

AREA 28, PANEL 72

SPECIAL GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE EDI-

The Boomerang

Why Do We Need a Conference?



The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting: “We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life. “We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing over integration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services. “We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social posi-

The 72nd General Service Conference met in Brooklyn, NY from April 24th to April 30th, 2022. The purpose of this special edition of the Boomerang is to present information on the process of approving the publication of a Fifth Edition Alcoholics Anonymous “Big Book”, to provide a historical perspective of our General Service Conference and to remind the reader of our upcoming Post Conference Delegates report of the recent conference agenda.

The Delegate receives a committee assignment prior to the conference and attends committee meetings before the GSC. This newsletter presents 1 of over 170 agenda items the conference deliberated on at this year’s conference. The Delegates received more than 1100 pages of background material to prepare for the conference and our Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Area Officers and Committee chairs have been working for you at our Pre Conference Forum, Area Spring Assembly and through interpersonal conversations to inform our groups of the business of Alcoholics Anonymous.

On behalf of the Panel 72 AA servants please do represent yourselves and your groups on Sunday May 15th in Bath. I think I speak on behalf of all AA “Trusted Servants” that we all share the goal of improving communication in the Maine Area. In return we all hope for a good turnout when we provide meetings to inform AA members and groups in the Maine Area. Information about our Post Conference Forum is on the back page of this newsletter.

John D.

There's a new acronym that AA members will want to know. "BBV". Try saying that 3 times fast. "BBV, BBV, BBV." Not so easy! "Big Book Version" Try saying that 3 times fast! Get the point?

What is BBV? It is the planned 5th Edition of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, affectionately known as BBV for short.

Before anyone gets over excited, let's unpack what this 5th Edition really means. First, there will be no changes to the first 164 pages, our historical text that details the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. In addition, the Preface, the Forewords, "The Doctor's Opinion," "Dr. Bob's Nightmare," and the Appendices will not change. About 25 new stories will be selected for inclusion in BBV.

The following new material will be added:

Some (but not all) of the personal stories

Cover and Jacket design

Jacket copy

Preface

Foreword to the Fifth Edition

Index, if included

The following material will be changed:

Title Page

Contents Page

Factual Material that appears in footnotes

Introduction to personal stories (to identify which stories are new, which are from earlier editions, and any edits to stories that appeared in previous editions)

Yes, a new edition, Big Book 5th Edition is coming, but slowly and carefully. This will proceed in stages over at least 4 General Service Conferences. Actual timing will depend on the number of personal stories submitted. For reference, approximately 1200 stories were submitted for the 4th Edition.

There will be a Call for Stories that will be published including in Grapevine, Box 459, on the Website, and through the service structure (General Service Conference, Areas, Districts, Groups). Every submission will be carefully considered.

In a 1954 letter concerning the 2nd Edition of the Big Book, Bill Wilson wrote "The story section of the Big Book is far more important than most of us think. It is our principle means of identifying with the reader outside of AA; it is the written equivalent of hearing speakers at an AA meeting; it is our show window of results." Further he wrote: "The main purpose of the revisions is to bring the story section up to date, to portray more adequately a cross section of those who have found help. The audience for the book is people who are coming to Alcoholics Anonymous now. Those who are here have already heard our stories. Since the audience for the book is likely to be newcomers, anything from the point of view of content or style that might offend or alienate those who are not familiar with the program should be carefully eliminated."

Everyone's story is important. Please consider submitting yours! Manuscripts should be approximately 3500 words. The deadline is not yet known but is expected to be 4-6 months after first publication in Grapevine. Be on the lookout for additional BBV info. More will be revealed!

Harriet W. District 9 DCMC

APRIL 1962

The General Service Conference and You

BY: ANN M.

ALL the Staff at GSO are looking forward to the annual meeting of the General Service Conference which will take place, as it has for the last eleven years, in New York City. The date of the opening session will be April 25 and we will meet together for four days with Delegates from all the States, Puerto Rico, the Provinces of Canada, Observers from overseas and our Trustees and Directors.

I was asked to tell you what the Conference has meant to me. Well, that's not so easy, as it has meant many things and I don't have many pages, but I can say first and foremost it increased my feeling of belonging, a major need for most of us. I have had the good luck to attend all the Conferences since the very first one, and each one has strengthened a feeling of belonging to our dear Fellowship that now stretches round the world.

Second, it has increased my faith in my fellow AAs, a faith that has sometimes been a weak, wobbly and leaky receptacle for the love that was certainly there. Knowing so surely my own fallibility I worried about the fallibility of others. The Conference has demonstrated to me beyond any doubt that when the group conscience is at work, we can be confident that what is wise and right for AA is working also.

Many good and fine things have taken place at every Conference and many that were not so fine and not so good, but what I have gained from participation is the heartening knowledge that the right for AA does prevail. For this I am truly grateful. AA has always been a partnership. We do not do it alone. The Conference links us to one another in a constructive sharing of experience that can mean AA's survival in the years to come.

Each year the Conference has grown in understanding and experience due to an increased knowledge and understanding of world service and to the continuing efforts of past Delegates. This, the twelfth Conference, will probably be the best yet, as we have felt about every one since the start!

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At Wit's End

Many returns A drunk walked into a bar and swallowed a Boomerang. The bartender threw him out—47 times.

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Area 28

Post Conference Forum

Where: Donald Small Gymnasium
4 Sheridan Rd. Bath, ME 04530

When: May 15, 2022 10am-2pm

Suggested Contribution \$8.00 (Pastries, Coffee, and Lunch)

Use QR Code to
make your
contribution
today



Email questions to
postconferenceforum@gmail.com

Come to the Post Conference
Forum to learn about the 72nd
General Service Conference.

