaViña questions
 - First digital survey and first survey to experiment with fielding through a mobile app
- **Positive things about Grapevine and La Viña**
 - Subscribers are very positive about Grapevine and La Viña appearance and variety of stories.
 - Most subscribers feel that a subscription is priced about right or a bargain.
 - Several subscribers report positive resolution to customer service issues
- **Opportunities Identified**
 - There is an opportunity to improve perceptions and relevance of Grapevine and La Viña as important personal recovery tools
 - There is confusion about how Grapevine and LaViña are funded, clarifying this may increase revenue
 - Current content formula could be improved to reach younger members and be more relevant to members with long-term sobriety
 - There is a desire for a simpler subscription model and less interest in a stand-alone digital subscription
 - Existing digital experience problems are barriers to adoption, these should be prioritized for improvement
 - There is an opportunity to learn from La Viña engagement strategies

Next Steps

- **Apply survey results to support and inform Grapevine, Inc. strategy goals**
 - **Content Driven:** use what readers want more of, find content contributors in existing communities
 - **Researched:** use new media responses to prioritize strategies
 - **Digital:** use identified problem feedback to prioritize enhancements
 - **Simple:** use subscription model and pricing feedback to make and support platform decisions
 - **Fully Informed:** use data to understand who is contributing now, and how to reach potential contributors
 - **Self Supporting:** Use data around funding misconceptions drive new contribution messages
- **Conduct Enhanced data explorations to answer new questions**