

A.A.W.S. HIGHLIGHTS

December 17, 2010

G.S.O.'s General Manager reported that everyone at G.S.O. has been busy with the multitude of end of year assignments, closing out 2010 and preparing for the upcoming year of services and publications to the A.A. Fellowship and broader community.

G.S.O. will be hiring an **additional A.A. staff member** in 2011, and a notice will be included in the upcoming issue of *Box 4-5-9* announcing the opening for the staff position.

As we review 2010 at G.S.O., we see that our IT folks were busy continuing to ensure that the new office computer equipment is secure, rolling out the Contributions Online project and putting in place the technology for us to move into e-publishing. In our Records Department, we achieved cost savings with the processing of return mail by working to clean up the FNV database – this has resulted in considerably reducing the number of mailings executed and the amount of paper, envelopes, labels and man hours needed to process a mailing. Throughout the year, our Archives Department continued to work at creating a single cohesive inventory of the entire archives collection.

The **Conference Desk** reports that we continue to prepare for the 61st General Service Conference. The first in-house planning meeting for G.S.O. and Grapevine staff was held on November 16th where we reviewed the planning schedule and preliminary Conference Agenda items. The first mailing to Conference members, the Communications Kit, will be sent by January 1, 2011, and committee secretaries will be sending welcome letters to the members of their committee.

The fall 2010 edition of **About A.A.**, the newsletter for professionals, highlighting our friends in the professional community who made presentations at the Fellowship's International Convention in San Antonio, has been mailed.

New sections on "A.A. Volunteers in Correctional Facilities" and "How local A.A. service committees can help A.A. volunteers" have been approved by the trustees' Committee on Corrections and will be incorporated in the next printing of the **Corrections Workbook**. Information about the additional text has been included in the most recent Corrections Desk Activity Update. Two sections in the A.A. Guidelines on Corrections Committees have also been updated, one under the section "Basic Functions of Corrections Committees" and one under the newly titled section "Prerelease/Bridging the Gap/Temporary Contacts, etc."

The winter issue of **A.A. Around The World** is now available in hard copy and on G.S.O.'s Web site. This issue provides a historical account of co-founder Bill W.'s vision of providing a forum where countries from all over the globe come together to share experience, strength, and hope. The biennial World Service Meeting that was born out of that vision has been incredibly successful.

An Activity Update was mailed from the **Literature Desk** to local literature committee chairs. The mailing included information on new items available from the Publications Department as well as Literature desk activities. It also requested stories for the revision of the pamphlet "A.A. and the Armed Services" and the development of literature focused on spirituality.

There were 312 attendees at the **West Central “Additional” Regional Forum** in Rapid City, South Dakota, November 12-14, 2010, which focused on carrying the A.A. message in the Native North American community.

The three-ring binder of the **Special Needs/Accessibilities Kit** was priced at \$12.00 at the December A.A.W.S. meeting and will be mailed to Special Needs Area Chairs. We think those in Special Needs service work will like the finished product.

In response to the A.A.W.S. Board request, G.S.O. put together an ad hoc committee to begin looking at a possible **redesign of G.S.O.’s A.A. Web site**. The committee has met once, and will be reporting to A.A.W.S. for approval as they move forward with this discussion.

The chair of the **Ad Hoc Committee on Copyrights** reported that the committee is continuing discussion of current copyright policy and practice. G.S.O. will assemble a summary of actual copyright situations/issues for A.A.W.S. to review later in the year.

The A.A.W.S. Board has approved recommendations from its **Ad Hoc Committee on E-Technology** allowing G.S.O. to proceed with plans to create and distribute A.A.W.S. publications in digital form, pending budget approval by the trustees’ Finance and Budgetary committee in January 2011. G.S.O. will develop the necessary technology infrastructure to convert A.A.W.S. publications into eBook format and make them available online for members to purchase and download. The current project timeline calls for availability of the Big Book and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* in English, French and Spanish in the second half of 2011.

The A.A.W.S. Board requested that G.S.O. conduct a **feasibility study regarding future online sales** of A.A. literature.

A.A.W.S. also began their **strategic planning process**.

The Publications Director reported that total distribution of all books for the eleven months ending November 30, 2010, was 1,568,493 units, down 501,522 units, or 24.2% ,from the distribution of units in the same period in 2009, 2,070,015. The eleven month total of A.A. purchases amounted to 1,330,606 units. Non-A.A. purchases accounted for 237,887 units or 15% of total units distributed through the end of November 2010. In 2009, non-A.A. purchases represented 30.6% of total units distributed as the result of large non-A.A. orders received prior to the July 1, 2009 price increase. In both 2007 and 2008, non-A.A. purchases represented 19% of total units distributed. Through November, we distributed 816,006 units of all editions of the Big Book, compared to 1,152,781 units in the same period in 2009.

Gross sales for October and November were \$1,196,653 and \$761,026 respectively. Gross sales for the eleven month period ending November, unaudited, came in at \$11,487,557, which is \$1,758,533 or 13% under budget. In the same period in 2009, gross sales amounted to \$12,808,211. We processed 8,896 and 1,599 pay orders and 607 and 488 complimentary orders in October and November respectively, along with 231 October and 149 November online large-purchase orders.