



BOX 4-5-9

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 20TH NORTH AMERICAN
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF A.A.

Vol. 15 No. 3

Conference issue 1970

Growing Need for A.A. Services Delegates Plan for Future

Policies have been established in recent months which will have lasting importance for our Fellowship, Dr. John L. Norris, Chairman of the Board of Trustees told Delegates to the 20th General Service Conference.

Among these was A.A.'s first World Service Meeting, said Dr. Jack, who is a nonalcoholic trustee and former associate medical director of Eastman Kodak Co. He noted that the meeting had been attended by delegates from twelve foreign countries and one zone who met with our own North American delegates in New York last October "in what must rank as a truly historic service meeting in which your whole board participated."

Dr. Norris said that the board also set qualifications for its first general service trustee-at-large and formed two new trustees committees. The first of these will be a long-range planning committee charged with responsibility

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"For these past twenty years I have watched the General Service Conference grow to the point where I now see it as the chief guarantor of unity and function of our society." *Bill W., A.A. Co-founder*

"When the world seemed to be going to hell in a basket, this conference was an island of peace, not the contented cow variety, but an island of dynamic peace." *Dr. John L. Norris, Chairman of the Board of Trustees*

"The importance is not so much what we do here, but that we are here." *Bernard Smith, nonalcoholic Trustee*

Excerpts from the final report of the 20th Annual General Service Conference, due June 1, 1970.

New York, April 25 – Inspired by the theme, **SERVICE: THE HEART OF A.A.**, Delegates to the 20th Annual General Service Conference which ended here today reviewed the past and looked to the future in seeking new and improved ways in which A.A. can extend the hand of hope to alcoholics throughout the world who still suffer.

The ninety delegates, representing groups from every state and province in the United States and Canada, worked through a five and one-half day series of almost continuous meetings and workshops at the New Yorker Hotel during which they discussed ways and means of attracting new members and of maintaining effective cooperation with our friends.

Delegates, together with alcoholic and nonalcoholic General Service Board Trustees, G.S.O. and Grapevine directors and staff members form the 129-member Conference which acts on behalf of the Fellowship to provide guidance to the Board, G.S.O. and Grapevine. Some Conference highlights:

POLICY – Recommended formation of a task force be appointed by Dr. Norris to review procedures and mechanics of the General Service Conference.

TRUSTEES – Recommended that General Service trustees (regional and at large) candidates may be either elected from each Conference area within a state or province, or that two or more areas within a state or province may jointly propose a single candidate if they wish.

PUBLIC INFORMATION – Recommended preparation of a brief statement explaining why A.A. retains the Tradition of anonymity at the public level – for use by members being interviewed by media and also to increase understanding among A.A. members.

G.S. BOARD – Nominated Arthur Miles as non-A.A. trustee and Jim H. as general service trustee at large.

INSTITUTIONS – Recommended that wording concerning definition of A.A.'s position on membership in institutional groups be changed to read: "Open meetings are traditionally open to all interested in A.A., but

should be devoted exclusively to the alcoholic problem." And, "Closed meetings should traditionally be restricted to alcoholics."

GRAPEVINE – Delegates urged, when making their report to their areas, to be sure to include the Grapevine.

FINANCE – Noted that 37% of total number of regular groups in U.S. and Canada do not contribute to cost of General Services and recommended that they be encouraged to participate if only on a token basis. Suggested that this be accomplished through better use of G.S.O. filmstrip, educational program for G.S.R.'s, acknowledgment of

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NEW A.A. SIZE		
Spring 1970		
	Groups	Members
United States	9,047	156,817
Lone Members . . .		157
Canada	1,590	22,661
Lone Members . . .		45
In Hospitals	742	20,160
In Prisons	895	33,871
Internationalists . .		366
	12,274	234,077
Overseas*	3,350	63,000
Totals	15,624	297,077

*Estimated only, until Part II of the *World Directory* is published in August 1970, (including non-reported members, actual membership is estimated at more than 450,000 worldwide.)

Sharing With Letters

Correspondence—answering letters—is our most important service and is the main responsibility of the eight staff members at G.S.O. Thus, we share experience with groups, individual A.A.'s, and nonalcoholics from around the world. The following aids help us in answering correspondence:

1. The **Steps and Traditions** are always kept in mind.
2. **Staff Meetings:** the staff and GV meet weekly to share experience, discuss problems that come in mail, etc.
3. **Visitors:** approximately a thousand visitors from around the world share A.A. information in their areas.
4. **Subject Files:** we maintain a separate folder for each Tradition; also "group experience" folders containing letters about A.A. problems and how solved.
5. **Trustees' Policy Committee:** if the problem is new concerning A.A. policy, it is discussed by the G.S.B. Policy Committee.
6. **General Service Board:** if the problem was not settled by the Policy Committee and seems to need Board action, it is recommended to the Board.
7. **General Service Conference:** problems or subjects may be taken to the Conference for discussion and action.

Staff Coordinator: She serves as (1) assistant secretary of the G.S.B., (2) secretary of the Trustees' Policy Committee and the committee on Conference Policy, and (3) is one of the directors of A.A.W.S. The staff coordinator is responsible for daily staff coverage of the office. She reads and distributes the mail each day and is responsible for maintaining the flow of correspondence, i.e., she checks with the staff to see if help is needed in answering their mail, as we sometimes get behind with this activity when working on special projects

—Waneta N.
Staff Coordinator

Planning For Conference

The actual planning for the annual meeting of the North American General Service Conference is done by the Conference secretary in conjunction with and subject to the approval of the general manager, who is vice chairman of the Conference. Suggestions for the agenda start with the current Conference Agenda/Admissions Committee when they meet at Conference time. Throughout the year the Conference secretary is in touch with this committee and presents all subjects suggested for the agenda to the committee for its approval.

There are nine Conference committees: Agenda/Admissions; Conference Report and Charter; Finance; Grapevine; Institutions; Literature; Public Information; Conference Policy, and

Conference Committee on Trustees. Every delegate serves on a Conference committee. There are ten members to a committee, made up of first-year and second-year delegates.

The committees play a vital part in the health and growth of A.A. For example, the Literature Committee, in conjunction with the General Service Board Literature Committee, is responsible for the development of A.A. pamphlets and books. It is through these committees that the Conference-approved literature is compiled, and they are responsible for seeing that A.A. thinking as a whole is reflected in each pamphlet and book.

It is also important to know that the Conference action taken in any one Conference is not binding on future Conferences. The General Service Conference, guided by a set of principles, or charter, confirmed by the movement in 1955, is the overall *voice of A.A.* The experience of previous Conferences has demonstrated that the Conference truly is not a governing or a legislative body. Instead, it is a service group which in its actions, even lack of action, faithfully reflects the collective conscience of the movement itself.

—Beth K.
Conference Secretary

1970 Convention, Miami Beach

A.A.'s 35th International Convention will be held in Miami Beach, Florida, July 3 through 5, 1970.

Though the official opening is on the 3rd, there will be a big dance on Thursday evening, July 2. The night of July 5 promises to be one of real entertainment—a star-studded cast will perform at Miami Beach's famous Convention Hall. The Fontainebleau will be the headquarters hotel for all A.A. activities, workshops, alkathons and daytime panel sessions. Al-Anon and Alateen will use the Eden Roc Hotel, which is next door to the Fontainebleau, as their headquarters. The large evening meetings, July 3 and 4, at which Bill and Lois will speak, and the Sunday morning Spiritual meeting, July 5, will be held at Convention Hall. Reports on charter flights as far away as Finland and as near as Central America will make this truly an "international" convention.

A welcome cup of coffee will await you at several Hospitality suites, hosted by A.A.'s from different states and provinces. Orange, whether on tie, dress, or jacket, signifies that the wearer is a member of Florida's Host Committee.

The registration fee is \$6.00 for all Convention sessions. For an additional \$4.00, you can attend the opening dance and closing show. All housing reservations are handled by the Miami Beach Housing Bureau, a \$15.00 deposit being required for each room.

Don't miss this opportunity to share A.A., Al-Anon and Alateen with Bill and Lois, along with thousands of other A.A.'s from around the world.

—Bob H.

World Service Meeting

You all know that wonderful feeling when an event you have anticipated turns out to be beyond your wildest expectation? That's the way we all felt about the 3-day World Service Meeting, held at the Hotel Roosevelt, beginning, Oct. 8, 1969.

The preparations for this meeting were detailed and involved many people; there was total involvement of everyone on the "18th floor" and this involvement extended to all countries participating. These delegates prepared reports concerning their structure, finance, publishing, services, and general service boards. We here at G.S.O. told how we handled these subjects, then a delegate from each country reported how they were handled in this country.

These were real international sharing sessions and it was particularly exciting, for example, to hear a delegate from a well-organized country offer helpful suggestions to a struggling one, or a delegate from a Spanish-speaking country share experience with a delegate from France — in Spanish!

After each session, small, round-table workshops were held; questions asked and answered across the tables—every phase of our operations was explained in detail. All this information, their reports and ours, has been collected into one volume, the most comprehensive information on A.A. worldwide ever assembled.

At the October meeting of A.A. World Services, delegates' names were drawn by lot for four committees: policy, finance, admission/agenda and literature. Already, communications, understanding, and unity have improved immeasurably since the World Service Meeting.

—Midge M.
Secretary, World Service Meeting

54,031 Institution Members

With the help of many A.A.'s and interested nonalcoholics, 895 prison groups with a membership of 33,871 have been formed, along with 742 hospital groups, with a membership of 20,160. To help A.A.'s do the job of carrying the message inside, the following services have been developed:

1. **Service to New Groups.** A complimentary supply of literature is sent to each newly registered hospital, prison and rehabilitation group.
2. **Directories.** Listings of groups in institutions are prepared and mailed annually and tell whether correspondence is allowed with A.A.'s on the outside, with groups in other

FINAL CONFERENCE REPORT

Please remember that the **Final Conference Report**, due to be published about June 15, or hopefully before, will carry a more complete coverage of the 1970 Conference sessions, including Bernard Smith's special talk on the history of the Conference and A.A. as a whole.

hospitals or prisons, and whether tape recordings are available.

3. **Tapes and Films.** A tape library has been collected, and five films are distributed at no charge to all groups on request.

4. **Institutional Bulletin.** Sent every four months to all groups, as well as committees.

5. **Literature.** Special discount packages (an assortment of pamphlets at considerable saving) are available to help in providing literature to inside groups without funds to purchase it themselves.

6. **Correspondence.** A large part of the Institutions Service consists of correspondence with individual members, group secretaries, committee chairmen, institutional sponsors, administration personnel, and others who find themselves in a position to help the confined alcoholic.

—Ann M., *Institutions*

A.A.W.S. Operations Increase

A.A. World Services, Inc., a membership corporation and subsidiary of the General Service Board, prepares and controls the G.S.O. operating budget, publishes and distributes all Conference-approved literature and is responsible for the employment of all G.S.O. personnel, currently 43 full-time and nine part-time employees (not including Grapevine personnel).

The year 1969 saw a substantial increase in book and pamphlet sales over 1968; total sales were \$477,000, an increase of 10.4%. This increase serves as a weathervane for the growth of A.A.W.S. The publishing operation contributed \$85,000 to the General Fund, helping to support other services. Free distribution of 186,740 pieces of literature was authorized.

Accounting: Supervised by Charlie Columbia, there are six full-time employees. During 1969, this department processed and recorded over 14,300 orders (dollar value \$472,700) and 18,300 contributions, totaling \$397,100. This year it acknowledged 6,000 Convention registrations and 2,000 housing requests.

Clerical/Steno: This department, supervised by Madeline Whitlock, has thirteen full-time employees and one part-time. Seven girls handle clerical and steno duties and there is a receptionist and a switchboard operator. The file unit of three girls also does research on group histories and maintains G.S.O.'s archives.

Records: Supervised by Rose Failla. This department processed over 11,000 pieces of mail and set up 1,725 new groups, an increase of 100 over 1968. In addition, 9,900 changes of addresses and other group information changes were made.

Shipping: Al Cryan supervises six full-time and 8 part-time employees. Last year 92,747 pieces of incoming mail were handled and 375,000 pieces were sent out. Book and pamphlet orders accounted for 63,665 packages shipped.

—Bob H., *Chairman*
A.A. World Services, Inc.

Services from G.S.O.

The services provided by your General Service Office have come about through expressed needs and fall naturally under certain headings. They include:

1. **Service to New Groups.** Each new group is placed on the mailing list, written, and sent a package of Conference-approved A.A. literature at no charge.
2. **World Directory, Parts I & II.** Prepared annually, a free copy is sent to all on mailing list and all groups. Additional copies are available for sale to A.A. members only.
3. **Box 4-5-9.** Published bimonthly in English, French and Spanish. Other service bulletins for specific services include Loners, Institutions, Public Information, Internationalists (seamen) and a quarterly report from the Board of Trustees.
4. **Group Correspondence.** Sharing group problems and solutions. Contact with groups in hospitals and prisons—hospital and prison directories—Institutional Committees. Correspondence with, and literature for, groups overseas.
5. Work with **Loners and Internationalists.**
6. **Publishing and distribution** of all Conference-approved books and pamphlets.
7. Help to **central offices and intergroups.**
8. **Coordination of program and arrangements** for the annual North American General Service Conference meeting and Conference activity between meetings.
9. **Direction of International Conventions** every five years.
10. **Working with the press, with broadcasting, films** and with area and local P.I. Committees. Cooperation with outside agencies and professional persons interested in A.A.
11. **Preparation of guidelines** sharing specific A.A. service experience.
12. **Tapes and films. Braille books** for blind A.A. members.

New services are added as the need arises, and as approval and finances warrant. Services are discontinued when no longer necessary. Service is the heart of A.A. and our lifeline.

—Hazel R.
Service Coordinator

Help For Loners

Today there are 500 Loners around the world. About 150 of these are in the U.S. and Canada. There are also thirty-nine Spanish-speaking and fifteen French-speaking Lone members. The balance is scattered all around the world, and in a few countries lone members are the only A.A. contacts available.

New Loners receive a letter from G.S.O. and suggestions based on the shared experience of other Lone members. They also receive some A.A. literature, the *World Directories*, and are put on the G.S.O. mailing list for *Box 4-5-9* and the *Loners Meeting*. This latter publication is mailed every other month and is a 5-page mimeographed letter-type bulletin, made up of excerpts from, Loner letters received at G.S.O. Loners outside the U.S. and Canada are put in touch with their own General

Service Board or whatever service entity there is in their country.

Loner sponsors play an important role in the sobriety of Lone members. These sponsors are A.A.'s who belong to local groups, but also enjoy writing letters and enhance their own sobriety through this type of Twelfth Step work. Currently, there are 290 Loner sponsors. —Midge M., *Loner Service*

GV Circulation 55,000

A substantial increase in subscriptions at 1969 year end brought the circulation to 54,000, as compared with 51,900 in 1968; a 4% increase. During this first quarter of 1970, the magazine has passed the 55,000 mark and at the end of March stood at 55,762.

The Grapevine Calendar, which was first presented to the Conference in April, 1967, has proved to be a favorite with our readers, and an order of 15,000 of our 1971 issue is now on the press.

Over the years there has been a growing request from our readers for a compilation of Grapevine humor stories or cartoons. This has prompted us to make a selection of cartoons from the magazine which will be presented in book format at our 35th Anniversary and International Convention in Miami as "The Best Cartoons from the Grapevine." —Jack M., *Editor*
Paula C., *Managing Editor*

Trustees Nominated

Among many actions taken during the past year, the Trustees' Nominating Committee reviewed thirty-nine resumes of general service trustee-at-large candidates from the U.S. and all were found eligible for consideration.

Reviewed suggestion that the 75-mile limit be discontinued with regard to location of general service trustee-at-large candidates.

It was recommended that the following candidates be presented to the G.S.B. for election as trustees of the General Service Board for their disapproval, if any:

Non-A.A.: John L. Norris, M.D., chairman; Travis Dancy, M.D.; Vincent Dole, M.D.; Austin MacCormick; Arthur J. Miles; Hon. John Murtagh, and Bernard B. Smith.

A.A.: Arthur A.; Eric B.; William C.; Rollie D.; Donald F.; Stephen O.; Robert P.; Bayard P.; Katharine P.; John R.; Maurice R.; Ruth W., and Jim H., Trustee at large.

—Robert P., *Chairman*
Trustees' Nominating Committee

Internationalists Bulletin

A special bulletin for our sea-going members (called "Internationalists" by Capt. Jack, founder of this service in the early fifties) is issued bimonthly. It is called *Round Robin* and consists of excerpts from letters in which members share their experience and ways in which they use the Twelve Steps to stay sober.

Each new member receives complimentary literature, the *World Directory, Parts I and II*, a listing of other members, and latest issues of *Box 4-5-9* and the *Round Robin*. A letter goes out to the new members immediately and correspondence is started with the G.S.O. staff member responsible for this Service. Today, there are 366 members listed.

Another service to seamen is a listing of "A.A. Radio HAAMS," people who are interested in amateur radio. Quite a few members of the group are also radio officers and so are able to keep in touch with one another on a daily basis.

—Ann M., *Internationalists*

Training For Staff

The first thing on my training program was a tour of the office where I received an explanation of each department's activities.

During the three months' training period, I became familiar with the bulletin board in the staff coordinator's office which covered times on duty, A.A. trip schedules, approaching activities, vacations, etc. Next, my indoctrination included a short visit with each staff member who explained her service assignment and responsibilities. For six weeks, I reviewed incoming mail with the staff coordinator, as well as specific pamphlets and the Group Handbook.

My first assignment is to correspond with Loners, sponsors of Loners and Internationalists, besides acting as chairman of the Conference Hospitality Committee.

—Eleanor N.,
G.S.O. Staff

P.I. Objectives

Objectives of Public Information Service: The primary purpose of A.A. Public Information is the same as the purpose of all A.A. activity—to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Until an alcoholic comes to A.A. for help, he himself is still a member of the public—and so that vast body called "the public" is where the alcoholic is. Also, out there are the other people who try in a variety of ways to help the alcoholic—the wife or husband, the doctor, the clergyman, the employer, the lawyer, the policeman, the social worker, etc.

So, our first objective in trying to keep the public informed about A.A. is to reach the alcoholic and those people who influence him. We go about providing this information in several different ways. We try to do it through the news media—newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. We try to carry the message to professional groups, made up of doctors, clergymen, educators, health, welfare, and alcoholism agencies, hospital and rehabilitation facility administrators, law-enforcement people, such as judges, policemen, prison and jail administrators. We try to provide information for community organizations, such as churches, schools, clubs, and libraries and inform these groups that A.A. members are available and willing to to speak at their meetings. We also have material which is directed toward industry and explains how A.A. can help in the recovery of problem-drinking employees.

Ways and Means: The ways and means that we use to reach these various groups are through our pamphlets, especially "A.A. and the Medical Profession," "A Clergyman Asks About A.A.," "A.A. and the Alcoholic Employee" and "Alcoholism Is A Management Problem. . . A.A. Suggests One Solution." For the news media, we have background stories for newspapers, suggested scripts for radio and TV, public-service announcements for radio and TV. We have samples of press releases for special events, such as group anniversaries, banquets, conventions, and the formation of new groups.

—Cora Louise B.
Public Information

Sales, Income Increase

Overall, the financial picture for 1969 was satisfactory. Sales for the year were good, with net income showing an increase of \$40,883 over 1968. Contributions totaled \$397,146 for the year, \$10,846 more than forecast and \$30,931 over 1968. Total income (publishing gross profit and contributions) increased \$54,056 over 1968 — 8.6%. Total expenses, excluding the \$15,000 architects fee in connection with moving the office, increased by \$41,413 over 1968 and were within 1% of the budgeted amount.

The 1970 G.S.O. budget has been reviewed by the committee and approved. Higher sales trends are expected to continue, and have been budgeted 6.9% higher than 1969. However, the expenses of the publishing operation have been budgeted 8.7% higher than the actual expenses for 1969. This is typical of expense trends in these inflationary times, but is still a matter for concern. We will continue to take every measure to keep our expenses under tight control and try to keep this rate of increase more in line with the expected increase in sales. Contribution income is expected to increase \$19,954 or 5% in excess of last year. All expenses, excluding the cost of construction and moving, have been budgeted 8.1% higher than 1969, a total of \$53,755. The estimated cost of moving and the estimated cost of construction will not be amortized over the life of the new lease, but will be charged to 1970 expenses, resulting in an overall budgeted deficit of \$99,000.

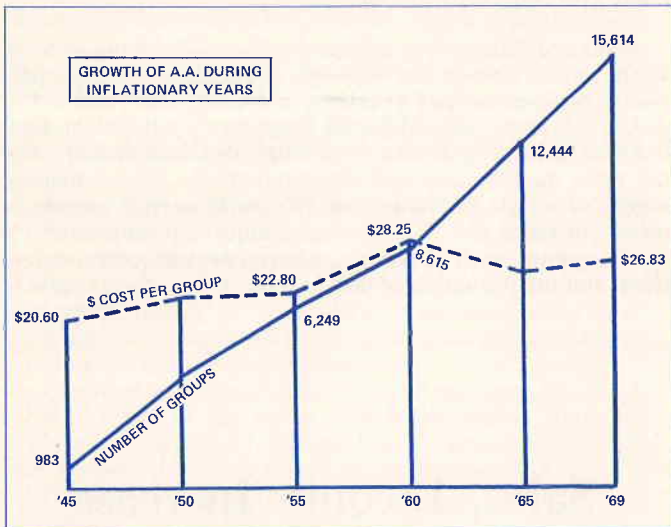
—Robert W.P. Morse, *chm.*
Trustees' Finance & Budgetary Comm.

Growth & Money at G.S.O.

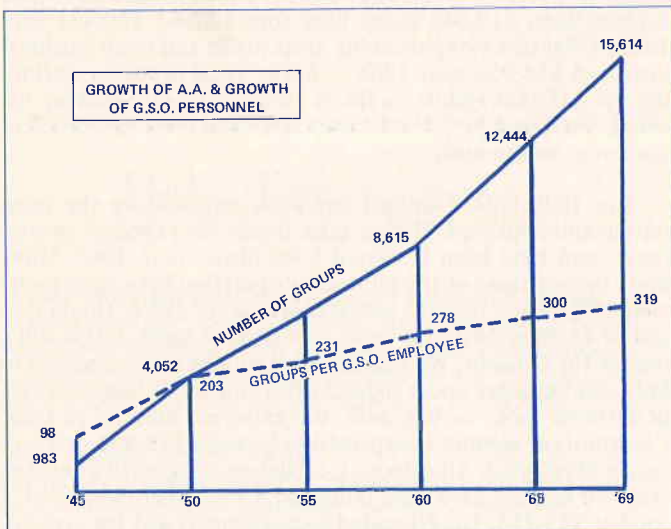
How efficient has been G.S.O.'s growth? In terms of personnel – in 1945 there was one employee for each 98 groups. Today, one employee serves each 319 groups.

During the past twenty four years, the G.S.O. budget has increased from \$20,000 to \$479,100 for services charged to the group contribution account. During that same period, cost of living increased 104%. Adjusting for this change in dollar value, we find that the cost of services per group actually showed a decrease from \$20.60 to \$13.15.

	Groups	Employees	Groups per Employee	\$ Cost per Group	Living Cost
1945	983	10	98	\$20.60	100
1950	4,052	20	202	22.06	139
1955	6,249	27	230	22.81	148
1960	8,615	31	278	28.25	165
1969	15,614	49	319	26.83	204



1. (Above) There are more than 15 times as many groups today as in 1945. The number of services has increased greatly, too, in the same period. Today, however, there are 319 groups for each G.S.O. employee, compared with only 98 in 1945.



2. (Above) During the years 1945 through 1969, the cost of living increased 104 percent. Constant striving for increased efficiency succeeded in keeping G.S.O. service cost per group to \$26.83 in 1969 compared with \$20.60 in 1945, an increase of only 30 percent.

1970 G.S.O. Budget

The budget for 1970 Operations of G.S.O. activities – Exclusive of the A.A. Grapevine – is as follows:

BUDGET

A.A. WORLD SERVICES, INC. – PUBLISHING

INCOME

Sales	\$510,000*
Less: Cost of Products	<u>209,100</u>
Gross Profit from Sales	300,900

TOTAL EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>212,900</u>
Excess of Income (Expense)	<u>88,000</u>

*Based upon the sale of:

- 51,800 Books – “Alcoholics Anonymous”
- 17,000 Books – “12 Steps & 12 Traditions” (Reg.)
- 6,200 Books – “12 Steps & 12 Traditions” (Pocket)
- 6,900 Books – “A.A. Comes of Age”
- 13,000 Books – “The A.A. Way of Life”
- Pamphlets & Miscellaneous Items

OFFICE EXPENSES – GROUP SERVICES

INCOME

Contributions	\$417,100
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TOTAL EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>479,100**</u>
Excess of Income (Expense)	<u>(62,000)</u>

**Includes cost of General Service Conference – \$ 36,300

GENERAL FUND – TRUSTEES’ EXPENSES

INCOME

\$ –0–

TOTAL EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>125,000***</u>
Excess of Income (Expense)	<u>(125,000)</u>

***Board Meetings, P.I.C. Expense, Special Projects, Architects fee and construction costs (re-locating office).

The Publishing activity will contribute \$88,000 to the budgeted deficits.

1970 Grapevine Budget

Estimated income from subscription and other sales.....	\$246,000
Estimated Expense.....	<u>232,400</u>

Net income from operations.....	13,600
Interest from Savings accounts.....	<u>8,700</u>

Net income.....	<u>22,300</u>
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