

# The Triangle - Pre Assembly Issue

Volume 16 Issue 2      March - April 2008



## Area 40

### Special points of interest:

- Self Supporting Issues
- Upcoming Events
- Contact Info
- Spring Assembly Agenda
- Subscription Form

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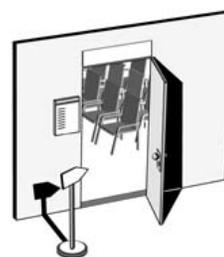
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## Self-Support or Self-Delusion?

"We hope that the day will come when AA groups and members, through their contributions, will be able to fund fully the services provided by the General Service Office. If that is achieved, revenues from literature sales will only be needed in amounts necessary to cover the actual costs associated with literature production and to maintain a Prudent Reserve Fund." This comes from the Finance and Budgetary report given at the 2007 General Service Conference, and is on page 48 of the final conference report under Self-Support of the World Services of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Here we go again! Another implication that we AA members are not being financially responsible because we continue to use literature profits to help fund GSO. How many times over the years have I heard that we need to fund GSO by contributions alone and that we shouldn't have to use profits from literature sales? In service workshops, area assemblies, service conferences, and at the General Service Conference it comes up time after time, but never have I heard any-

one suggest an action to move us in that direction. It's always just somebody voicing the opinion that it's something we *should* do.



### If these walls could talk!

Well, if it's something we should do, when are we going to do it? If it really is a problem for Alcoholics Anonymous, then let's solve it. But first let's decide if it is a problem.

In an August 1947 Grapevine article (page 63 of Language of the Heart) Bill W. wrote that shortly after 1945 "...the Alcoholic Foundation (now the General Service Board) had become adequately supported by the AA groups and by income from the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*." A few years later, in a June 1955 article (page 159 of Language of the

Heart) Bill wrote "...group voluntary contributions have fully paid office expenses in only five years out of the last fifteen. That Headquarters reserve of "book money" has had to foot the ten deficits."

Do the math. We have been relying on literature profits for over sixty years. So where is the problem? If these literature profits were going to cause a problem for Alcoholics Anonymous, wouldn't we have seen the negative effects by now? Or, maybe we have but the information hasn't been conveyed to the Fellowship.

In Concept XII, Warranty Two (page 67 of the 2007-2008 service manual) Bill wrote, "Some of us have another concern, and this is related to so-called book "profits." The fact that AA Headquarters and most of the groups sell books for more than they cost is thought to be spiritually bad. But is this sort of noncommercial book income really a profit after all? In my view, it is not. This net income to the groups and to AA's General Services is actually the sum of a great many contribu-

## Self-Support or Self-Delusion? (Cont.)

tions which the book buyers make to the general welfare of Alcoholics Anonymous."

Was Bill serious when he said this net income "is actually the sum of a great many contributions?" Or was he merely playing with words to hide his fear of financial insecurity? Perhaps he was rationalizing to justify the then-current state of affairs.

From reading that one paragraph, Bill seemed to have no problem with literature profits. Yet in the 1955 Grapevine article, he seemed to be complaining about literature profits having to sustain GSO for ten out of the last fifteen years.

Is it even possible to fully fund GSO by contributions alone? Will the Fellowship truly rise to the occasion and increase contributions to the amount necessary to support GSO? Experience shows that whenever money is needed in AA, our members contribute. I have absolutely no doubt we can ac-

complish this. We might have to phase it in over three to five years, for example, in year one we reduce literature profits by 20%, in year two by 40%, etc. Of course, we could make a radical move and say that beginning in 2009 we will no longer sell our literature at a profit. That would be exciting, wouldn't it? Kind of gets the adrenaline flowing.

Let's look at some numbers. According to the 2007 final conference report, GSO expenses for 2006 were just over \$12 million. We have approximately one million members in the U.S. and Canada. That works out to \$12 per member per year. Heck, I'll send in a check for \$12 right now to do my part. In fact, I'll make it out for \$24, assuming some other member either can't or won't send in any money.

Can we do this? Of course we can. We just have to make a decision.

I am not against fully funding GSO by contributions alone but let's decide

as a Fellowship if that is what we want to do. Let's have a dialogue in our groups and areas. Let's discuss it at the General Service Conference and let our Higher Powers guide us to the correct decision. If we are in favor of such a move, then let's take the appropriate actions. But let's stop wasting time theorizing and insinuating.

To initiate the discussion, I have submitted an agenda item for the 2008 General Service Conference. I hope we thoroughly discuss the practical and spiritual aspects of this issue and come to a collective group conscience that is in the best interest of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Loren B.



Was Bill serious when he said this net income "is actually the sum of a great many contributions?"



"I hope we thoroughly discuss the practical and spiritual aspects of this issue ..."

## Self Support and The Triangle

Lets find out who is reading their Triangle.

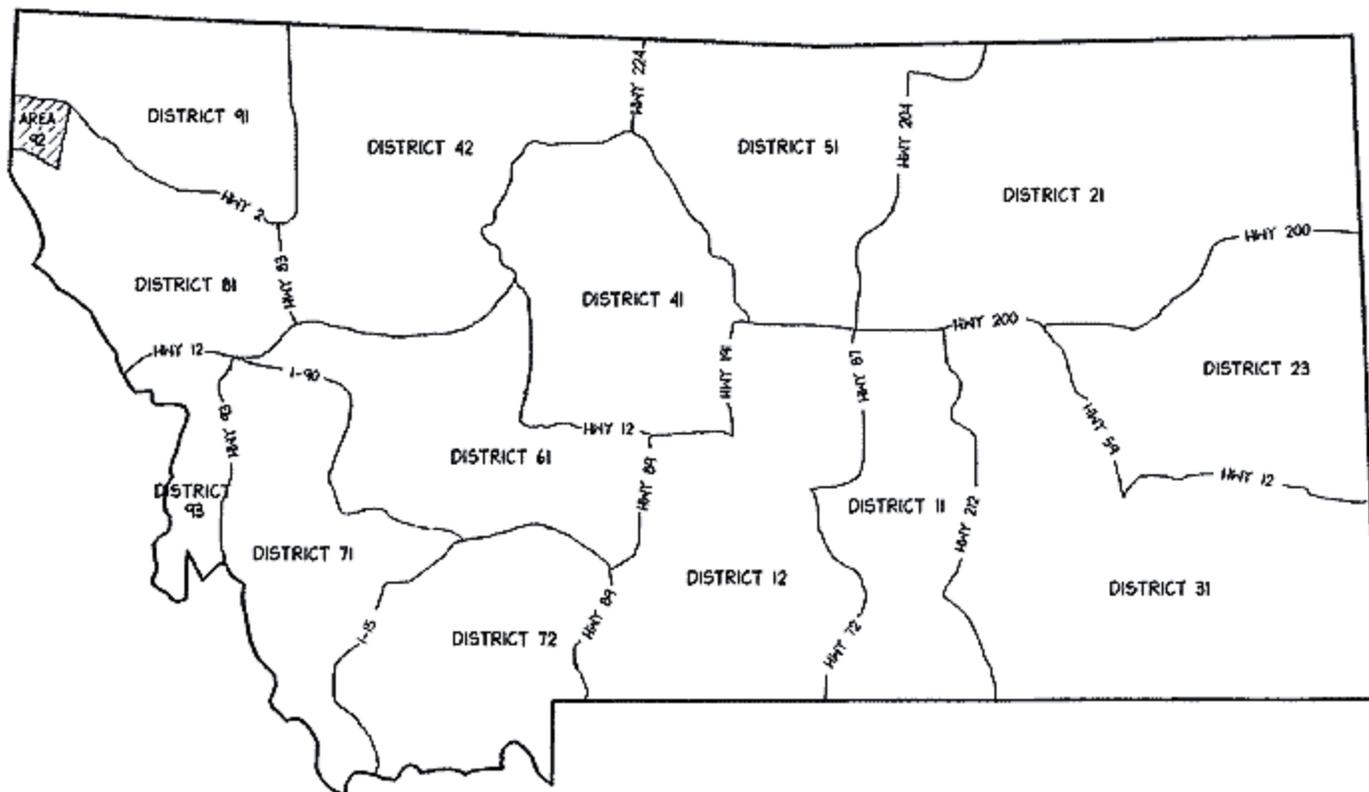
After listening to this item at the Pre Assemblies, some research has indicated that The Triangle is far from "self supporting through our own contributions". As of this

printing, there are only about 75 of 232 groups in Area 40 who support this publication through purchase of the \$10 yearly subscription. This is approximately only 35%. Although past action at Area Assembly insures your subscription without payment, the

cost of publishing cannot be covered without subscriptions. Please check your label, if it says "EXPIRED", send your \$10 in and help the Triangle to become self supporting. **CHECK YOUR LABEL FOR THE EXPIRATION DATE**

Subscriptions are \$10 per year and can be mailed to:

Area 40 Triangle  
PO Box 2337  
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### UPCOMING EVENTS

**APRIL 12, 13 - LEWISTOWN - AREA 40 SPRING ASSEMBLY**

**APRIL 19 - SPRING FLING AND TALENT SHOW**

**APRIL 26 - 12 STEP STUDY - CIVIC CENTER  
GREAT FALLS, MT**

**MAY 16 -18 - SPRING ROUND UP - COLONIAL INN -  
HELENA, MT - STEPPING STONES TO RECOVERY**

**MAY 23 - 25 - GOPHER STATE ROUND UP XXXV -  
BLOOMINGTON, MN**

**JUNE 20 - 22 - BITTERROOT PICNIC & CAMPOUT  
PAINTED ROCKS ST PARK - SOUTH HWY 93 - MT**

**JUNE 27 - 29 - BEARTOOTH MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE -  
MCLEOD, MT - [www.beartoothmountainconference.com](http://www.beartoothmountainconference.com)**

**SEPTEMBER 13, 14 - LEWISTOWN - AREA 40 FALL ASSEMBLY - ELECTIONS**

**"Humility is knowing and accepting the truth about myself, my relationship to others, God and the world about me." Tom W. - Missoula**



**FOR OTHER EVENTS, SEE ALSO [aa-montana.org](http://aa-montana.org)**

**JUNE 20 - 22 - LIONS CAMPGROUND - HAVRE, MT**

**JULY 18 - 20 - PAGERS CAMPGROUND - HAVRE, MT**

Yogo Inn  
Lewistown, Montana  
April 12 & 13, 2008

\*\*\*\*\*

**Friday, April 11-** Sapphire Rooms

**AA meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. (This meeting is held separately from the Assembly and is self-supporting).**

\*\*\*\*\*

**SATURDAY SESSION – April 12**

7:30/8:00 GSR’s and visitors sign in with their District’s DCM. (*DCM’s please give the sign in sheets to the Area Secretary no later than 10:00 a.m.*)

8:00/9:45 **Welcome** – Serenity Prayer, Traditions, and Concepts

**Roll Call** – by Area Secretary

**Orientation to the Assembly** – Area Delegate, Andrew W.

**Reports from the Area Committee Members**

- Area Chair\*
- Area Secretary\*
- Area Treasurer\*
- Triangle Editor\*
- Area Service Chairs\*
- DCM’s\*
- Standing, nonvoting service positions\*

9:45/10:00 **Coffee Break**

10:00/12:00 **Standing Committee Meetings:**

Archives/Structure.....	Kendall Room
Corrections/Intn’l-Regional Forums .....	Terrace Room
CPC/Trustees.....	Employee Lounge
Finance.....	Gypsum Room
Grapevine/Policy & Admissions .....	Board Room
Literature .....	Room 306
Public Information/Report.....	Room 328
Treatment/Agenda .....	Room 310

(IF YOUR COMMITTEE FINISHES ITS BUSINESS DURING THIS SESSION, PLEASE NOTIFY THE AREA CHAIR OR SECRETARY)

**Workshop for those not attending committee meetings**

Led by past delegate Loren B. – “Communication and Participation - The Key to Unity”

12:00/1:30 **Recess for Lunch**

1:30/2:30 **Workshop for those not attending committee meetings**

Led by past delegate Earl F. – “Communication and Participation - The Key to Self-Support”

**Standing Committee Meetings (continued)**

Archives/Structure.....	Kendall Room
Corrections/Intn’l-Regional Forums .....	Terrace Room
CPC/Trustees.....	Employee Lounge
Finance.....	Gypsum Room
Grapevine/Policy & Admissions .....	Board Room
Literature .....	Room 306
Public Information/Report.....	Room 328
Treatment/Agenda .....	Room 310

2:30/3:15 **Delegate's Report** – Andrew W. (questions and answers)

3:15/3:30 **Coffee Break**

3:30/5:00 **Floor Assembly – Committee Reports/Motions and Discussion**

Literature \*\* - Linda B.

Grapevine/Policy & Admissions \*\* - BilliJo D.

Archives/Structure \*\* - Conrad M.

Finance \*\* - Curt K.

Public Information/Report & Charter \*\* - Sean B.

CPC/Trustees \*\* - Terry S.

Treatment/Agenda \*\* - Geoff D.

Corrections/International Conventions-Regional Forums \*\* - Bill E.

5:00/7:00 **Recess for Dinner**

7:00/8:15 **Floor Assembly / Committee Reports-Motions and Discussion (Cont.)**

8:15/8:30 **Coffee Break**

8:30/10:00 **GSR Breakout** – Led by Past Delegate Earl F.: Ask-it-basket questions and sharing

**DCM Breakout** – Led by Past Delegate Loren B.: Ask-it-basket questions and sharing

## **SUNDAY SESSION – April 13**

8:00/8:45 **\*Roundup Reports: Fall 2007 Great Falls; Spring 2008 Helena; Fall 2008 Kalispell**

**\*Intergroup Reports**

**\*Report from the West Central Regional Alcoholics Anonymous**

**Service Conference (WCRAASC) in Fargo, ND – Tim M.**

8:45/9:15 **Past Delegate Sharing** – Loren B.

9:15/9:45 **Past Delegate Sharing** – Earl F.

9:45/10:00 **Coffee Break**

10:00/12:00 **Continue Floor Assembly / Committee Reports – Recommendations – Discussion, General Sharing**

### **ADJOURN / DRIVE SAFELY!!!**

*\* Reports: 5-minute time limit with two written copies given to the Area Secretary.*

*Floor comments are requested to take no longer than 3 minutes*

Please note that the rooms this Assembly meets in have been designated smoke free by past action. The Yogo Inn has graciously placed ashtrays/receptacles just outside the outside doors. They have requested that smoking be limited to that area and the bar and that we not smoke in the meeting rooms, hallways or lobby area. Your thoughtful compliance and courtesy are appreciated.

The following is a list of agenda items and the Area Committees they have been assigned to for review. All items come from the General Service Conference and will be fully addressed at the General Service Conference later this month. In addition, there are Agenda Items that pertain to Area 40.

The Committee Chairs should have received a list of agenda items with, in most instances, corresponding background information sometime in February. This information is then passed on to other members of those committees for research, review and discussion, in turn providing for a well-informed *conscience/decision*. If your Group has any comments, questions, and concerns or would like copies of any background information please contact the appropriate Area Committee Chair. Your DCM has the names, phone numbers and addresses of the Area Committee or you can email them through the Area's website [www.aamontana.org](http://www.aamontana.org) should you need them. (**NOTE:** the process by which items are submitted, dispersed, considered and brought to the Assembly is detailed in the **Area 40 Committee System Policies & Procedures** manual which is available through your DCM).

The General Service Conference items that were submitted to the committees for review will not come to the floor of the Assembly as *recommendations (a motion passed and seconded)* but will instead be addressed as an informed *sense of the committee/area*. The purpose of this is to insure our Delegate is provided with a sense of Area 40's informed group conscience and to help him in preparation for the upcoming General Service Conference.

Review Concepts I, II, III, X, XII and Tradition 2 for a clearer understanding of the above process.

The following Committees/Committee agenda items are listed in order of presentation.

## Literature – Linda B.

Review manuscript of revised pamphlet "A.A. for the Native North American."

Review progress report from Publications Department on the revision of the pamphlet "The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs."

Consider a request to change the title of the pamphlet "44 Questions" to "FAQ" subtitled "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A."

Consider a request to reinstate the pamphlet "Letter To a Woman Alcoholic."

## Grapevine/Policy & Admissions – BilliJo D.

### Grapevine

Review contents of Workbook.

Review and discuss the staff report addressing the 2007 Additional Consideration to "explore less expensive formats for the production of the Workbook."

Consider publishing two CDs of stories from La Viña on Traditions One – Twelve.

Reconsider the 2007 General Service Conference Committee Advisory Action recommending that:

"The Grapevine and La Viña include a section on the medical, legal and social aspects of alcoholism, with an appropriate disclaimer."

Discuss the A.A. Grapevine's legacy of self-support.

Consider ways to increase awareness of the Grapevine and La Viña's roles in the Fellowship today.

### **Policy & Admissions**

Consider approving admission to the 2008 General Service Conference of Scott A., alternate delegate, Area 36, Southern Minnesota, in place of Samira A, the Panel 57 delegate for Area 36, who is unable to attend.

Approve invitations for two observers from the General Service Board of Central Mexicana and two observers from the General Service Board and G.S.O. of Great Britain to attend the 58<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference.

Review dates for the 2011 General Service Conference.

Consider proposal that the current secondary Conference Archives Committee be established as a standing Conference committee.

Review the current policy on international guest observers at the General Service Conference.

Consider delegating to General Service Office management the responsibility for General Service Conference site selection.

## **Archives/Structure – Conrad M.**

### **Archives**

Review contents of Workbook.

Discuss ideas for making A.A.'s archives and history more readily available to the Fellowship in the future.

### **Area 40 Item for Structure**

Review the report from the Ad Hoc committee concerning the Pre-Assembly structure currently utilized in Area 40.

## **Finance – Curt K.**

Discuss request that a Finance Kit be developed to assist group, Intergroup/central offices, district and area service workers in carrying the message of our shared responsibility for the Seventh Tradition.

Consider the request to "Discuss the benefits and liabilities, both spiritual and practical, of funding the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous solely by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members and A.A. groups, that profits from literature sales will no longer be used to fund our General Service Office. Further, consider a procedure for gathering input from the Fellowship as a whole and prepare a report on these discussions for the 2009 Conference."

Discuss self-support.

## **Public Information/Report & Charter – Sean B.**

### **Public Information**

Consider 2007 annual report from the trustees' Committee on Public Information regarding G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site.

Public Service Announcements (P.S.A.s):

Consider approving the proposed 2008 television P.S.A. - "I Thought" - developed by the trustees' Committee on Public Information.

Consider centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the proposed 2008 television P.S.A. - "I Thought" - at a cost not to exceed \$35,000, as an addition to the work of local Public Information committees.

Review information on centralized distribution, tracking and evaluation of the 2007 television P.S.A., "A Force of Nature."

Discuss the 2002 - 2006 General Service Conference Advisory Actions regarding replacement and production of television P.S.A.s.

Consider updating the script and recording of Combination Radio P.S.A.s on CD, Item R-10.

Review and approve final draft of the "Alcoholics Anonymous 2007 Membership Survey" pamphlet.

Consider proposed text for a new section on posthumous anonymity in the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity."

Review trustees' Public Information Committee's Progress Report on the A.A. Videos for Young People Project.

Consider request that a wall poster with information about Alcoholics Anonymous be created for placement in school guidance counselor offices.

Review contents of Kit and Workbook.

### **Area 40 Agenda Items for PI**

Consider expanding the Area 40 website to include dissemination of other materials such as reports from the annual General Service Conference, information coming from the General Service Board throughout the year, and other materials that might continue to improve the communication between all levels of the service structure.

### **Report & Charter**

*The A.A. Service Manual*, 2007 - 2008 Edition:

Consider a paragraph titled "District Information" for inclusion in Chapter Three.

Consider a suggestion to place a glossary of terms used in the *A.A. Service Manual* and the *Twelve Concepts for World Service* after the text of the *A.A. Service Manual* and directly preceding the index.

Review additional changes.

A.A. Directories (Canada, Western U.S., and Eastern U.S.):

Consider listing the Online Intergroup of A.A. (OIAA) in a new section titled "Online Intergroups" under the section "International Correspondence Meetings" in the A.A. Directories where "Online Meetings" appear, and include the online intergroup web site and email addresses.

Review additional changes.

Discuss General Service Conference *Final Report*.

## CPC/Trustees – Terry S.

### CPC

Consider the draft Video Segments Directed to Professionals.

Review contents of Kit and Workbook.

Discuss ways in which A.A. can continue to be a resource to the legal/criminal justice system.

### Trustees

A. Review resumes of candidates for:

1. West Central Regional Trustee  
Western Canada Regional Trustee

B. Review slates of trustees and officers of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.

Review slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc.

Review slate of directors of A.A. Grapevine, Inc.

Review report from the trustees' Committee on Nominating regarding Nominating Procedure No. 9 ("Guidelines for Hiring General Manager, G.S.O.") and length of service of General Manager, G.S.O.

Discuss request to revisit the 2007 General Service Conference Advisory Action to consider all eligible Class A and Class B trustees when selecting the Chairperson of the General Service Board.

Bylaws of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., amended in April 2007:

1. Discuss recommendation from the General Service Board that the following language from paragraph three, page 4 of the Bylaws be amended so that it applies only to **Class B regional trustees**:

"...However, when the vacancy being filled is that of a Class B **regional** trustee, the maximum term of service of such successor member trustee shall be limited to that number of one-year terms which will result in the term of service of the successor member trustee ending at the same time as the term of the replaced member trustee would have ended if no vacancy had occurred and the replaced member trustee had served four consecutive one-year terms."

2. Discuss recommendation from the General Service Board that the following language from paragraph two,

page 4 of the Bylaws be amended so that it applies only to **Class B regional trustees**:

"In the event that any member trustee shall resign, die, retire, be removed, become disqualified, or shall be otherwise unable to serve, the trustees may, at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Trustees, elect a new member trustee to fill such vacancy, or, alternatively, permit such a vacancy to continue until the next annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board. A third alternative, with respect to Class B **regional** member trustee vacancies occasioned by resignation, death, retirement, removal or disqualification, is to permit the vacancy to remain unfilled for the remainder of the four year commitment, and to allow regional coverage to be provided by the trustee-at-large or the regional trustee from an adjacent region, unless a region decides that a new regional member trustee should be elected."

3. Discuss recommendation from the General Service Board that the Bylaws be amended to include options for interim changes to member trustee ratio and composition in response to the 2007 Advisory Action which instituted consideration of all eligible Class A and Class B trustees when selecting the Chairperson of the General Service Board.

4. Discuss the suggestion that the General Service Board Bylaws extend the term of Class B regional trustees after filling the term of an unexpected General Service Board vacancy.

## Treatment/Agenda – Geoff D.

### Treatment

Discuss progress report and sample footage of the revised video - *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Discuss the possible development of Conference-approved literature and/or service material to stimulate A.A. members' interest in Treatment Facilities Twelfth Step work.

Discuss a proposal that the pamphlet, *Bridging the Gap* (BTG), be rewritten to reflect that the BTG program is used in both Treatment Facilities and Corrections service work.

Review contents of Kit and Workbook.

### Agenda

Review suggestions for the theme of the 2009 General Service Conference.

Discuss presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2009 General Service Conference.

Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2009 General Service Conference.

Review the General Service Conference Evaluation Form.

## Corrections/International Conventions-Regional Forums – Bill E.

### Corrections

Review contents of Kit and Workbook.

Review service piece "Corrections A.A. Group Handbook"

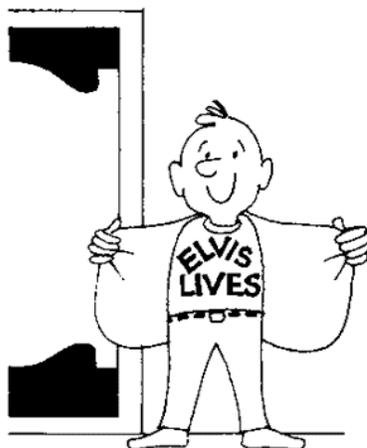
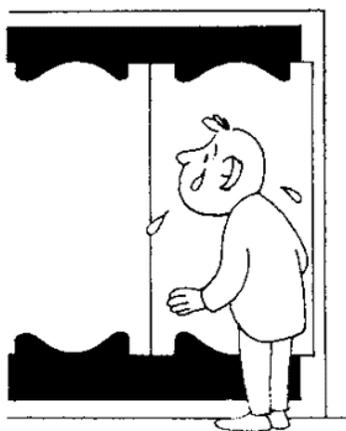
**International Conventions-Regional Forums**

Discuss selection of three cities to be considered as a site for the International Convention in 2020

Discuss inviting up to twenty-one non-A.A. speakers to participate in the 2010 International Convention at A.A.'s expense.

Discuss ways to encourage interest in Regional and Local Forums.

**Fall Assembly – September 13 & 14, 2008**



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GROUP

NEW

INDIVIDUAL

RENEWAL

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