

I.

AGENDA

AGENDA

Conference Committee on Agenda

Monday, April 20, 2020 – 9 a.m. - Noon

Room: Robert Bartell

Chairperson: Steve S.

Secretary: Patrick C.

Conference Committee Members

Panel 69

Coleen A.
Bobby D.
Lorraine P.
Steve S.
Susan V.

Panel 70

Hank K.
Gary P.
Jim S.

- ◆ Discussion and acceptance of trustees' committee report.
- A. Review suggestions for the theme of the 2021 General Service Conference.
- B. Review presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2021 General Service Conference.
- C. Review workshop topic ideas for the 2021 General Service Conference.
- D. Review the General Service Conference Evaluation Form, process and 2019 Evaluation Summary.
- E. Review the 2019 January conference call participant survey results.
- F. Discuss report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference.
- G. Discuss the General Service Conference schedule.

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.

2020 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM A: Review suggestions for the theme of the 2021 General Service Conference.

Background notes:

In the early years of the Conference (1951 through 1961) the theme of the Conference became defined following the Conference meeting itself, from taking a “sense of the meeting.”

Definite themes came into being beginning with the 1962 General Service Conference. We do not have documentation attesting to the selection of the topic or about the decision-making process at this time. However, letters mailed to speakers/presenters prior to the Conference tell us that a definite theme was selected, before the start of the Conference.

Conference theme and presentation topics revolve around basic principles of A.A. and can spark thought-provoking discussion at area and district meetings as well. Regions, areas and districts often incorporate discussion of these topics into workshops, meetings, pre-Conference assemblies, etc. This gives all A.A. members the opportunity to participate and become more informed about A.A.

Background:

1. Suggestions for 2021 Conference Theme
2. List of Conference Themes 1951-2020

Suggested Themes for the 2021 Conference

The topics in the following list were submitted by the Fellowship as possible Conference themes. They came in response to an August 2019 request for theme topics sent by the Conference Coordinator on behalf of the Agenda Committee.

1. Our Singleness of Purpose
2. 12 x 12 x 12
3. A.A. Staying relevant for the generations to come
4. Our Primary Purpose
5. Trudging!
6. Happier, More Joyous, Free-er
7. We know very little
8. Our Three Legacies
9. Our Past, Stepping Stones for Our Future
10. Carrying the Message: Today and Tomorrow
11. Working with others inside and outside the rooms
12. Our COMMON Welfare...
13. One Alcoholic helping another Alcoholic like no one else can
14. The attached string (*A.A. Comes of Age*, page 280, para 1 – 3)
15. Our 3 Legacies: Does Recovery Come First?
16. Our 3 Legacies: Recovery then Unity then Service?
17. Our 3 Legacies: Can unity or Service Exist without Recovery?
18. Unity: A.A. Fellowship & the GSC
19. Autonomy: A.A. Fellowship & General Service
20. Autonomy: Unity, Humility, Authority
21. Unity: Group Autonomy & A.A. as a whole
22. Being financially responsible at the group level
23. How to be inclusive and still retain our singleness of purpose
24. How can we stay current without losing our history?
25. Three legacy sponsorship: leading us into the future by remembering where we come from
26. Inform, Involve, Inspire

27. By Faith & By Works (**note this is the other part of the 1951 theme)
28. Home Groups/ The Beginning
29. Principles over Personalities
30. Home Group – The Heartbeat of A.A.
31. Twelve points to assure our Future
32. Our Literature – Preserving the A.A. Message
33. Beyond Love and Service – Sacrifice
34. Trauma and Recovery
35. Trauma and Addiction
36. Holding Fast to traditions
37. Being a Good role model for New Members
38. Encouraging service at the District and Area Levels
39. The A.A. Home Group
40. A.A. and other Organizations
41. Unity – One Solution.... One message
42. Rigorous Honesty
43. Unity - Service - Recovery
44. Interpersonal - Collective – Self
45. Our Unshakeable Foundation – Preserving It
46. Our Three Legacies in Action – Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow
47. Practicing the Principles – Preserving our Fellowship
48. H.O.W. It Works
49. Attraction Rather than Promotion
50. Emotional Sobriety – To Serve A.A. Better
51. This Colossus of Communication
52. Always Inclusive, Never Exclusive
53. Working with Others
54. Drop of Participation and participants during meetings
55. Our People, Our Places, Our Participation & Our Progress
56. The 12 Concepts
57. The Members, The Meetings, The Magic

58. A.A. Services – It Begins as an Experiment and ends as an Experience

(Inspired by the 1st GSC theme: 1951 – Genuine Faith – It Begins as an Experiment and Ends as an Experience)

59. HOW It Works – Honesty Openness and Willingness

60. Back to the Basics

61. Where It All Began

62. HALT – Humility, Acceptance, Love and Tolerance

63. Recovery & Unity = Service

64. Consider a request to discuss the exclusionary language in Grapevine Inc. Examples include: The Preamble's use of 'men and women,' the use of language such as 'transgendered' in countless pamphlets, including *Sober and Out*; lack of transgender stories in The Grapevine, our meeting in print; and more" for discussion as part of all the suggested Themes, Presentation/Discussion, and Workshop ideas for the 2021 Conference. The committee suggests the Conference committee consider broadening the focus of the exclusionary language topic.

**Themes of the General Service Conference
1951 - 2020**

2020: 2020: A Clear Vision for You
2019 - Our Big Book – 80 Years, 71 Languages
2018 - A.A. – A Solution for All Generations
2017 - Supporting Our Future
2016 - Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts
2015 - Celebrating 80 Years of Recovery, Unity and Service – The Foundation of Our Future
2014 - Communicating Our Legacies – Vital in a Changing World
2013 - The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory – Our Solution in Action
2012 - Anonymity: Our Spiritual Responsibility in the Digital Age
2011 - We Are Responsible for A.A.'s Future – Let It Begin With Us
2010 - Practicing A.A.'s Principles – The Pathway to Unity
2009 - Our Commitment to Carry A.A.'s Message – Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action
2008 - Communication and Participation – The Key to Unity and Self-Support
2007 - Our 12th Step Responsibility – Are We Going to Any Length?
2006 - Sponsorship, Service and Self-Support in a Changing World
2005 - Basics of Our Home Group – Recovery, Unity and Service
2004 - Our Singleness of Purpose – The Cornerstone of A.A.
2003 - Living A.A.'s Principles Through Sponsorship
2002 - Sharing the Steps, Traditions and Concepts
2001 - Love and Service
2000 - Trusting Our Future to A.A. Principles
1999 - Moving Forward: Unity Through Humility
1998 - Our Twelfth Step Work
1997 - Spirituality – Our Foundation
1996 - Preserving Our Fellowship – Our Challenge
1995 - Pass It On – Our Three Legacies
1994 - Spirit of Sacrifice
1993 - A.A. Takes Its Inventory – The General Service Conference Structure
1992 - The A.A. Message in a Changing World
1991 - Sponsorship: Gratitude in Action
1990 - The Home Group – Our Responsibility and Link to A.A.'s Future
1989 - Anonymity – Living Our Traditions
1988 - Singleness of Purpose – Key to Unity
1987 - The Seventh Tradition – A Turning Point
1986 - A.A.'s Future – Our Responsibility
1985 - Golden Moments of Reflection
1984 - Gratitude – The Language of the Heart
1983 - Anonymity – Our Spiritual Foundation
1982 - The Traditions – Our Way of Unity
1981 - A.A. Takes Its Inventory

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- 1980 - Participation: The Key to Recovery
- 1979 - The Legacies: Our Heritage and My Responsibility
- 1978 - The Member and the Group – Recovery Through Service
- 1977 - The A.A. Group – Where It Begins
- 1976 - Sponsorship – Our Privilege and Responsibility
- 1975 - Unity Through Love and Service
- 1974 - Understanding and Cooperation – Inside and Outside A.A.
- 1973 - Responsibility – Our Expression of Gratitude
- 1972 - Our Primary Purpose
- 1971 - Communication: Key to A.A. Growth
- 1970 - Service – The Heart of A.A.
- 1969 - Group Conscience Guides A.A.
- 1968 - Unity Vital to A.A. Survival, Growth
- 1967 - Sponsorship – The Hand of A.A.
- 1966 - Principles and Responsibility
- 1965 - More Effective Ways to Use Tools of Service
- 1964 - Sharing
- 1963 - Our Common Welfare
- 1962 - One Primary Purpose
- 1961 - Working and Growing Together
- 1960 - Need for Improved Internal and External Communications
- 1959 - Confidence – Absence of Fear of the Future
- 1958 - Promise and Progress
- 1957 - Stability and Responsibility Without Complacency
- 1956 - Self-Confidence and Responsibility
- 1955 - A.A. Had Truly Come of Age
- 1954 - Self-confidence and Responsibility
- 1953 - On the Threshold of Maturity
- 1952 - Progress – Humility and Unity
- 1951 - Genuine Faith – It Begins as an Experiment and Ends as an Experience

2020 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM B: Review presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2021 General Service Conference.

Background:

1. Suggestions for 2021 Conference Presentations
2. List of Conference Presentations 1985-2020

**Suggested Presentation/Discussion Topic Ideas
for the 2021 General Service Conference**

The topics in the following list were submitted by the Fellowship as possible presentation/discussion topics for the Conference. They came in response to an August 2019 request for presentation/discussion topics sent by the Conference Coordinator on behalf of the Agenda Committee.

1. Dealing with people in meetings with problems other than alcohol
2. Foundation of Service
3. Maintaining love and tolerance throughout A.A. Groups
4. How to reach the new generations
5. Does Recovery Come First?
6. Recovery then Unity then Service?
7. What is My Message?
8. Who defines “the Message”?
9. What is my group’s message?
10. Principle into action: staying relevant
11. Finding and reaching the problem drinker
12. Our COMMON Welfare...
 - One Alcoholic helping another Alcoholic like no one else can
13. A True Fellowship
14. Strong as the Weakest Link
15. Seeking the Light
16. Insulation Against Anarchy
17. Unity: A.A. Literature & Tradition Four
18. Tradition Four: Group Conscience, Autonomy, Humility
19. Unity: Our Common Welfare should come first
20. What is the purpose of an A.A. Group?
21. What is the difference between carrying THE message and carrying MY message?
22. How can we better convey the meaning of the Responsibility Pledge?
23. What are our Three legacies?
24. Service, Sponsorship, repairing the broken link in the three-legacy chain.

25. How will the three legacies help me to better do my 12-step work
26. A.A. General Service:
 - Inform: How to develop an informed group conscience
 - Involve: How to encourage participation (inactive groups and districts)
 - Inspire: How to sponsor into service
27. From 1951 to 2021 the changes in A.A. fellowship and G.S.O. and the foundations or things that have not changed in A.A. fellowship and G.S.O that continue to provide unity.
28. What are upcoming and exciting things for the future of G.S.O.
29. Home Groups:
 - Our Mission – carrying the message to “alcoholics” (nonalcoholics should not have the privilege of speaking at meetings)
30. Principles over Personalities:
 - The Principles of A.A.
 - The Traditions
 - The Concepts
31. Our Literature – Preserving the A.A. Message
32. Twelve points to assure our Future
33. Do I Carry the A.A. Message or My Own?
34. The Spiritual and Practical Benefits of a Prudent Reserve
35. Carrying the message outside of A.A.
36. Group Inventory
37. Business meetings
38. When apathy leads to becoming a Dark District
39. What is the common solution and why it is important
40. Why ALL the Traditions are still relevant
41. Practicing the principles and the solution as a pathway to unity
42. Sponsorship
43. Our Singleness of Purpose
44. Language of the Heart
45. Self-Reflection – Hidden Motives
46. Where does personal honesty fit in with service to the group

47. Uncovering Hidden Motives and Agendas
 - Radical Honesty; Radical Acceptance
48. Cross-Cultural Communications – Finding Connections
49. Upside Down Triangle
50. How to Proactively Communicate with Attraction
51. Attraction Rather than Promotion – at the Individual Level
52. Emotional Sobriety – Attraction for the Newcomers
53. Service Sponsorship
54. Find Inner Peace
55. Emotional Sobriety – Attraction from Unity
56. Emotional Sobriety – to give weight to the Traditions. (i.e., to make them more important) and to live the Steps
57. Recovery: Our lives have depended on Communication (from *Our Great Responsibility*, p. 101)
58. Unity: Our unity depends on Communication (from *Our Great Responsibility*, p. 101)
59. Service: Our function depends on Communication (from *Our Great Responsibility*, p. 101)
60. Cultural Diversity – Who is not in the room and Why Not?
61. Traditional Sponsorship – when face to face is not possible, making the approach
62. Lack of members for responsibility and for supporting
63. Speaker on the topic – Our People, Our Places, Our Participation & Our Progress
64. The Original Manuscript (the book that started it all)
65. History is Now: How will Actions taken Today impact A.A. Tomorrow?
66. Digital Communications at the Speed of A.A.
67. Action to Faith – Where Services and Spirituality Mix
68. Rule 62
69. Safety in A.A. – Don't be silent, say something
70. The Recovery Plane comes before the service and material plane
71. Literature at A.A. meetings – What do we read, and do we change it when we read it aloud?
72. Anonymity vs. Technology

73. Communication Leadership – An Ever-Vital Need
74. Prudence – A Way to Achieve Spiritual Progress
75. Freedom to Serve – Freedom to Live and Love Unconditionally
76. Sacrifice – Opens the Door to Unity
77. Consider a request to discuss the exclusionary language in Grapevine Inc. Examples include: The Preamble's use of 'men and women,' the use of language such as 'transgendered' in countless pamphlets, including *Sober and Out*; lack of transgender stories in The Grapevine, our meeting in print; and more" for discussion as part of all the suggested Themes, Presentation/Discussion, and Workshop ideas for the 2021 Conference. The committee suggests the Conference committee consider broadening the focus of the exclusionary language topic.

**Presentations recommended by Conference
1985 – 2020**

- 2020: Recovery – Who is Missing in Our Rooms?
Unity – Practicing Our Principles
Service – Keeping A.A. Relevant
- 2019: Yesterday's World – Our Legacies Begin
Today's World – Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service
Tomorrow's World – Courage to be Vigilant
- 2018: Today's Alcoholic: Inclusion, Not Exclusion
Participation in All of A.A. – Is My Triangle Balanced?
A.A. Technology: Where Innovation Meets the Traditions
Attraction not Promotion: A.A.'s Relation to the World
Group Conscience: The Guiding Force
- 2017: 1. Growth:
Diversity – Outreach and Attraction
Safety – Our Responsibility
Communication – Today and Tomorrow
2. Participation:
Fellowship vs. Membership
Leadership: "I am Responsible. . ."
Is Your Voice Heard?
3. Contributions:
Spirituality and Money
Fully Self-Supporting Our Obligations
Apathy and Power of the Purse
- 2016: Connecting with the Newcomer
Connecting with Each Other
Connecting with A.A. as a Whole
- 2015: Our Common Welfare Through Gratitude in Action
1. Diversity in A.A. - Our Heritage of Inclusion
2. Safety and Respect – Practicing the Principles Begins in our Home Group
3. Safeguarding our Traditions through the Evolution of Technology
4. Inventory – Looking Back to Move Ahead
- 2014: Living in the Heart of A.A.:
1. Recovery, Unity and Service – Our Responsibility
2. Passing It on Through Sponsorship
3. Participating in Our Common Welfare through Contributions
4. Inventory – A Guiding Tool to Our Future

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- 2013: Spiritual Principles for World Service:
1. The Triangle – More Than a Shape
 2. The General Service Conference Inventory – Why is it Necessary?
 3. Self-Support – What Does it Mean to the Fellowship?
 4. Primary Purpose – Carrying the A.A. Message
- 2012: a: Carrying the A.A. Message:
1. Still Our Primary Purpose
 2. Social Web Sites
 3. Young People in A.A.
 4. Importance of Sponsorship
- b: Change – Essential to A.A.'s Growth:
1. Service: Our Third Legacy
 2. Spirit of Rotation
 3. Diversity – Let's Keep Our Doors Open for Any Who May Suffer from Alcoholism
 4. Archives – Where the Past Meets the Present
- 2011: a: Alcoholics Anonymous in a Digital Age:
1. Practicing Our Traditions in a Digital Age
 2. Carrying A.A.'s Message Online
 3. Grapevine – "A.A.'s Meeting in Print" and More . . .
- b. An Informed Group Conscience: The Voice of A.A.:
1. Self-Support – Where Do Money and Spirituality Mix?
 2. Humility – Accepting the Group Conscience
 3. An Informed Group Conscience – Using the Three Legacies
- c. Diversity in A.A.:
1. The Language of the Heart is Spoken Here
 2. The Hand of A.A. – Inclusive Never Exclusive
 3. Tradition Five – Our Primary Purpose
- d. Sponsorship:
1. Importance of a Home Group
 2. Leading by Example – Attraction Not Promotion
 3. Recovery, Unity, Service
- 2010: a: Practicing These Principles in All Our "Service" Affairs:
1. What is the Difference Between General Service and Service in General?
 2. Love and Tolerance is Our Code
 3. Setting an Example – Attraction to Service
- b: Unity Through Inventory:
1. Our Common Welfare Should Come First
 2. This We Owe to A.A.'s Future
 3. What Happens After Inventory?

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- c: General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process:
 - 1. How it Works.
 - 2. Collective Participation.
 - 3. Communication – The Key to an Informed Decision

- 2009:
 - a: Humility and Sacrifice:
 - 1. Setting an Example
 - 2. Changing Our Perceptions
 - 3. Anonymity – Sacrificing Our Egos
 - b: Enthusiasm and Gratitude:
 - 1. Hope and Purpose from Defeat and Despair
 - 2. Happy, Joyous and Free
 - 3. Enthusiasm – A Gift of Inventory
 - c: Spiritual Program in Action:
 - 1. Maximum Service – Our Spiritual Benefit
 - 2. Persistence – The Key to Progress
 - 3. Living the Traditions
- 2008:
 - a. Communication and Participation:
 - 1. Sharing the Message of Service
 - 2. Our Key to Keeping A.A. Strong
 - 3. Leadership in A.A.: Building Communication
 - b: Unity
 - 1. Our Common Welfare Should Come First
 - 2. Principles Before Personalities
 - 3. Diversity: Reaching Out to All Alcoholics
 - c: Self-Support:
 - 1. Self-Supporting Through Members' Voluntary Contributions Only
 - 2. Contempt Prior to Investigation
 - 3. Responsibility to Communicate and Participate
- 2007:
 - a. Inclusiveness in A.A.:
 - 1. Our 3rd Tradition
 - 2. Growth of the Fellowship
 - 3. Reaching Out to All Who Want It
 - b. Our Primary Purpose:
 - 1. Attraction Rather Than Promotion
 - 2. Working with Wet Drunks
 - 3. Practicing These Principles in All Our Affairs
 - c. Humility and Responsibility:
 - 1. Expressed by Anonymity
 - 2. Are We Resting on Our Laurels?
 - 3. Raising Literature Prices or Footing the Bill?
- 2006:
 - a. Sponsorship:
 - 1. Presenting A.A. to Newcomers

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- 2. Changes in the Alcoholic Coming to A.A.
 - 3. Sponsorship Into Sobriety, Into Service
 - b. Service:
 - 1. Performing Service Without Expectations
 - 2. Leadership – An Ever Vital Need
 - 3. Responsibility With Accountability
 - c. Self-Support:
 - 1. An Informed Group Conscience
 - 2. Gratitude through Self-Sacrifice
- 2005:
- a. Recovery:
 - 1. “How It Works” in Our Home Group
 - 2. Carrying the Message Through Practicing the Principles of Our Daily Lives
 - b. Unity:
 - 1. “Love and Tolerance of Others is Our Code” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 84)
 - 2. The Basket – Where Money and Spirituality Mix
 - 3. The Spiritual Principle of Our Twelfth Tradition
 - c. Service:
 - 1. Concept One – Final Responsibility and Ultimate Authority
 - 2. Minority Opinion – Are We Listening?
 - 3. Leadership – Responsibility for A.A.’s Future – Concept Nine
- 2004:
- a. Our Singleness of Purpose:
 - 1. Our Responsibility to the Newcomer
 - 2. Communicating Our Singleness of Purpose
 - b. The Cornerstone of A.A.:
 - 1. Safeguarding Our Unity
 - 2. The Role of the Home Group
 - 3. Traditions Three and Five: Our Members, Our Message
- 2003:
- a. Sponsorship:
 - 1. Responsibilities of Sponsorship
 - 2. Is Sponsorship Fading Away?
 - 3. Working with Medical Practitioners, Other Professionals and Friends
 - b. Principles:
 - 1. What are the Principles?
 - 2. Living the Principles, Accepting Our Differences
- 2002:
- a. Unity:
 - 1. Spirit of Rotation—Letting Go!
 - 2. Does Our Committee System Work?
 - 3. The Internet—A Part of or Apart From?
 - b. Inventory:
 - 1. A.A. Literature—Is It Being Utilized or Collecting Dust?

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2. Seventh Tradition and Spirituality—Do They Really Mix?

- 2001:
- a. Sponsorship:
 - 1. The Home Group
 - 2. Sponsorship into Service
 - 3. Never Too Late to Get a Sponsor
 - b. Language of the Heart:
 - 1. Listening to the Language of the Heart
 - 2. Sharing Experience, Strength and Hope
 - 3. Passing On Our Three Legacies
 - c. The G.S.R.'s Role in A.A.:
 - 1. In the Home Group
 - 2. Link to the District, Area and G.S.O.
 - 3. Guardian of the Traditions
- 2000:
- a. Recovery:
 - 1. Trust the God of Your Understanding
 - 2. Clean House
 - 3. Work With Others
 - b. Unity:
 - 1. Our Common Welfare
 - 2. The Informed Group Conscience and Substantial Unanimity
 - 3. Practicing Genuine Humility Through Anonymity
 - c. Service:
 - 1. I Am Responsible...
 - 2. Our Primary Purpose
 - 3. Spirit of Rotation
- 1999:
- a. Our Responsibility to A.A. Unity:
 - 1. Home Group
 - 2. A.A. Service Structure
 - 3. A.A. Worldwide
 - b. Many Faces—One Fellowship
 - 1. Accepting Our Differences
 - 2. I Am Responsible...
 - 3. Principles Before Personalities
 - c. Our Future Together:
 - 1. Sponsorship
 - 2. A.A. Literature
 - 3. Tradition Seven
- 1998:
- a. Our Twelfth Step Work:
 - 1. Reaching the Newcomer
 - 2. Carrying This Message
 - 3. Back to Basics
 - b. Tools for Twelfth Stepping:

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1. The A.A. Member
 2. Sponsorship
 3. Literature
- c. Diversity of Twelfth Step Work:
1. Home Group
 2. Service Structure
 3. Around the World
- 1997:
- a. Group Conscience—Seeking Our Ultimate Authority
 - b. Carrying A.A.'s Message Around the World
 - c. The Hat—Where Money and Spirituality Mix
- 1996:
- a. Preserving Our Fellowship—Let It Begin With Me
 - b. Preserving Our Fellowship—Carrying Our Original Message
 - c. Preserving Our Fellowship—Unity and Spirituality in All Our Affairs
- 1995:
- a. Pass It On: Recovery—Our First Legacy
 - b. Pass It On: Unity—Our Second Legacy
 - c. Pass It On: Service—Our Third Legacy
- 1994:
- a. Spirit of Sacrifice: Bill's and Dr. Bob's Farewell Messages:
Bill's Message
Dr. Bob's Message
 - b. Spirit of Sacrifice in the Long Form of the Traditions:
Traditions One, Two and Three
Traditions Four, Five and Six
 - c. Spirit of Sacrifice in the Long Form of the Traditions:
Traditions Seven, Eight and Nine
Traditions Ten, Eleven and Twelve
- 1993:
- a. A.A. Takes Its Inventory
The Purpose of the General Service Conference
The A.A. Conference Relation to A.A.
The General Service Conference and Its General Procedures
 - b. A.A. Takes Its Inventory
Conference Relation to the General Service Board and Its Corporate Services
The General Service Board: Composition, Jurisdiction, Responsibilities
 - c. The General Warranties of the Conference
 - d. A.A. Takes Its Inventory: Finance
 - e. A.A. Takes Its Inventory: The Grapevine
- 1992:
- a. The A.A. Message in a Changing World
Our Common Welfare
Unity: Together We Can

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- The Language of the Heart Worldwide
 - b. The Joy of Living
 - The Newcomer: A.A.'s Future
 - Principles Before Personalities
 - Humility Through Rotation
 - c. Love and Service
 - d. G.S.O. Finances
- 1991:
 - a. Sponsorship
 - Help and Hope
 - I Am Responsible
 - A Way of Life
 - b. Our Collective Humility
 - How We Identify Ourselves
 - Anonymity—Our Spiritual Foundation
 - In All Our Affairs
 - Self-support Project—Five Years Later
 - G.S.O. Finances
- 1990:
 - a. The Importance of the Home Group
 - In Recovery
 - For Unity
 - For Service
 - b. Sponsorship
 - In Recovery
 - For Unity
 - For Service
 - c. Self-support
 - d. G.S.O. Finances
- 1989:
 - a. Self-support
 - b. G.S.O. Finances
 - c. Anonymity
 - How It Developed
 - Its Necessity Today
 - Principles Before Personalities
 - d. Back to Basics
 - The Group in the Structure
 - Sponsorship in Recovery and Service
 - A.A. Literature—Tool or Mandate
- 1988:
 - a. Self-support
 - b. Singleness of Purpose—Key to Unity
 - Groups vs. Meetings
 - Are We Being Too Friendly with Our Friends?
 - Our Primary Purpose—Is Our Message Clear?

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- c. Focus on the Positive
 - Communications—Challenges
 - What Are We Doing Right?
 - Spirit of Rotation

- 1987:
 - a. Are We Carrying the Message to All?
 - b. Area Structure
 - General Service Representative
 - District Committee Member
 - Area Committee
 - Delegate
 - c. Finance
 - Can G.S.O. be Self-supporting Through Group Contributions Only?
 - What About the Birthday Plan?
 - Could Groups Pledge Contributions?
 - Group Support to District, Area and Intergroup
 - d. Maintaining the Basics—A.A.'s Principles
 - Our Primary Purpose
 - The Twelve Steps
 - The Twelve Traditions
 - The Twelve Concepts—How Can We Live the Concepts in Service?
 - e. Right of Decision

- 1986:
 - a. The Committee System
 - Do We Trust It?
 - Does It Eliminate Conflict?
 - b. Responsibility in Service
 - Why Are You a General Service Representative?
 - Why Are You a District Committee Member?
 - Why Are You an Area Officer?
 - Why Are You a Trustee?
 - c. Trusted Servants
 - Do We Trust Them?
 - Ultimate Authority—Are We Listening?
 - Are Trusted Servants Informed?
 - The Importance of Rotation

- 1985: (Presentation and/or workshop for 1985)
 - a. Will the Hand of A.A. Always Be There?
 - The Middle Years of Sobriety—A Dangerous Time
 - Are We Diluting Ourselves?
 - Communication Within the Fellowship
 - b. The Warranties
 - c. Beyond the Seventh Tradition—Group Responsibility
 - In the Meeting Place
 - To the Newcomer

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- d. Fifty Years of Caring and Sharing
 - In Treatment Centers
 - In Correctional Facilities
 - With Young People
 - In the Group
- e. The G.S.R.—The Key Role
 - Obtaining the Most Qualified Member
 - The Service Sponsor

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ITEM C: Review workshop topic ideas for the 2021 General Service Conference.

Background:

1. Suggestions for 2021 Conference workshop topics
2. List of Conference workshop topics recommended by Conference 1985-2020

Suggested Workshop for the 2021 Conference

The topics in the following list were submitted by the Fellowship as possible workshop topics for the Conference. They came in response to an August 2019 request for workshop topic ideas sent by the Conference Coordinator on behalf of the Agenda Committee.

1. Dealing with meeting attendees from drug courts
2. How a concept relates to a tradition or step (Ex. Concept 1 w/ Tradition 1)
3. How “appropriate” is harming groups and the members
4. Why A.A. isn’t judge, jury, and executioner of its members
5. Building Participatory Activities into Communications
6. Singleness of Purpose
7. Traditions Workshop
8. 6th Step
9. Can Unity or Service Exist Without Recovery?
10. How did I become the G.S.R.?
11. A.A. is already established, why do we need service?
12. How much does our past look like the future?
13. Let our nonalcoholic friends recommend A.A./ How does that happen?
14. Are treatment centers, halfway houses and other recovery groups doing our A.A. work?
15. Can I smoke marijuana and be sober in A.A.?
16. Has the Tradition 12 “Anonymity” faded from its intended use?
17. A checklist for the A.A. message
18. The identity of my group’s message
19. Where does the newcomer fit in my group structure?

20. How to develop my attraction
21. What more can we do to stay relevant?
22. Reaching problem drinkers where they are and on their terms.
23. Why are there breakaways from the original A.A. such as A.A. for young people, A.A. for the native American, etc.
24. Our COMMON Welfare...One Alcoholic helping another Alcoholic like no one else can
25. An Obligation to Society
26. Providing a permanent & Safe Haven
27. The Flame of Faith
28. Special Interest Groups: inclusive or divisive?
29. The Big Book & Tradition Three: How they are one?
30. Are A.A. Groups connected to General Service?
31. Can the GSC decide first on matters that affect A.A. as a whole?
32. Concept One: Final Responsibility & Ultimate Authority
33. What is the difference between carrying A.A.'s message and carrying My message?
34. If the A.A. message is the Language of the Heart, why would it be different now?
35. Is A.A. broken? If not, then why the need to update the language
36. Sharing the Three Legacies to insure we leave what we were given
37. Inform, Involve, Inspire: Rocketed into a fourth dimension
38. How do people serving at G.S.O become involved in serving at that level?
39. Home Groups: Strengthening the Home Group
40. Principles Over Personalities:
 - Longevity of A.A. Ensuring it will be here 500 years from now
 - Anonymity: How we protect it in this day of the Internet

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- Carrying the Message: What does that mean? Different ways we can carry the message? What exactly is the message?
- Importance of consistency at different meetings; what is the connection in conducting a meeting that all A.A. adheres to. The bare minimum?

41. Twelve points to assure our Future
42. Home Group – The Heartbeat of A.A.
43. Cooperation without Affiliation
44. Do I Carry the A.A. message or my own?
45. Our Spiritual Heritage
46. Liaising with professionals, probation, etc.
47. Public Information
48. Home group vs. A.A. meeting
49. Service structure
50. Chairing an A.A. meeting
51. Open vs. Closed meetings
52. Bridging the Gap
53. Application of the Traditions in our interactions with our Friends
54. Affiliation versus Cooperation
55. Maintaining our Primary Purpose in the ever-changing world of Treatment
56. Informing A.A. members of what A.A. does and doesn't do
57. What is an A.A. member's responsibility?
58. I am Responsible
59. Tradition 3 – The only requirement...
60. Our Literature – Preserving the A.A. Message
61. Avoiding "Group Think"
62. Tools for uncovering hidden motives in oneself

63. Unity – Conformity or Synthesis
64. Humility in the Digital Age
65. Respect for Wisdom & Experience
66. Sponsorship and Responsibility
67. More will be Disclosed; “Our book is meant to be suggestive only...God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.” [A.A., p 164]. What does this mean; how do members take responsibility to ensure that this occurs?
68. Spiritual awakening comes before emotional sobriety
69. Create for yourself and find a Higher Power
70. Maintaining emotional sobriety through the Tenth Step
71. Emotional sobriety for better leadership
72. Our responsibility to communicate on self-support
73. A.A. and Electronic Media
74. Constant thought of Others? What an Order! Our past becomes our greatest asset giving it away to get it – what seemed at first a flimsy reed
75. Honesty and borrowing money from the 7th Tradition and financial responsibility
76. Meetings and the Chairperson’s responsibilities
77. Concept workshops (1 workshop per concept)
78. Traditions
79. Safety and A.A. on Social media
80. A.A. Turf – Who’s Doing what?
81. Communication in A.A.: Staying Ahead of the “Telephone Game”
82. Getting the Newcomer to Stay
83. Serving with Enthusiasm
84. Knowledge – What A.A. is and What it is Not
85. Experience as Foundation

86. Setting Examples: Initiative and Demonstrating Responsibility and Dedication
87. Applying Judgment
88. Developing Discretion
89. Value of Intuition
90. Significance of Risk, Failure and Success
91. Orientation – Spending Sufficient Time to Teach Others
92. Spirit of Rotation
93. Within Reach for all Members to Serve
94. Being Available
95. 7th Tradition Contributions
96. Willingness: as privilege, as choice
97. The beginning of true recovery
98. Sharing for the benefit of others
99. Getting rid of selfishness
100. Applying Traditions to Everyday Life
101. Consider a request to discuss the exclusionary language in Grapevine Inc. Examples include: The Preamble's use of 'men and women,' the use of language such as 'transgendered' in countless pamphlets, including *Sober and Out*; lack of transgender stories in The Grapevine, our meeting in print; and more" for discussion as part of all the suggested Themes, Presentation/Discussion, and Workshop ideas for the 2021 Conference. The committee suggests the Conference committee consider broadening the focus of the exclusionary language topic.

**Workshop Topics Recommended by General Service Conference
1985 – 2020**

- 2020: Attraction Through Action
- 2019: Clarity of Purpose – Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings
- 2018: Getting the A.A. Message Out...
- 2017: Anonymity – The Spiritual Foundation
- 2016: G.S.B. Brainstorming Ideas – no Workshop
- 2015: Conference Inventory – no Workshop
- 2014: Conference Inventory – no Workshop
- 2013: Conference Inventory – no Workshop
- 2012: Safety in A.A.: Our Common Welfare
- 2011: How to Increase Participation in A.A. – Striving for Self-Support in All Our Affairs
- 2010: Discuss the General Service Agenda Selection Process
- 2009: Language of the Heart – Keeping It Simple
- 2008: Love and Tolerance, Now More Than Ever
- 2007: Spiritual Value of Our A.A. Dollars
- 2006: Passing It On in a Changing World
- 2005: Do I Carry the A.A. Message Or My Own?
- 2004: How is Singleness of Purpose Important to the Individual, Group, District, Area, G.S.O. and Grapevine Office?
- 2003: Sponsorship – Remembering to Practice Our Principles
- 2002: Using the Steps, Traditions and Concepts in Our Daily Lives
- 2001: Love and Service
 - a. Carrying the A.A. Message of Service

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- b. Living the A.A. Principles in All Our Affairs
- c. Maintaining the Spirit of Anonymity

- 2000: Trusting Our Future to A.A. Principles
 - a. Twelve Steps
 - b. Twelve Traditions
 - c. Twelve Concepts

- 1999: Moving Forward: Unity Through Humility
 - a. Harmony in the A.A. Community
 - b. Principle of Rotation
 - c. Spiritual Significance of Anonymity

- 1998: Our Twelfth Step Work
 - a. In the Home Group
 - b. In the Service Structure
 - c. Around the World

- 1997: Spirituality – Our Foundation
 - a. Spirit of Rotation
 - b. Working with Faith, Serving with Love
 - c. Unity – We Are Responsible

- 1996: Preserving Our Fellowship – Our Challenge
 - a. Through Your Home Group
 - b. Through Your District
 - c. Through Your Conference Area

- 1995: How We Pass It On:
 - a. Our Basic Message
 - b. Sponsorship in Recovery and Service
 - c. Communication – The Language of A.A.

- 1994: The Twelfth Step in Action:
 - a. Where have we been?
 - b. Where are we now?
 - c. Where are we going?

- 1993: A.A. Takes Its Inventory—The General Service Conference Structure
(Focus to be on the other six articles of the Conference Charter)
A Vision for Us—Where Are We and Where Are We Going?

- 1992: The A.A. message in a Changing World

- 1991:
 - a. Sponsorship: Gratitude in Action
 - b. Sponsorship: Our Three Legacies
 - c. Sponsorship: The Hand of A.A.

- 1990:
 - a. Home Group—Where Love and Service Begin
 - b. Home Group—Our Link to the Fellowship
 - c. Home Group—Our Responsibility and Link to A.A.'s Future
- 1989:
 - Anonymity—Our Past, Present and Future
 - Anonymity—Living Our Traditions
 - Love and Service
- 1988:
 - Our Singleness of Purpose—Key to Unity
(Per Conference: A second workshop be scheduled, if time permits, with the subject to be determined at the trustees' Conference Committee's discretion)
- 1987:
 - Unity—Let's Talk About It
 - Living Sober—Growing Together or Growing Apart?
- 1986:
 - a. Letting Go of Old Ideas:
New Ways of Carrying the A.A. Message
Are We Getting Too Rigid?
 - b. A.A.'s Impact on the World
Are We Being Friendly With Our Friends?
How A.A. Cooperates
- 1985: (Presentation and/or workshop for 1985)
 - a. Will the Hand of A.A. Always Be There?
The Middle Years of Sobriety—A Dangerous Time
Communication Within the Fellowship
 - b. The Warranties
 - c. Beyond the Seventh Tradition—Group Responsibility
In the Meeting Place
To the Newcomer
 - d. Fifty Years of Caring and Sharing
In Treatment Centers
In Correctional Facilities
With Young People
In the Group
 - e. The G.S.R.—The Key Role
Obtaining the Most Qualified Member
The Service Sponsor

2020 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM D: Review the General Service Conference Evaluation Form, process and 2019 Evaluation Summary.

Background notes:

2019 Committee Considerations from the Conference Agenda Committee:

The committee reviewed the 2019 General Service Conference evaluations and noted that improvements were implemented from the 68th GSC Evaluation suggestions.

The committee reviewed the summary of the 2018 General Service Conference evaluations. The committee suggests that Conference members be given the option to select the Conference Manual format and that the online version of the evaluation form be formatted such that it can be continually updated during Conference week.

From the report of the July 2019 trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:

The committee agreed that the Conference coordinator will provide the 70th G.S.C. members a choice in receiving an electronic copy or hard copy Conference Week Manual and work with the Meeting, Events and Travel team (METS) to improve the online Conference evaluation form process.

The committee reviewed the 2019 Conference Evaluation Summary and the in-house Post-Conference Sharing Session notes. The committee noted the generally positive tone of the responses. Some committee members made the following suggestions:

- Ensure general sharing sessions are not first to be removed to save time.
- To be consistent during a Conference week the decision to reduce sharing time from two minutes to one minute might be decided at the beginning of the week.
- Include more Conference body discussions like the one that took place during the 2019 A.A.W.S. Board report regarding the "Safety Card for A.A. Groups."
- Consider use of electronic voting for the trustee elections.

From the report of the February 2020 trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:

The committee reviewed the 2020 Conference Evaluation Form. The 2020 Conference Agenda Committee will review the form, process and 2019 Evaluation Summary Report as a standard agenda item.

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A summary of actions taken by Conference Coordinator related to the Committee Considerations and trustee suggestions:

- An email request was sent to ask all Conference members that has an option to select to receive the 2020 General Service Conference Manual in an online digital or hard copy version. Fourteen Conference members requested the digital version.
- Conference Coordinator determined that the online Conference evaluation system can provide a link to a daily evaluation. Each day's evaluation can only be completed in one sitting. The 2020 Conference members will be provided the digital and a hard copy version of the evaluation forms.
- A memorandum was sent to the trustees' Committee on Nominating requesting them to consider the use of electronic voting for the trustee elections.
- The timing, general session and presentation ideas suggested for Conference week are being considered for the 2020 Conference.

Background:

1. 2020 General Service Conference Evaluation Form
2. 2019 General Service Conference Evaluation Summary

April 2020

GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE EVALUATION FORM

To: All Conference Members

***Please take the time to share your experience and opinions
by filling out & turning in this Conference Evaluation.***

This Conference Evaluation plays an important role in helping both the trustees' Committee on General Service Conference and the staff to plan the next annual meeting of the General Service Conference. The 2017 Conference Agenda Committee emphasized strongly that all Conference members have an obligation to fill out the Conference Evaluation Form so that useful decisions for improvement of the Conference can be made. The committees and staff members responsible for the agendas for future Conferences give careful consideration to the comments of all delegates, trustees, directors and staff who turn in a form.

Pre-ConferenceWas the advance material and preparation from G.S.O. adequate? ☐ Yes ☐ NoWas the advance material and preparation from G.S.O. timely? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments: _____

Dashboard

How valuable did you find the Conference dashboard?

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

☐ Delegate ☐ Director ☐ Staff ☐ Trustee

CONFIDENTIAL: 70th General Service Conference Background

Please rate the value of sharing information from the dashboard with members of your area while preparing for the Conference?

1 – Not valuable

2 – Somewhat valuable

3 – Very valuable

Value:

Comments:

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate

() Director

() Staff

() Trustee

CONFIDENTIAL: This is background for the 70th 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.

SUNDAY, APRIL 19

Conference Manual

Please rate the value of the Conference Manual in providing you information about the schedule of Conference week's events?

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please rate the value of having an electronic version of the Conference Manual available for your use?

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Presentations

“A.A. International: 21st Meeting of the Americas”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

“A.A. International: A.A. Around the World”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Joint Meeting

Please rate and comment on the joint meeting experience:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

MONDAY, APRIL 20

Reports

Please rate and comment on the report presentations:

1 – Not valuable

2 – Somewhat valuable

3 – Very valuable

Finance Report Presentation

Value: _____

Comments: _____

A.A. Grapevine Board Report Presentation

Value: _____

Comments: _____

General Service Board Report Presentation

Value: _____

Comments: _____

A.A.W.S. Board Report Presentation

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate

() Director

() Staff

() Trustee

TUESDAY, APRIL 21

Workshop

Please rate and comment on the workshop:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

“Attraction Through Action”

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Presentation

“The General Service Board Strategic Plan”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

THURSDAY, APRIL 23

Presentations

1. “Recovery – Who is Missing in Our Rooms”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

2. “Unity – Practicing Our Principles”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

3. “Service – Keeping A.A. Relevant”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

4. AA Grapevine and La Viña

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

5. “2020 International Convention – Love and Tolerance is our Code”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

FRIDAY, APRIL 24

Presentation

“Issues, Tools and Access to Our Message of Recovery”

Please rate the value of discussing this topic in the course of this Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Conference Committee Reports

Was there enough time for discussion of Conference committee reports?

Not enough _____ Just right _____ Too much _____

Comments: _____

Presentation/Discussion Sessions

Please rate the overall value of holding presentation/discussion sessions in the course of the Conference week:

1 – Not valuable 2 – Somewhat valuable 3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

Conference Participation

Was the participation of:

	Delegates	Directors	Staff	Trustees
Not enough	_____	_____	_____	_____
Just right	_____	_____	_____	_____
Too much	_____	_____	_____	_____

Comments: _____

Electronic Device Usage

Did you use a laptop or a similar computer device at this year's Conference?

() Yes () No

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate () Director () Staff () Trustee

Conference Evaluation Forms

Please rate the value of the ability to submit your Conference evaluation forms electronically?

1 – Not valuable

2 – Somewhat valuable

3 – Very valuable

Value: _____

Comments: _____

Please indicate whether you are:

() Delegate

() Director

() Staff

() Trustee

Suggestions for the 71st General Service Conference

If you have suggestions for improving the Conference (e.g. schedule of Conference activities, meals, hotel accommodations), please list them here:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Please indicate whether you are:

☐ Delegate ☐ Director ☐ Staff ☐ Trustee

EVALUATION SUMMARY

69th GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

Pre-Conference

Was the advance material and preparation from G.S.O adequate?

Was the advance material and preparation from G.S.O. timely?

One hundred six (106) Conference members responded to the questions on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	82
Trustees:	11
Staff Members:	4
Directors:	5
No Designation:	4

In response to whether or not the advance material and preparation from G.S.O. was adequate, the following replies were recorded:

Was the advance material and preparation from G.S.O adequate?

Yes:	100
No:	4
No answer:	2

Was the advance material and preparation from G.S.O. timely?

Yes:	95
No:	6
No answer:	5

The vast majority of respondents answered that the advance material and preparation were both adequate and timely. “Excellent” said one respondent,” and “Very helpful info and reminders!” said a delegate. One member said the Conference attendees “very much appreciated the care, attention and expeditious way staff responded to questions and emails.”

But several respondents expressed concern about the translations — particularly the Spanish — being late. One delegate said that this was “very inconvenient for Hispanic members, not giving them adequate time to prepare.” And two attendees offered these suggestions: “For those of us a little less tech savvy, a ‘how to’ guide/video would have helped. Then I used other alcoholics I may not have used otherwise to help me.” Another member reflected, “There were delays and updates happening after

background material was posted. I would rather a delay than continual changes and updates.”

Dashboard

How valuable did you find the Conference dashboard?

When Conference members were asked to rate the use of the dashboard, their comments were recorded and tallied. Here is the breakdown:

Very valuable:	86
Somewhat valuable:	16
Not valuable:	1
No answer:	3

The dashboard met with the approval of many Conference attendees. One attendee [an online respondent] announced, “I am now a downloading queen.” Another said, “I love the dashboard.” “Excellent tool,” shared one member, “allows info to be immediately available to all.” Another wrote: “Excellent format, that even a dummy like me could navigate!” And one delegate expressed the ambivalence many others had: “Great add to our process,” that respondent said, yet, “Sometimes email link was a little confusing, but could just be me not reading thoroughly.”

Many members suggested that they needed to acquaint themselves with the function: “Kinda surprised with the new dashboard, but figured it out and it was very useful,” said one. Another member said, “Once I got the hang of it! Took a little getting used to.” And an avid respondent shared, “What would I do without this? It is an invaluable tool. I think the ‘hints’ page sent out is great. I am shocked at how many delegates aren’t using it as much as I am.”

Several respondents gave specific recommendations for improvement:

- “There could be a place for dialogue between committees and all delegates.”
- “The ‘What’s New’ folder is a good idea, but needs to be used consistently.”
- “Would like a more automated/interactive tool.”
- “Some things could have been put up earlier, like the Conference Manual.”
- “Power Points and a simple matrix might be helpful.”

How valuable did you find sharing information from the dashboard with members of your area while preparing for the Conference?

Very valuable:	66
Somewhat valuable:	16
Not valuable:	1
No answer:	20
N/A	3

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Most respondents felt this function was a great way to share information with members of their areas. "Very helpful to the troops," said one delegate. Another was "able to forward changes immediately." And one Conference attendee said, "I gave my area more than previous years. We really liked the 'Conference Process.'" One delegate shared that it was "nice to be able to download the background and distribute it to the area." And another noted that it was "absolutely critical to our Pre-Conference Workshops."

One member brought up the issue of anonymity: "It would be helpful to receive suggestions for sharing background material when anonymity may be compromised."

[Note: A few respondents said these two dashboard questions were duplicates.]

Sunday, May 19, 2019

One hundred two (102) Conference members responded to the questions on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	74
Trustees:	13
Staff Members:	3
Directors:	5
No Answer:	7

Conference Manual

How valuable was the Conference Manual in providing you information about the schedule of Conference Week's events?

Very Valuable:	90
Somewhat Valuable:	7
Not Valuable:	1
2.5	1
No Answer:	3

An overwhelming majority of respondents found the manual essential, saying it was "Excellent" and "Excellent content, prefer it electronically." One delegate was especially enthusiastic: "It's like the Bible for the week. I LOVE being able to read along as reports are read and have such handy access to it all, altho it's a bit bulky to cart around." Other Comments ranged from "Beautifully put together" to "valuable, useful and needed" to "very detailed." Not everyone voted affirmative for the digital side. For instance, one attendee wrote, "I strongly encourage continuing to utilize the printed manual."

Timeliness was a concern to many attendees. One delegate said, "Not sure why we waited until we were on-site. I'd prefer it electronic and earlier." Sharing that opinion, another respondent said, "It would have been nice to get the schedule sooner."

Some members offered constructive suggestions. "Would be good to have hotel map in binder with schedule (so could see where to go next!)," one noted. Others said, "Their choice. At this time, we have a wide variety of digital fluency and want the information to meet accessibility needs." "Let's offer delegates options of e or paper, early in the year."

How valuable was having an electronic version of the Conference Manual available for your use?

Very Valuable:	63
Somewhat Valuable:	26
Not Valuable:	5
Unsure	1

No Answer:	5
N/A	2

Opinions ran across the board. One delegate stated, "Love the material." Another said, "This question prompted members to lament the passing of *paper*." And one delegate "still dragged the notebook around." And another "Can't figure out how an electronic version would replace the paper version. However, I will give it a go. It might be a while before delegates are *all* capable of using a digital version."

Quite a few comments leaned toward the negative. One trustee stated, "It means I will always need to have a device. With paper, I simply bring what I need." Another: "I like the book better." But this answer seemed to sum up the feeling of many: "I'm still learning my way around digitally, and continue to rely more and access info quicker via hard copy, as is my historical habit."

One delegate set forth this middle-of-the-road solution: "We should offer both, but not offer tablets. The digital people have their own preferred device. For those who use paper all the time, it's way too much to expect them to learn how to use a device at the GSC. Buying devices would be a waste of basket dollars. Tech turns obsolete in a minute."

Presentations

"The 1969 Project" — History of the World Service Meeting

Very Valuable:	61
Somewhat Valuable:	35
Not Valuable:	2
No Answer:	4

Most of the Conference attendees found great value in this presentation. "I loved learning about when and why the World Service Meeting was started," one delegate said. "Always heartwarming," said another. Some members also saw its usefulness, as this delegate pointed out: "Sharing the experience will go a long way in educating members about A.A. worldwide."

But a few attendees shared rather different views, like these: "Lengthy and informative but a little too dry." And "Good overview, not very deep history, but good setup for next presentation," said one. One respondent found it "boring."

25th World Service Meeting

Very Valuable:	77
Somewhat Valuable:	20
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	5

Respondents enjoyed this presentation and were effusive in their support and complimentary comments. “I loved the presentation. Blew me away,” one attendee said. And one member commented, “I really appreciated it because it continues to remind me how much bigger this is than my home group, district, area, U.S.” Still another remarked that it was a “Great practical explanation and tangible explanation of our international efforts,”

Enthusiasm ran high, even when responses were not entirely positive. One delegate pointed out: “I realize we all have not reviewed previously. [This] got us all on same page.” Another felt that it was “Great, went very fast, even though overtime.” An online respondent noted that “It would have been wonderful to have heard more about the topics discussed at the WSM.”

Joint Meeting

Very Valuable:	70
Somewhat Valuable:	14
Not Valuable:	3
No Answer:	13
N/A	2

Most Conference attendees felt this experience had a good deal of value. One delegate saw it as “Awesome, experience of a lifetime getting the info from the top.” Other comments ranged from “I felt better informed than last year” to “Good company, good food,” to “Great opportunity to meet and ask questions.” One delegate saw it as an “Excellent opportunity to discuss trustees report.” And another offered a candid assessment: “Eye-opening, interesting — a good orientation into what the hell we were going to do from this moment forward.” One attendee offered a response that went directly to the heart of our Fellowship: “It personalized the process. Just drunks or friends of drunks sharing experience.”

On the other hand, one attendee noted, “Trustees could make more of an effort to be welcoming in the joint meeting. This would go a long way in building trust and unity. The information we received was great, the delivery was sort of deadpan.” One delegate shared that “We need more time with trustees.”

Monday, May 20, 2019

Ninety-one (91) Conference members responded to the questions on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	71
Trustees:	8
Staff Members:	3
Directors:	6
No Answer:	3

"Finance Report Presentation"

Very Valuable:	81
Somewhat Valuable:	9
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	1

Most respondents expressed great appreciation for the clear and concise manner in which this report was delivered. "Showed where \$ came from, where they don't and how used" and "A plethora of information delivered in a timely fashion, well organized, well presented" were typical of numerous comments. One respondent seemed to capture the spirit of most with, "Needed and valued by all it seems. Modern version of kicking tires. Boggled down in detail but tries to please everyone." Although responses were almost universally approving, more than a few members mentioned that the presentation was delivered "very fast, could slow down just a bit" and "too much, too fast, too many repeat graphs." "Treasurer needs more time to present. LOTS Of information but presentation seems rushed." One delegate said, "Too much information thrown at us without discussion/explanation." Nevertheless, the "Always great" sentiment prevailed.

"AA Grapevine Board Report Presentation"

Very Valuable:	77
Somewhat Valuable:	11
Not Valuable:	2
No Answer:	1

Conference attendees were warm and spirited in expressing their appreciation — making such comments as "A+," "Excellent! Thank you!" and "Great." One delegate said, "I love the Grapevine and would love to watch it grow more and more."

A small minority were not quite as enthused about the presentation. One delegate said the presentation was "Good info, although somewhat general." And a couple of respondents even noted that it was "not very good" and was "not any really new info." Said one respondent, "Last year's Grapevine presentation was more dynamic. There was a lack of enthusiasm in the delivery. The information had value but the presentation

itself left me wanting. When I have to report on the Grapevine in my area I will focus on the self-advocacy of the project with much more zeal.”

“General Service Board Report Presentation”

Very Valuable:	69
Somewhat Valuable:	17
Not Valuable:	2
No Answer:	2
2.5:	1

Most Conference members found this report presentation valuable. Two delegates expressed how much the presentation was appreciated: “Great report with valuable information” and “Excellent — this is what we came here for!!” Other responses were also quite spirited, such as “Love, love, love [the presenter’s] enthusiasm, and love AA” and “I adored the presentation very much with so much excellent information.” Even the constructive criticism from one delegate was given in a complimentary manner: “Very inspirational. More emotional and factual than technical or statistical. Would like to hear more measurements and data.” As one delegate said, it was “Impressive.”

One member shared this thoughtful comment: “ ‘Everything is fine’ was the theme of this year’s board report. I love a positive report but it has to be real as well and there is more to what is happening on the board than meets the ear these days. Last year’s Navajo Translation cannot be this year’s ‘heartwarming service story.’ I know we want a year where ‘everything is fine’ but this is probably not that year.”

“A.A.W.S. Board Report Presentation”

Very Valuable:	81
Somewhat Valuable:	3
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	1
Various numerical Designations, such as A++, 10, 100%	6

This presentation not only brought out an overwhelming number of positive responses, but those responses also expressed a high regard for its usefulness. There were many, many appreciative comments. Some specific: “It was good to hear about all the savings that staff is implementing” and “An impressive presentation. So wonderful to hear efforts of staff acknowledged.” But most were the superlatives of “Excellent,” [another] “A+,” and “Awesome — the safety card will be discussed ASAP.”

The following response, however, seemed to sum up the general feeling: “Great presentation, not a boring one with great and valuable information that I am excited in bringing back to my area. Thank you.”

Tuesday, May 21, 2019

One hundred three (103) Conference members responded to the question about the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	70
Trustees:	9
Staff Members:	2
Directors:	5
No Answer:	17

Workshop

“Clarity of Purpose — Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings”

Very Valuable:	70
Somewhat Valuable:	25
Not Valuable:	2
No Answer:	6

Conference members were gung ho about this workshop, and they had a lot to say. Nearly every participant made a comment. “Awesome format. Awesome facilitator. Awesome participation. Awesome results” seemed to capture the spirit of all others. Among the critical opinions were “Interesting process. Room was small and got hot, causing nausea and reduced capacity to focus on task.”

One director rated the workshop as only somewhat valuable, but went on to say it was “Fun, good format. Topics more relevant to GSC, Delegate/Board work may have been more productive/helpful.” A less ardent respondent noted that the workshop was “much better than last year — not sure of what the ultimate value is — we are here to do important work — I don’t know if that time can be put to better use.” Observations ranged from fairly lukewarm “Fun, engaging, maybe less topics to spend more time on the debriefing” to this rather contradictory comment: “Seemed disorganized, subject was interesting! Please do again!” Still other comments were extensive; some were full pages of observations. Some responses were explicit complaints/compliments, such as this trustee’s Comment: “A survey in advance of Conference would have been sufficient to collect sharing on this topic — in person workshop led to extra time on deciding which suggestions were either duplicative of others or otherwise comprehensible. But still useful and fun experience.”

This topic seemed to have struck a chord with the Conference attendees, as typified by this response: “Suggest we use the ‘Get Ready!’ video soundtrack for the 2020 convention next year. Feeling blessed to be part of this.”

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Eighty-nine (89) Conference members responded to the question on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	50
Trustees:	6
Staff Members:	2
Directors:	4
No Answer:	27

Trip to G.S.O.

Very Valuable:	64
Somewhat Valuable:	7
Not Valuable:	2
No Answer:	8
N/A	3
Did not go	5

A respondent's "Marvelous" captures the essence of the feedback. Nearly all the Conference attendees who made the trip found it enjoyable as well as valuable; even those who gave the outing a "somewhat valuable" rating had heartwarming and loving comments for GSO and the staff. Most delegates seemed to concur with these sentiments: "All I can say is whoa! The warmth and accessibility of these dedicated people blew me away!" and "It felt like going home to real family." "Very moving. I'm not overly emotional but I found myself crying. Staff, Trustees, everyone there are wonderful. Noticed a photo of Bill with his feet up on his desk. Looks like Bill started this fancy sock thing."

One member expressed a widely held notion, "Good as a break from sessions. Great for those who have never been — it's their office." Along the same line, one delegate said, "It was a wonderful opportunity to see where the love and support starts. The Archives are amazing." The Archives were a hit: "Just wish I had more time to spend in Archives. Love our history," said one respondent. Another delegate found it overwhelming, "a blessing and a joy, the Archives — Fabulous!"

A few attendees did not make the trip; several mentioned that they had been to the offices before, some even several times. But it seems that many who missed the jaunt had a good time anyway. "We enjoyed our stroll to St. Patrick's Cathedral" or "As a second year delegate, I did not attend. I slept in." Along with "I could not go ZZZZZZZZ."

A few attendees expressed specific ideas that they felt could make the occasion even better. Here are their remarks and suggestions:

- "Make clearer that it's optional. As someone who's been multiple times before, I might have done something different that morning (and you could save on Metro Cards, knowing who's in/who's out.)"

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- “More time needed or less # of people at same time touring.”
- “Time constraint was my only issue. Other than that, it was magical.”
- “I am wondering why the staff cannot come to the Grapevine and Treasurer’s Reports.”
- “I saw the stockroom. EEEEEK! A business which does no regular inventory usually goes broke. Just sayin’.”

Thursday, May 23, 2019

Eighty-two (82) Conference members responded to the questions on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	65
Trustees:	6
Staff Members:	1
Directors:	5
No Answer:	5

Presentations

1. “Yesterday’s World: Our Legacies Begin”

Very Valuable:	49
Somewhat Valuable:	31
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	2

This presentation elicited strong reactions from Conference attendees, and those reactions ran the gamut. They ranged from several “Excellent” and “thought-provoking” as well as “Well done!” and “Thoughtful” to “Too upsetting, comments about becoming disillusioned and how AA currently moving.”

One respondent expressed a common sentiment, “Very well prepared, Excellent content.” The number of “Somewhat Valuable” ratings was significant, with these kinds of remarks from attendees: “Somewhat disappointing that the presentation was used for a personal gripe that was better suited for What’s on Your Mind” and “I’m not sure we needed a break from Conference to hear opinion.”

2. “Today’s world: Demonstrating Integrity, Anonymity and Service”

Very Valuable:	64
Somewhat Valuable:	18
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	0

The Conference attendees agreed overwhelmingly that this topic was meaningful. Even the respondents who indicated that it held less value for them saw that it was a subject of great importance in our world today. One respondent wrote that it “brought up many important ideas.” More than one found great use and help in the presentation: “Way to OPEN THE DISCUSSION about the use of Social Media and all it will give our fellowship. We live in a modern world. Thank you.” Another said, “Thank you for providing questions that are useful in taking a personal inventory in this regard.” “Relevant topic on social media — keep sharing on this one” said one delegate. And another delegate expressed similar thoughts, “Loved it, thank you! Yes we can use

social media and we should continue to explore this avenue. Young people need us and we need them. We need to communicate today.”

3. “Tomorrow’s World: Courage to Be Vigilant”

Very Valuable:	67
Somewhat Valuable:	15
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	0

An overarching reaction to this presentation was that word again: *thought-provoking*. One respondent put it this way, “Must think even more about this — it is our job here to do just that.” A delegate said, “Very important topic as were all three that were presented today during this session.” And another delegate shared, “Great work, thorough work. Loved it.”

Still, one delegate did state (in answer to Items 1, 2 and 3), “I’m not sure we needed a break from Conference to hear opinion.”

4. “AAWS Audio/Video: Strategic Plan Presentation

Very Valuable:	48
Somewhat Valuable:	24
Not Valuable:	3
No Answer:	7

Several respondents had a strong positive reaction to this presentation. “Good to know that we are exploring video as the world moves farther away from the written word,” wrote one attendee. Another member shared: “Great talk, the idea of acceptability of the Fellowship’s lessening knowledge of the 12 Traditions and the opportunity we have concerning that are important topics.” And another said this was “Extremely timely!” One noted the whimsical notion of “Bill tweeting — I love the image.” “

One delegate said that the presentation was “very well done,” yet had this opinion: “Just questioning the value of taking 2 hours away from the committee recommendations to this other activity — Just afraid we’ll be going ‘into the wee hours’ to get it all done!” And there was this: “Poor, not well presented,” a sentiment that did not seem to be widespread among Conference attendees.

5. “2020 International Convention”

Very Valuable:	70
Somewhat Valuable:	6
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	6

Conference attendees’ had heartfelt, appreciative reactions to the presentation about this upcoming A.A. event. Their comments were favorable and included such remarks

as “Outstanding,” “Skit was wonderful,” and “I did not know our staff was so talented.” A delegate who rated the presentation 15/10 [3 is the highest listed] had this enthusiastic remark: “Fabulous — creative — entertaining and funny. Who knew we have this kind of extraordinary acting and singing talent. P.S. You’ve set the bar high for next conference! Cuz I’m gonna be spreading the word!” Another exuberant respondent said, “The video was very good, but the actual production was unbelievable. What a delightful event. Everyone was superb. I thought [a GSO staff member] was lip-synching. She has a beautiful voice, as did the rest of the cast. It was just what we needed. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

Along that same vein, one respondent wrote, “As much as it was entertaining, it was also every bit as informative as the presentation. It was a real gift from the staff that I appreciated.” Another delegate wrote, “Excellent teaser. Good info at this point. Loved the play and the break from sessions it provided. I needed to laugh at this point.” However, one attendee suggested that we “leave out skit.” And although one attendee said that the presentation was “informative and fun,” that same attendee was “very disappointed in losing a sharing session.”

Friday, May 29, 2019

Sixty-seven (67) Conference members responded to the questions on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	49
Trustees:	1
Staff Members:	0
Directors:	3
No Answer:	14

Presentation

“AA Grapevine and La Viña”

Very Valuable:	37
Somewhat Valuable:	20
Not Valuable:	1
No Answer:	8
N/A	1

Most of the Conference members agreed that the presentation on the AA Grapevine and La Viña was excellent and “Very Valuable.” One delegate said, “Loved to hear audio and appreciate that this will be available on dashboard so I can share it. Wonder what got cut that would have been useful. Appreciate new management and direction of GV/LV.” One respondent didn’t give the presentation a numerical rating, but “enjoyed the video.”

The majority of those respondents who assigned the presentation a “Somewhat Valuable” rating cited these kinds of reasons for doing so: “Wish we could have given them the full time,” said one attendee. And “Cut too short, but what we heard and saw was excellent,” shared a delegate. Of course, there was an opposing view: “Too bad it was cut very short,” wrote a director. And one delegate expressed still another point of view: “Thank you for shortening this presentation so that we could focus on Conference Agenda Items and offering Power Point on dashboard.”

Conference Committee Reports

Conference members were asked if there was enough time for discussion of Conference committee reports. To answer, they used a rating key with three choices:

Not Enough:	13
Just right:	46
Too much:	5
No Answer:	3

“Just right” was the choice for the majority of attendees. They elaborated in their comments: A delegate pointed out that the presentation “went well, better than last

year.” Another showed appreciation for other participants by saying “I’m glad people were willing to give up presentation time and come in earlier/stay later to get our work done.” And maybe it was just enough this year because “we did away with ‘What’s on Your Mind’ offered a delegate.

One attendee who felt that *too much time* was allowed for Conference committee reports shared, “A lot of the comments are repetitious and are sharing what areas thought or voted.” Another delegate seemed to agree, noting that “the problem lies in actually too much talk at times, beating a dead horse, so to speak.” Interestingly, one delegate who felt the timing was just right then made the comment “Sometimes too much.” And one who checked “Too much” said, “Soooo Good. Loved the process.”

An attendee who felt there was *not enough* time said, “Seemed we rushed to consider some decisions,” and another cited a specific result of this time issue: “We had to shorten presentation of Grapevine and sharing sessions.” A respondent offered a suggestion: “I think the item that is being discussed and voted on should be displayed on the screen. It would keep the discussion more on topic and then the voter knows for sure exactly what is being voted on. From a technical standpoint, I don’t see any reason why it can’t be done.”

One delegate summed it up this way: “It’s amazing how efficient everything was this year.”

“Presentation/Discussion Sessions”

Attendees were asked to rate the overall value of holding presentation/discussion sessions in the course of the Conference week.

Very Valuable:	39
Somewhat Valuable:	23
Not Valuable:	0
No Answer:	4
N/A	1

Again, time was of the essence. “Very thoughtful — mostly polite and on to pic[s]. More repetition than needed, too much floor actions that were not ripe. Recs should overwhelmingly go through committee.” And information was important too. It was a major issue for respondents. “Very, very informative,” shared a delegate; “very enjoyable and informative,” said another. And one noted that it was “very educational.”

Although most members found the Presentation/Discussion sessions very valuable, on this topic, the number of “Somewhat Valuable” ratings was significantly high. One director said that it was “difficult to rate because committee work and floor motions take so much time — but we do need a break.” One delegate gave the question a 5-1/2 value, circled “Somewhat Valuable” and had this to say: “Frankly depends on quality of reports given; some people are more adept at putting thoughts together concisely, in a

way that they're easily absorbed!" One delegate assigned a "Somewhat Valuable" rating, while making this comment: "I think it's a good balance mostly."

Conference Participation

The Conference members were also asked to rate whether or not the participation of delegates, directors, staff and trustees was not enough, just right, or too much.

Conference Participation				
	Not Enough	Just Right	Too Much	No Answer
Delegate	5	51	4	7
Directors	3	50	6	8
Staff	7	49	3	8
Trustees	6	49	3	9

The chart above shows that most members across the board — delegate, director, trustee, G.S.O. staff — marked event participation as "just right": "Everyone participated fully and equally. It was a true democracy," said one member. Another attendee agreed, saying "It was just as it was supposed to be; full participation of all members — engaged." "All amazing." And one delegate noted: "I say mostly [just] right but there were possibly occasions I felt staff members were providing points of information that were actually intended to influence and outcome for something they wanted or did not want to pass. It provided [them] more opportunity to speak than others."

Some Conference members who voted "not enough" had definite ideas about what should be done. One member remarked, "Would like to see more interaction of trustees." And one member said, "Need more collaboration in meetings similar to joint committee meetings."

And from the "too much" camp: "Some delegates spoke sparingly but several (Golden Mic Recipients) spoke over 20 times! (I counted.) Any way to enforce not repeating?" An attendee wrote, "Some delegates dominated the discussions on almost every committee report. Many shared personal experiences and strayed off topic. Many shared the same opinion which had already been shared more than once." And this attendee offered an alternative view: "I find this question offensive. All conference members are equal and should feel free to participate as their conscience guides them."

One Conference member offered a thoughtful recommendation: "It would be helpful to meet with trustees prior to conference and [have] availability to their knowledge." Another capsulized the majority opinion: "Very good representation of all aspects."

Electronic Device Usage

Did you use a laptop or similar computer device at this year's Conference?

Yes:	43
No:	22
No Answer:	2

This hot topic generated spirited comments, affirmative and negative. The majority of attendees did use a computer, laptop, iPad or similar device; a few indicated that they were quite pleased with their electronics. One respondent said, "Liked having my laptop/tablet. Floor actions on dashboard would be helpful." And another respondent considered, "I think I need my laptop."

Although the majority of respondents said they used an electronic device, they didn't seem very happy about it. "I brought it to Conference but ended up taking notes," said one. And another respondent longed for the old days, saying that the laptop was used "only occasionally for background responses as I prefer 'paper' for notes and keeping track." "Didn't this year," shared a delegate, "but I might next year." One delegate "made a conscious decision to 'not' experience the Conference from 'behind the screen.'" And with an eye to the future, another delegate stated how much the electronic device was appreciated and "would like to go paperless — 2020."

More than one respondent noted how convenient the outlets and internet access were. This delegate expressed an optimistic view: "My comments would be very positive, although my laptop died on Wednesday a.m. Loved the power pods. Will challenge myself to do no paper next year." Others couldn't make up their minds:

- "Not [there] during discussion (so I could be fully present at GSC, this is what works for me, others prefer all electronic), but valuable in my room.
- "Considering bringing to GSC next year, for resources at my fingertips, but not sure. Strong suggestion: we ought not purchase devices for GSC members to use. Rationales: a) short shelf life, quickly obsolete b) cost prohibitive, is this service needed? I think not because: c) those who use e devices prefer our own d) even for the digitally fluent, devices we are not familiar with have somewhat of a learning curve which should not divert us from our primary purpose of the business of the GSC.

Conference Evaluation Forms

Conference members were asked to rate the value of the ability to submit their Conference Evaluation Forms electronically.

Very Valuable:	35
Somewhat Valuable:	4
Not Valuable:	5
No Answer:	18
N/A	5

Some attendees apparently were reluctant to use electronic forms, and many were reluctant to answer this question. Eighteen respondents did not assign a numerical rating to the topic, half of those same respondents made Comments. The members who found value in using the electronic forms generally did not use them.

Here are some responses from those who said the electronic forms were “Very Valuable”:

- Didn’t do it but expect it will result in more feedback.”
- “Only used it on Sunday.”
- “I did not use them yet on line.”
- “Submitted by paper.”
- “Use them please to make improvements.”

One delegate would have tried, but the laptop died. That delegate was “all for it.” Several attendees continued to see electronic devices as distracting. One member shared, “I’m sure it’s really valuable — I tried to stay away from electronics this week and keep my mind clear.” And several said they just didn’t use the ones they had. Period. One “doesn’t use electronics.” Others don’t have them. “Did not use. Paper forms are easier.” Yet, one respondent observed that if the devices had not been available, “Oh my goodness! You’d not be able to read my writing. I can’t. ;-)”

Possibly tongue-in-cheek, a respondent said, “Maybe next year? I didn’t try this, sorry. That’s for our next delegate.”

Conference Week

Conference Members were asked to help evaluate and rate elements of the 69th General Service Conference:

Conference Week Events	Not Valuable	Somewhat Valuable	Very Valuable	No Answer/Not Applicable
Sunday Orientation	1	15	47	4
Board Reports	1	11	52	3
Committee Reports	1	2	61	3
Sharing Sessions	5	19	39	4
Joint Meeting	2	10	42	13
Reports on Area Service Highlights	6	22	35	4
Presentations/Discussions	2	20	39	6
Workshops	2	21	38	5

Here are several attendees' reflections:

- I think the schedule was well-constructed. And I appreciated the nimble way in which flexibility was applied. That said, I think it could be weighted a little more in favor of committee reports.
- I think we waste too much time.
- Hotel staff, food during the week have been OUTSTANDING! Panel 69s have a great new energy that has affected the vibe thru-out whole 8 days! Thank you for another once in a lifetime fabulous experience."
- It was perfect! The schedule, content was loving, flexible, respectful. I would have liked more sharing sessions but it's also important to manage time. There should be more time in committee. I felt it was a little rushed. Everything was perfect. I started the voting process with zero confidence in electronic process but once they straightened it out that changed my confidence level? Thank you!
- I didn't want to give everything a top rating, so the Presentations/Discussions and Workshop only get a 2. The workshop was too confusing and chaotic and had no follow-up after the cursory reportbacks. The Presentations/Discussions were less vital than the sharing sessions, committee reports, or other scheduled activities.
- How could it not be awesome[?] The commitment, knowledge and experience of planners, board and staff shined through in a smooth running event and the ability to adjust schedule as needed. The advance information and our continued advance in digital well prepared me for coming. How R all of you so nice and helpful and patient with us all the time[?] You R amazing.

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- “Loved the Conference! Particularly the workshop and the skit. Loved the fact that trustees, staff, emeriti engaged with Delegates.”
- “Everything helped!”

Suggestions for the 70th General Service Conference

Sixty-seven Conference members responded to the request for suggestions on this page of the Conference evaluation:

Delegates:	49
Trustees:	1
Directors:	3
No Answer:	14

Here is a selection of those suggestions, submitted by Conference members for improving the Conference:

1. Put a monitor facing the podium by the front row of tables for chair and people on podium to see. Committees might be more efficient if suggestions for chairing were available.
2. When it was asked for Class A feedback on an agenda item, chair said that could happen in general sharing. Sounded like Class A's couldn't share?
3. Prefer to work a little later in the day. Easier in the week and end earlier on Thursday and Friday if possible.
4. I heard many questions from trustees and directors regarding conference committee consideration. Suggest investigating an avenue of clear communication between the Conference Committees and trustees regarding intentions of committee considerations.
5. I feel more unity between this fellowship and AAWS. I hope the Fellowship can continue to work with our trustees effectively to improve our primary purpose.
6. We did not get much participation from Spanish-speaking groups because translation of background was late. If promised on a certain date, please make sure the deadlines are met.
7. More fruits, less sugar, healthy food, more water.
8. More time doing AA business, less time on Presentations, Workshops, eating (45 minutes).
9. Need garbage cans by coffee station but that would be the hotel's job.
10. Way too much food. The meals were fantastic but way too much. We were offered so many options — I loved the food.
11. Disappointed by lack of respect conference attendees had, for example, speaking while people are at the microphones during presentations — very rude — talking — it was hard to hear.
12. Not very welcoming — I found I had to really work on meeting others here ... found many of them cliquish. But I made some great new friends. I had to make a point of greeting people, otherwise I felt invisible to them. But alcoholics are alcoholics and it was still a great spiritual experience.
13. Soy milk.
14. More/better use of projection — seemed an underutilized resource.
15. Clickers were not an issue last year but they were this year.

16. The behavior of this conference has been out of control. People did not stop talking when the bell rang. Side conversations going on in the room. Very disappointing.
17. Voting clickers were not explained well. That's why it took so long for people to feel okay about using them. *Clarity* is the key tool of the facilitator.
18. Committee readouts do not include rationale. This baffles me no end. Now I have to ask 80 times — Why?
19. Figure out how to use delegates more for the items. Trustees get 4 years and *much* more continuity with the agenda. Delegates get 12 days in 2 years. This is a *big* gap.
 - Background information is shallow. Should be more hard [info to give to] area. Feel like Pre-Conference and area should happen at the Conference because now I have enough info. I'm very surprised to find myself thinking this...but I'm not going to tell my area how extravagant the Conference week has been. It's not too over the top but it seems like we spend a lot of money for not much squeeze. I think if we maybe...Oh, I don't know. I am just feeling a bit uncomfortable, not a suggestion though. Just FYI if it means anything to you.
20. Schedule time to take photos.
21. Better location for the Serenity meeting. The present location was too noisy from the air ducts.
22. To provide one night prior and one night after conference to allow for travel.
23. First priority should be committee meetings and consideration of committees' recommendations and additional considerations. (Save rest till the end? Friday?)
24. The staff, directors (and a few trustees) spoke as much or more than the delegates. They are co-equal members but are in the minority. I love them all, but we need to hear from the delegates, who represent our Fellowship.
25. Sharing sessions — would have liked more at the end.
26. Workshop — with so much business that took place, the workshops time might have been shorter = more time for business.
27. Allow more time for business.
28. Allow all GSO staff to come down and hear the Board chair and financial reports to further facilitate their understanding of how important and appreciated they are by us.
29. When we are discussing video, please cue up the video.
30. Please use tech to its fullest. Recommendations on the screen — when completed — considerations on the screen.
31. Close after dinner on Friday if business is done. Many of us need to pack and go Saturday. Have an optional meeting?
32. We got the same time break for lunch and dinner with no choices as to going shorter for meals to get back into conference.
33. Hopeful of a venue well outside NYC, if that is feasible.
34. Food and beverage over the top — most of us conduct AA business at lower cost with prudence and paper plates.
35. I would recommend [that area highlights] be written for final report with word count limit, time limit.
36. Run test with electronic voting.

37. Go paperless.
38. Evaluate floor action process. By and large, items should go through committee process unless deemed emergency, should auto vote to connect to committee for future.
39. Chair should be allowed to make a call as to whether show of hands, voice or electronic on any voting item.
40. Keep up what you did for this conference.
41. Schedule 15–20 minutes on Wednesday for Conference committees to meet again to approve their reports.
42. General manager and Conference chair should be wearing a tie.
43. More garbage cans in large room.
44. Some members don't feel like standing up and sharing or talking on the microphone. Can we do something about that?
45. Do we really have to hear area highlights?
46. Have the joint committee meeting via Zoom a week or two before the Conference and not waste that time.
47. Put the agenda item on the screen for the discussion and vote.
48. Continue working on keeping discussion at the mic non repetitive and on topic.
49. A definition of the delegate chair position should be made available for new delegates.
50. Please have coffee available at the beginning of the morning meetings — every day. I prefer buffet meals rather than plated meals; this saves time and gives me the opportunity to have a bit of a break.
51. Hotel staff did not seem to have an understanding of the difference between a food preference and food intolerances/allergies. They were commonly unaware of what was in the food. Feeling ill all day is no fun at the Conference.
52. Good hotel. We can get to our room even on a 15 minute break. Hoping future hotels have this asset. Great location for out of towners especially.
53. It might be interesting to do some kind of workshop where folks are put into groups with a few delegates, a trustee or two, a director (or two) some staff members and have brainstorming on various topics. I think it would be beneficial to have a situation where we can hear about “different areas of the elephant” to gain broader perspective. Doing it in small groups and then reporting out to larger fellowship would be interesting.
54. Include in the orientation for all delegates the importance of pacing yourself in the debates. We start out on Wed with a lot of energy and enthusiasm, so we tend to get into it a lot deeper than we probably need to, and then we wind up getting way behind the pace. Rushing through at the end, and having to limit it to 1 minute per share is not what's best for A.A. as a whole. I know it'd be tough to impose a time limit on debate on any one topic, but maybe we need stricter enforcement of “don't repeat a point someone else has made” guideline would help.
55. Could we do business first and get to know each other later?

2020 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM E: Review the 2019 January conference call participant survey results.

Background notes:

2019 Committee Consideration from the Conference Agenda Committee:

The committee reviewed the report on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference, which included sharing from the 2019 Conference committee chairs. The committee noted that the January conference call portion of the plan was implemented and request reporting of the 2019 participant survey results to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee.

From the report of the July 2019 trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee the requested 2019 January Conference Call participant survey results.

Background:

1. 2019 January Conference Call Survey Questions
2. 2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results
3. 2019 January Conference Call Survey Participants Comments Q6
4. 2019 January Conference Call Survey Participants Comments Q7
5. 2020 Suggestions for January Conference Call

2019 January Conference Call Survey Questions

Q1 Did you participate in the January Conference Call?

Q2 Did you find the materials provided for this call allowed for an informed discussion?

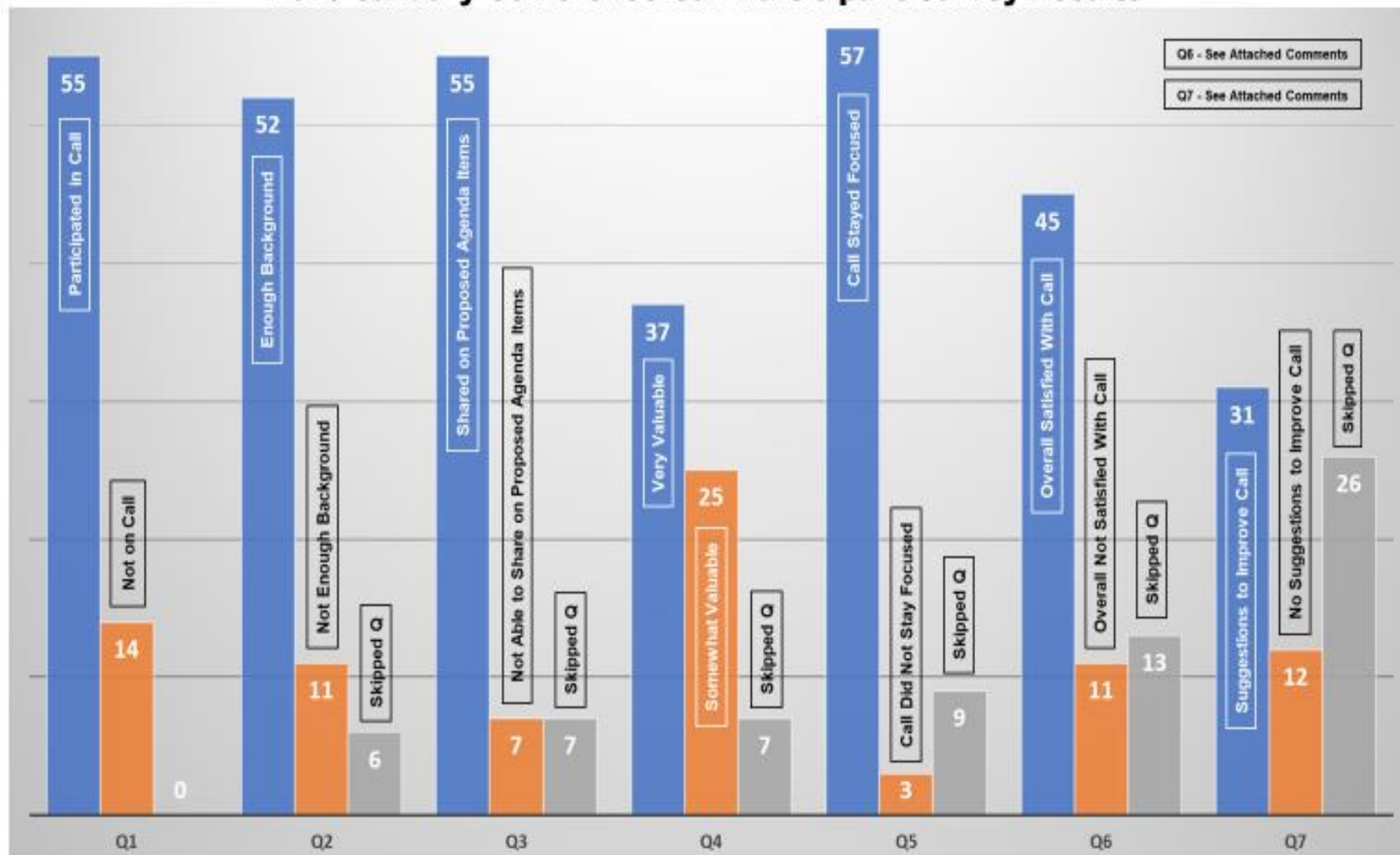
Q3 Were you able to share about potential Conference agenda items during the call?

Q4 How valuable did you find this call between the Trustee Chair and Conference Committee?

Q5 Did your conference call stay focused on the proposed agenda items and agenda items still being discussed by the trustees?

Q6 Overall, how satisfied are you with this process for providing input into the Conference Agenda process?

Q7 What suggestions for improvement to this process do you have?

2019 January Conference Call Participant Survey Results

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2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results - Q6 Comments

Q6	Answered	It is a great start. I hope it will become a more integral part of the agenda selection process.
Q6	Answered	Not only did this call help to inform the delegate and the trustee, it was a great forum to begin the conference process. Everyone had the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas.
Q6	Answered	Very satisfied. But more can be done; such as having the Conference Committee Chair attend the corresponding Trustees meeting when all the agenda items are sorted out.
Q6	Answered	Yes, well worth the effort
Q6	Answered	I was very satisfied. I had time to ask questions and receive feedback from the Trustee of the committee and from the other Delegates on the panel. Very nice.
Q6	Answered	Impression was that we were all informed and prepared.
Q6	Answered	Somewhat
Q6	Answered	It served it's purpose.
Q6	Answered	I think the process is satisfactory without needing a January phone call.
Q6	Answered	I was very satisfied that we had input into the process. I was disappointed that none of the items that the majority of the Conference committee wanted to see included made it to the Final Conference agenda.
Q6	Answered	I went into it blind. I wasn't real satisfied.
Q6	Answered	It's a very good add.
Q6	Answered	I liked it — as a Trustee I was introduced to the new delegates and believe this will be beneficial in May—
Q6	Answered	Very satisfied. I trust and hope this process will continue and improve the delegate participation of agenda item selection.
Q6	Answered	This is not a good use of our time.
Q6	Answered	Definitely a good idea, but the background should be shared.

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2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results - Q6 Comments

Q6	Answered	Satisfied- I listened mostly since others were making the same points I would have. Got some clarity on a couple points.
Q6	Answered	Moderately
Q6	Answered	Somewhat- as with all new things, maybe it starts out a bit clunky and gets better as we move ahead (future conferences). It was nice to feel included in the process!
Q6	Answered	satisfied but would like more background on the motive for the agenda item?
Q6	Answered	I found the conference call to be very informative and I was also able to connect with my other committee colleagues
Q6	Answered	I was brand new but gave me insight on things to come
Q6	Answered	I believe the process was very helpful
Q6	Answered	Moderately satisfied. I gave a little input on an item I'd submitted, but there wasn't a lot of delegate input overall.
Q6	Answered	I think it is important that the delegate's have input into the agenda process. This seems like a good start.
Q6	Answered	I thought it was worthwhile
Q6	Answered	Like I said, I didn't feel like our voice was heard. We voted unanimously in favor of every item on our grid, yet none made the agenda.
Q6	Answered	Very satisfied with the process. I believe it is a step toward becoming more informed.
Q6	Answered	As a committee chair, I was very satisfied. Communication with the chair of the trustees' committee after each board meeting was informative and I passed that information on to the members of my committee. As a committee member, I was extremely disappointed in the process. The committee chair has not communicate with the committee even once since the Conference. He has acted as a committee of one.
Q6	Answered	I think it was a step in the right direction. It helped the committee members get to know each other and that will be helpful when we meet in person. It was good to get an update and hear from trustees. It was empowering in some ways, however the information did not seem
Q6	Answered	Great step in the right direction!
Q6	Answered	Excellent idea. Please continue.
Q6	Answered	Very satisfied. I think it provided a good arena for discussion at a time when items were new and still pending. It gave me as a delegate, especially a first year delegate, a voice and an opportunity to learn more about what was in front of us prior to the release of the final list of
Q6	Answered	Very satisfied and we are moving in the right direction to get more Delegate input on setting the agenda.

2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results - Q6 Comments

Q6	Answered	Very satisfied. As a first year delegate, it helped me feel more comfortable with the agenda items and questions that might arise about them.
Q6	Answered	I was satisfied but have nothing to compare it to. Still, it was good.
Q6	Answered	I was satisfied, trustees chair stayed over the 1 hour because we were not finished. We covered and discussed everything and you know literature is always long.
Q6	Answered	I hope the exercise will prove to be valuable.
Q6	Answered	next time I will ask if I can hear the others persons.
Q6	Answered	I felt that there was discussion in the trustees committee about agenda items that we were not made aware of that could have helped us.
Q6	Answered	I'll let you know next year when I would be better prepared.

2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results - Q7 Comments

Q7	Answered	More background information before the call and feedback on the trustees committee deliberations surrounding the opinions of the conference committee.
Q7	Answered	I appreciate the background material containing what happened to the agenda item not selected. This was most helpful in understanding why there were not. If this could be sent out with the final agenda items before the background material is available, they would be helpful to answer questions and give further clarity to the process.
Q7	Answered	For first year Delegates, explain better the purpose of the call - as explained at the beginning of this survey. Not necessary to read the agenda items to us. Took a lot of our time.
Q7	Answered	Issue some guidance prior to the call regarding the objective is to discuss the worthiness of the Item for inclusion; not, the opportunity to begin debate on the merits of the Item.
Q7	Answered	Allow time for everyone to call in
Q7	Answered	I highly recommend that a separate conference call with both GVCC and AAGVB members be conducted in the future. In 2018, we had a conference call meet and greet which served as an important team-building exercise that contributed a great deal to the excellent work of the 68th GSC GVCC. This year, no one except the GVCC Chair has spoken yet to any of the AAGVB members other than the Board Chair.
Q7	Answered	Background material submitted prior to call.
Q7	Answered	Since this is a year long conference, I believe it would be beneficial to have one more than just once. It almost seemed like we were just giving approval of items that were going to be on the agenda rather than helping select items.
Q7	Answered	I'm a first year guy, so not much. Ask me again next year.
Q7	Answered	We tried the January phone call. I do not think it is needed.
Q7	Answered	This was a valuable process and I was glad that my Grapevine committee participated. I would suggest that this be the regular practice of all Conference committees.

2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results - Q7 Comments

Q7	Answered	The process experienced was excellent from the meeting time survey to the execution of the calls. I do not know if this was the product of the organizer or if there were guidelines in place to follow. I would hope the process would be documented for all to follow to enhance
Q7	Answered	Information provided ahead of time so we are better informed on what we are going to discuss.
Q7	Answered	As it was this year, with the proposed items by committee being discussed on the Trustee's call. As the delegate chair I am not sure what specific information other delegate members of the committee received for review prior to the call. I was quite satisfied with the
Q7	Answered	This is trying a bad fix a broken system. People don't trust the committee system. Let's do something different.
Q7	Answered	Share the info
Q7	Answered	Each delegate asked individually for input on each discussion point, even if just to agree with point made.
Q7	Answered	There was no discussion about "Why" an item was not being forwarded therefore, no "real substantive " discussion could take place. Why not have a discussion on items not being forwarded??
Q7	Answered	Perhaps to have someone (a Trustee) provide a synopsis of the background material during the call, so delegates might have a more 'informed decision'? Idk...
Q7	Answered	I find Zoom to be a way to talk and and "see" the other participants. Not sure if this would be an option.
Q7	Answered	Put it on Zoom. If there is background material the Trustees have, give it to us.
Q7	Answered	Less chit chatting would be appreciated.
Q7	Answered	Background ahead of time and longer calls.
Q7	Answered	More information on the duties of the conference committee chair needs to be provided BEFORE the committee elects its chair so that 1) committees might make better choices in selecting their chairpersons and 2) those elected might do a better job of fulfilling their duties.
Q7	Answered	I have confidence that the Conference has this topic on the agenda for discussion - what to do with agenda items not forwarded to GSC and will discuss through the committee process. It seems to me that we should continue these calls and perhaps learn some lessons and set some guidelines on who chairs, capture the "why" committees do or do not want an item on their agenda for trustees committees, and continue to further refine. Thank you for this survey and communication it is great.
Q7	Answered	Allow delegates to share if they think items on the grid should be made agenda items or not

2019 January Conference Call Survey Participant Results - Q7 Comments

Q7	Answered	As mentioned previously, all background to the committee members and provide the chair with notes of from the call.
Q7	Answered	An outline of the intent of the call. First real experience as a Delegate and was a little like a “deer in the headlights “.
Q7	Answered	More time, maybe.
Q7	Answered	More transparency with the trustees committee.
Q7	Answered	Not sure... I am learning the process.
Q7	Answered	Some extra pre-info for new Delegates.

**Suggestions for January Conference Call with
Members of Conference Committees**

Here are suggestions for trustees' Committee Chairs and Conference Committee secretaries regarding inviting members of the Conference Committee to and facilitating the Board-requested January conference call to obtain feedback on proposed Agenda items.

Also included is a template for documenting sharing from members of the Conference committees that will be brought to the January trustees' committee meeting as background for the discussion on each item.

Conference Committee Chair and Member Welcome Letters: The "welcome letter" templates have been updated to include a section informing each Conference Committee member about the January Conference Call. Committee secretaries agreed to copy the trustees' Committee chair or chair of a board on the welcome letter distributed to the Conference committee chair.

Invitation to the Call: Committee secretaries will share the following information about the purpose for the conference call in the invitation to the participants.

To give area delegates a further voice in the Agenda item selection process, the General Service Board has agreed on the following action. Before the January board weekend, the trustees' committee chair and staff secretary will arrange a conference call with the Conference committee to review items submitted as Agenda items and to talk about items still being considered by the trustees' committee. This way, Conference committee members would get a verbal report on the disposition of items submitted to the trustees' committee, and could share regarding those items. This will allow all Conference committee members to offer feedback on proposed Agenda items related to their committee. On the call, we will go through a list of proposed Agenda Items. Some of these have already been forwarded to the Conference committee, some the trustees' committee agreed not to forward to the Conference committee, and some are still under consideration.

The trustees' committee is interested in the thoughts of the Conference committee members as to whether these proposed *Agenda Items not forwarded* or *still under consideration* should be forwarded to the Conference committee.

In keeping with the Concept III, the final responsibility for selection of Conference Agenda Items appropriately lies with the trustees of the General Service Board. The Conference Committee's feedback will be brought to

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the trustees' committee meeting as background for the discussion on each item.

The conference calls should be set up to take place no later than Tuesday, January 21, 2020. Committee chairs and secretaries will want to decide on the length of the call based on the number of agenda items that will be reviewed.

Preparation for the Call: The Conference Coordinator will provide each Conference Committee secretary a reporting of the Preliminary or Proposed Agenda items pertinent to the Conference committee.

Conference Call Talking Points: The trustees' Committee Chair can explain to the participants that the purpose of this call is to share whether an agenda item should move forward to the Conference Committee or not. Members are not gathered to vote on or debate the merits of each agenda item. Conference committee secretaries are available and willing to provide points of information, as needed, during the calls.

The trustees' Committee chair will verbally review the following:

- Agenda items already forwarded to the Conference committee
- Proposed Agenda items that the trustees' Committee took no action
- Proposed Agenda items on the February trustees' Committee agenda

Document and Share Feedback with Trustees' Committee: Each secretary will capture the sharing on each item to be brought to the February trustees' committee meeting to inform the discussion. Sharing should be documented but, not attributed to any person.

Under the trustees' Committee Agenda section "Chair Remarks" for February, request the trustees' Committee Chair inform the committee that the sharing from the recent Conference call is being distributed to support the discussion of each Proposed Agenda item.

- **Committee secretary action** – Provide copies of the sharing notes from the conference call to each trustees' Committee member and the Conference Committee Delegate Chair who is participating in the meeting.

Note: A copy does not need to be provided to all the visiting observers.

Sharing Notes Template:

**Sharing from Members of the 2020 Conference Committee on _____
Regarding Proposed Agenda Items
Conference Call
January XX, 2020**

Attendees:

Proposed Agenda Item 1

- Thought Number 1
- Thought Number 2

Proposed Agenda Item 2

- Thought Number 1
- Thought Number 2

Revised 1/2020

2020 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM F: Discuss report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference.

Background notes:

2019 Committee Consideration from the Conference Agenda Committee:

The committee reviewed the report on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference, which included sharing from the 2019 Conference committee chairs. The committee noted that the January conference call portion of the plan was implemented and request reporting of the 2019 participant survey results to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee.

From the report of the July 2019 trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee the "Report to the Conference on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the 2020 Conference Agenda Process."

Background:

1. Report on the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Conference Agenda Process including sharing from the 2020 Conference committee chairs

**Report on the Implementation and Effectiveness
of the Conference Agenda Process
Including Sharing from the 2020 Conference committee chairs**

The 2016 Conference recommended that “The General Service Board develop a new policy and a plan that enhances the General Service Conference agenda review and selection process, providing the area delegate members of the Conference a role in the vetting and selection of proposed agenda items through the Conference process, to be brought to the 2017 General Service Conference.”

During the 2017 General Service Conference the Conference Agenda Committee discussed a report from the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference on the Conference Agenda Process. Committee members expressed appreciation for the additional communication and larger role for area delegate members of the Conference in the selection of Agenda Items. The committee requested that information on the implementation and effectiveness of the plan be gathered from the 2018 Conference committee chairs and included in a report for the 2018 Conference Agenda Committee.

During the 2018 General Service Conference the Conference Agenda Committee reviewed the report on the Conference Agenda Process from the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference, which included the Trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference 2016 Report on the Agenda Item Selection Process.

The committee noted that progress has been made on implementing the plan in the 2016 report. However, the trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference forwarded a request to the General Service Board to continue to consider enhanced participation of area delegates in the process for selection of agenda items, and no action on this item was reported by the board.

The committee noted the 2016 report suggested that:

Before the January board weekend, the entire Conference committee could have a conference call with the corresponding trustees’ committee chair and staff secretary to review items submitted as agenda items and to talk about items still being considered by the trustees’ committee. This way, Conference committee members would get a verbal report on the disposition of items submitted to the trustees’ committee, and could share regarding those items. This would allow all Conference committee members to offer feedback on proposed Agenda items. Their feedback could be brought to the trustees’ committee meeting as background for the discussion.

The committee realized that this has not happened and requested that the trustees’ committee chairs implement this conference call portion of the plan starting in January 2019.

The Trustees’ Committee on the General Service Conference requested that the staff

secretary send a notice to the chair of the General Service Board asking that this be implemented. The Board agreed and a process was developed to implement the conference calls for 2019. The sharing will be captured by committee secretaries and provided to the appropriate trustees' Committees or Boards for their discussion of Proposed Agenda items during the January meetings.

This is the second year that the January Conference calls, as requested and implemented in 2019, have been successfully completed. Each Conference committee secretary captured the sharing on each proposed agenda item discussed and provided it to January or February 2020 trustees' committee or Corporate Board meeting to inform the discussion.

In addition, after reviewing the results of a survey of Conference committee chairs about the implementation of the 2016 plan, the Conference Agenda committee requested that this sharing be gathered from the Conference committee chairs annually and provided to the Conference Committee on Agenda.

The following annual survey results were gathered from the 2020 Conference committee chairs through a questionnaire. The focus of the survey is to understand the effectiveness of the communication between the trustees' Committee chair or Corporate Board chair and the corresponding Conference Committee chair. The Conference Report and Charter Committee chair and the Conference Policy and Admissions chair both meet with the trustees' Committee on General Service Conference chair.

QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

In early January 2020, the following anonymous questionnaire was provided to the 13 Conference committee chairs and the delegate Conference chair. Eleven people out of 14 responded to the questionnaire.

Below are the questions and responses.

1. Did the chair of your corresponding trustees' committee/board contact you prior to their meetings?

YES – 10 responded yes, and 6 offered these comments:

- Communication with the chair of the trustees' committee has consistently been timely and helpful.
- Prior to each board weekend in July and November, the trustee chair and I scheduled a call for pre/post board weekend discussion. I found this pivotal to be able to communicate with my conference committee.
- The Chair gave me ample time to reach out to the conference Committee to ask if they had any questions prior to Board weekends.
- The communication would have been useful, especially if the key items being discussed at the Board meeting were identified.
- The chair was most diligent in regard to this and were readily available on a broad spectrum of dates.
- Very helpful and offered some great experience as to what the process is.

NO – 1 responded no, and 1 offered this comment:

- The communication would have been useful, especially if the key items being discussed at the Board meeting were identified.

2. Did the chair of your corresponding trustees' committee/board follow up with you after their meetings?

YES – 10 responded yes, and 3 offered these comments:

- Absolutely.
- The chair was most diligent in regard to this and were readily available on a broad spectrum of dates.
- She emailed me and we coordinated when the call would be made.

NO – 1 responded no, and 1 offered comment:

- That would have been helpful to understand the important issues and to let my Area know what was being considered without having to wait for the Board minutes.

3. Were you able to share about potential Conference agenda items with the chair during these conversations?

YES – 10 responded yes, and 3 offered these comments:

- We discussed ongoing items along with items that came up during the Trustee Committee meetings.
- For our committee it was more about sharing follow up on last years' GSC agenda items, which was great.
- This was very important to her as she really wanted to bring back questions or concerns I had to the next board meeting.

NO – 1 responded no, and 1 offered these comments:

- This was not discussed but would have been helpful. I wasn't aware that those type of discussions should be going on.

4. How valuable did you find these conversations?

VERY VALUABLE – 11 responded “very valuable,” and 4 offered these comments:

- I have shared with my Area how much I've appreciated the improved communication.
- I cannot express how helpful this process is!
- Such discussions would have been very useful.
- One it gave me an opportunity to meet someone new. Two it put me to ease about the process. Three has allowed me to voice my opinion and/or concerns.

SOMEWHAT VALUABLE – 0 responded “somewhat valuable.” No comments.

NOT VALUBALE – 0 responded “not valuable.” No comments.

5. Did you communicate about your calls with the corresponding chair with the other members of your committee?

YES – 8 responded yes, and 7 offered these comments:

- I was able to communicate with the committee after each call to update them on the work being done with ongoing items and the ideas for new requests.
- Yes, I sent emails recapping all the items discussed to the entire committee (the committee agreed that was how the info could be conveyed, as opposed to a conf call with everyone).
- Yes, it's a terrific process.
- I sent my committee members whatever communication I received from the chair.
- I asked folks if that had items pre-meeting and I produced a read out post-meeting and shared it.

NO – 3 responded no, and 2 offered these comments:

- I dropped the ball on this and did not fully communicate until much later. I have since done so and will continue into the future.
- I guess I wasn't aware I was supposed to. I dropped the ball on that one.

6. Overall, how satisfied are you with this process for providing input into the Conference Agenda process?

10 out of 14 respondents replied, and offered these comments:

- Very satisfied with the Trustee communications.
- Very satisfied. These open channels of communication help our committee stay informed about the work related to developing the agenda items for us to consider at Conference.
- The Trustee chair was very open to hearing our committees process and thoughts on each item. It was very helpful to be able to communicate and clarify our process and thoughts.
- Very. I was also able to share info from the trustee calls to my Area - gave them a better sense of the overall process/the life of an advisory action post conference.
- I'm thrilled. This process is in keeping with both the revised strategic plan and the recommendations from Impact Collaborative.
- Very, not going in blind.
- Not very. I don't think that Conference committee chairs are given much guidance in what should be done in between Conferences. Another issue is that only half of the committee that will need the information gathered during the year will be attending next year's Conference and the new Conference committee members will not be available until December when they are assigned to the committee after their election to Delegate in October/November
- I would say 8 out of 10.
- Pretty satisfied.

- I think it's valuable. I would encourage this practice to continue in the future. I loved the transparency it provided.

1 skipped the question.

7. What suggestions for improvement to this process do you have?

7 out of 14 respondents replied, and offered these comments:

- A reminder that it was my responsibility to communicate with my committee members (from the 69th GSC) after each call or communication with the trustee.
- None at this time.
- I appreciate all the open communication from the Trustee chair of our corresponding committee.
- Continue this process, please. More may be revealed as we move forward, and for right now it's perfect as is.
- 1. Prepare a workbook for Conference committee chairs to help them understand their roles as chair 2. Utilize current and past Conference committee chairs to develop this workbook.
- I think it might be useful for our staff desk person to join the call and follow up on requests for further information or to clarify status of items.
- At least for my experience there isn't much you could do to make it better.

4 skipped the question.

2020 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM G: Discuss the General Service Conference schedule.

Background notes:

During the July 2019 trustees' Committee on General Service Conference meeting a member brought forward an idea during committee discussion for how to schedule General Service Conference discussion of agenda items. The chair requested that Carole B. document her thoughts to inform a discussion at the November 2019 meeting.

August 12, 2019 the chair of the trustees' Committee on General Service Conference received a communication from a member of the committee, Carole B., sharing a draft document for front loading the discussion on agenda items during the General Service Conference week.

From the report of the November 2019 trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:

The committee tabled the discussion on the proposal to change the G.S.C. schedule to the February 2020 meeting.

In addition, the committee reviewed a draft 2020 G.S.C. week schedule with highlighted updates and asked the secretary to send this question to the committee "What can we stop doing during Conference week?" The committee sharing will be background for the Conference Week Schedule discussion at the February 2020 meeting.

From the report of the February 2020 trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference:

The committee discussed potential ideas for changes to future General Service Conference schedules. The committee agreed to forward a new proposal on General Service Conference schedule changes and the trustees' Committee sharing on the question "What can we stop doing during Conference week?" to the 2020 Conference Agenda Committee for consideration.

Background:

1. Proposed G.S.C. Schedule Ideas
2. Committee sharing on the question "What can we stop doing during Conference week?"

Proposed Changes to the GSC Schedule

Concept I states that the ultimate authority for AA resides with the Fellowship. Area Delegates spend a lot of their resources hearing the voice of the Fellowship in their respective areas on all conference agenda items. Yet, many times these voices, especially those with strong feelings about an item, are not heard. Floor actions have been introduced by some delegates to allow for discussion on items that only came out of committee as a consideration.

Additionally, most agenda items are submitted to provide a solution to a challenge or barrier. There are likely multiple solutions. Perhaps we're settling for good - the enemy of the best.

The purpose of this proposal is to "front load" the conference committees with the thoughts and opinions of the area delegates. In the past, I've heard people treat the conference committee process as sacred. Is it time to further embrace Concept I by hearing the thoughts and opinions of the area delegates before the conference committees meet?

1. Conference Committee and Trustees Committee Communication

- a. Prior to the January meeting of the General Service Board, schedule a video or teleconference meeting between the two committees
 - i. Discuss the status of those agenda items from previous GSC still under progress.
 - ii. Discuss the comp, scope, and procedure of the Conference Committee.
 - iii. Discuss agenda items not forwarded to the Conference Committee to date. This allows for a reconsideration by the trustees committees.

- iv. Discuss the agenda items submitted but not yet considered by the trustees committees.

2. Joint Meeting of Conference and Trustees Committees

- a. Two to three weeks prior to the General Service Conference conduct the joint meeting via video conference.
- b. Allow for the Conference Committee members to ask questions
- c. Since this is a video conference, the ACMs may not need to attend the conference. NTD could be excused until later in the week.

3. Day 1 of the GSC

- a. Find a way to allow for the Conference Committees to hear from Delegates that are not members of the committee yet wish to express their opinions or ideas for respective agenda items. Variations of two Liberating Structures are listed below as options.
 - i. Option 1 - [Open Space](#) (Time needed - 3 -3.5 hours)
 - 1. Use an on-line poll to determine which items the area delegates wish to discuss. The top 10 agenda items would be discussed. However, at the beginning of the session, the chair would ask if someone has a strong opinion they would like to express regarding the need to discuss an agenda item that was not in the top 10. If the body wished, add it to the list.
 - 2. Use the Open Space Structure to discuss. Likely two sessions of 1:15 hours each.
 - 3. Either or both the trustees committee chair or conference committee chair leads the discussion. Preferably, the conference committee chair but the option is available should they wish to participate in the discussion of other topics.
 - 4. The secretary to the conference committee would serve as a scribe for the discussion.

- ii. Option 2 - [Shift and Share](#) (Time needed 3.5 - 4 hours)
 - 1. Stations are set up for the 13 committees. Either or both the trustees committee chair or conference committee chair leads the discussion. The secretary to the conference committee would serve as a scribe for the discussion.
 - 2. Give all area delegates a number between 1-13 to break into groups. Assign each committee a number between 1-13. Group 1 starts with committee 1 and so on.
 - 3. For 15 minutes, each group provides input from their areas on the agenda for the committee. At the end of the 15 minutes, group 1 shifts to committee 2 and so forth.
- b. Eliminate the keynote speaker.
- c. Start earlier in the morning - reduce the amount of time given to register/receive the week's materials.

4. Remainder of the GSC schedule remains the same

Notes

- 1. Floor actions have been used as a way with which delegates can discuss items that did not come out of committee as a proposed action for the conference. Delegates have expressed frustration that their voice has not been heard as a result and they were limited to questions of the committee.
- 2. Floor actions would now be allowed for items that are of an emergent nature. The Chair, presiding over the conference, has the right to deem a floor action out of order.
- 3. The following questions are asked to be considered when submitting an agenda item:
 - What barrier or challenge present that this agenda item solving?
 - Is the right action to take in solving this problem creating a policy (i.e. an advisory action of the General Service Conference)?

- Have Areas, Districts, or Groups solved this issue? What practices made their success possible?
- 4. If we continue with the current process, perhaps a Slack channel for all conference members to discuss items could be useful.

Trustees' Committee on General Service Conference member sharing received on the question "What can we stop doing during Conference week?"

The committee asked the secretary to send a question and gather sharing from the committee. The following responses were collected.

- I would like to know if there is a way to streamline elections that do not involve the entire conference. Perhaps these can be programmed over a special lunch (like we do to reduce the TAL candidates to a regional TAL candidate). It is A LOT of conference time.
- Second, I don't think the area highlights are a good use of time. If it's important for delegates to present, I'd rather hear them present 2 minutes on innovative area programs or significant area challenges. We should not have exercises in talking, we should talk about what is impacting our society.
- Third, presentations should be limited to presentations on matters impacting AA, and not include recovery topics (e.g., gratitude). This varies over time.
- Stop the keynote address
- Stop the invocation at the banquet
- Stop inviting guests to the banquet. It is the most expensive part of the GSC at least at \$100 per plate.
- Stop the Area Highlights
- Stop the joint meetings- do this via conference call instead of the call among the trustees committee chair and the conference committee
- Before responding to your request below, I took a look back at the Conference Evaluations that were provided in the background for the July 2019 Board meeting. In there you summarized the conference member responses to the various questions about the conference week agenda. I noted that the 'not valuable' response was highest for area highlights at 6. Next came sharing sessions at 5. 6 and 5 are pretty small numbers relative to the number of conference members who responded. I'm thinking it would be tough to stop doing anything that we're currently doing.
- Keynote address – while this is probably a minimal amount of time in the schedule I wonder about its contribution to the Conference process? I didn't see that it is an item that is 'rated' in the evaluation and I would assume that is because that would have the potential to become a personality versus principle concern.

- Area Highlights – I have never been able to see the benefit in using Conference time to present these orally. I do see the benefit in having them published in the Final Conference Report.
- Joint Dinner Meetings (Archives and ICRF) – this is a place where I can see a ‘trial run’ on having the joint meeting for these secondary committees via video conference prior to the actual Conference meeting and/or figure out a way to move these to the Sunday evening joint meetings say from 6-7 pm then move the opening dinner to 7:30 start time.
- I see the Sharing Sessions got 5 Not Valuable and 19 Somewhat Valuable in the evaluation from 2019. Perhaps these could be shortened by 15 minutes each? When I was delegate I was VERY THANKFUL we had these opportunities to ask additional questions/make comments about GSB, AAWS, AAGV, financial reports, etc. as they came up later in the week.
- Since we are in Rye in 2020 I see we have 2.5 hours ‘free’ on Wednesday morning (no trip to the office). Perhaps we should not schedule the trip to GSO as a part of Conference week but on the Saturday prior to the formal opening of the Conference? I realize that isn’t when the office is ‘open’ thus no normal hustle and bustle, etc. and would put an additional burden on staff and core GSO personnel (and might not be feasible with the building itself) so perhaps that is a bad idea in and of itself but seems to me that most delegates come in on Saturday and attend the Remote Communities meeting (and don’t we have a delegate meeting of some sort on Saturday evening prior to opening of GSC?).
- I am very much in favor of Keeping the Area Highlights as for some new Delegates it helps to break the ice for them and gets them at the mic and speaking for the allotted two minutes.
- I am also in favor in Keeping the Keynote address since some in the past have, in fact, been quite useful in focusing the Conference on topical issues facing our Fellowship.
- Wednesday morning could house the two Regional elections followed by training in the use of the voting buttons, and then open to General Sharing Session leading up to lunch. After lunch we could get directly into Committee reports and Discussion with 2-minute time for all at the microphone for the duration of the Conference in keeping with a Conference Advisory action from Agenda Committee and keep it at 2 minutes throughout the Conference. Therefore, more Committee time and Open Mic time is necessary at least against the past few years.
- Thursday afternoon, I would drop the 4:40 presentation and leave more time for Committee Reports.
- Not sure about the time slot for the International and Detroit