

# Quarterly Report *from the Board*



## AN UPDATE FROM THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD TO AREA DELEGATES

*This is a confidential bulletin, for use only within A.A.*

November 2020

### Trustees' Message

Since our last newsletter in August, COVID-19 is continuing to have an impact on AA around the country. As laws are changing frequently and from State to State (and Territory to Territory), we need to keep being mindful not only of our home groups' compliance with our respective requirements but also to be mindful of the welfare of our fellow members - some of whom are doing it particularly tough. In true AA spirit, we continue to be amazed at the resilience of the Fellowship and our capacity to continue to carry the message.

### General Service Conference

This year Conference was held by Zoom for the first time due to our current environment. Conference was held over the weekend of 7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> November with a lot of prior committee work being done online. We thanked those Delegates that are rotating off and we welcomed a number of new Delegates who got to experience Conference albeit an online Conference. Those participating adapted very well although there is a sense that we would like to return to face-to-face when it is safe to do so.

Delegates received a thorough presentation from Fabian our accountant who presented financial reports for the year ended 30/06/2020, and a budget for 2021. He explained changes to reporting requirements relating to leases; explained Jobkeeper payments; and answered questions from Delegates. There was also discussion around the recalculation of the prudent reserve and whether it was sufficient in terms of a crisis.

Thank you to the Agenda Committee who had the difficult task of taking on board everyone's feedback before deciding how best to conduct Conference this year - and in fact whether to even have Conference this year. In the end the pre-work done by the Committees and the planning by the Agenda Committee paved the way for a successful Conference in these difficult times. Area Delegates will no doubt report to the Fellowship on the outcomes of Conference 2020.

### 2020 National Convention

Congratulations to Toowoomba for hosting the first ever Virtual National Convention. Not only difficult to achieve, but made more complicated by the fact that it had Al-Anon and Alateen participation necessitating three online, simultaneous programs. What could go wrong?

Highlights from the Convention included:

- 520 registrants - including a very healthy 175 Al-Anon and Alateen participants;
- The creation of an 'app' allowing members to access the Convention via their mobile phones - they could attend meetings, watch content, interact with fellow registrants, and post messages;
- An incredible amount of On Demand content consisting of workshops, panel discussions and special interest groups including numerous Indigenous stories;
- An AA play performed by Melbourne actors via Zoom whilst they were in lockdown;
- Publishing of the Special Edition book, *A Vision for You*, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of AA in Australia;
- International speakers;
- Welcome by the Governor-General of Australia; Michele Grinberg, Chair of the GSB New York; Andy P, our GSB Chair;
- A public meeting for professionals interested in the area of alcoholism (this was a physical event hosted in Toowoomba and had 50 professionals in attendance); and
- The first ever virtual Sobriety Countdown.

Feedback has been universally positive and credit to Toowoomba for pulling off this feat just a few months after the International Convention had been cancelled.

## Contributions

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the Fellowship in Australia has caused an unexpected and substantial reduction in 7th Tradition contributions and a severe decline in Literature Sales. As these are the two main sources of revenue to fund 12th Step work, we have reassessed this reliance to ensure we can continue the essential services of GSO and improve the financial health of the Fellowship.

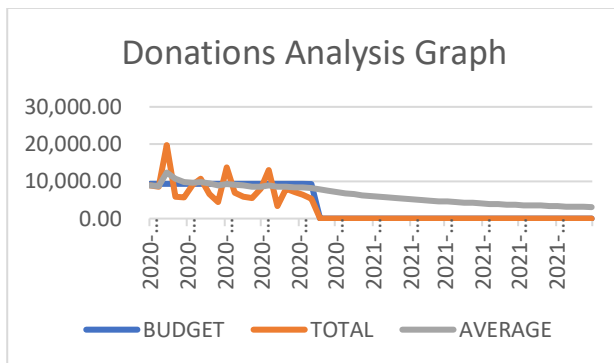
One of the General Service Board's initiatives is for the operations of the General Service Office to be fully self-supported through Fellowship contributions and not rely on Literature sale income.

Based on the audited yearly financial reports, the General Service Office's Operating goal for contributions is \$9322.02 per week.

The contributions up to November 13 averaged out at \$8140.35 a week - this is a shortfall of \$1181.67 per week.

We encourage groups and individuals to support our services which have been crucial to the continued operation of the fellowship at a National level during the COVID crisis.

Groups and members are encouraged to donate through the AA website at [www.aa.org.au](http://www.aa.org.au).



## 2021 National Convention - Adelaide

Early bird registration has been extended to 31 December 2020, so please get behind Adelaide and support our National Convention. Please register now for what will be a truly wonderful event. You can find out more information at: <https://www.aanatcon2021.com.au>.



## World Services

Attached to this newsletter is the second edition of the World Service Committee Newsletter. Enjoy!

## Resignation of Class A Trustee

Ruby Jones, who has served on the Board as a Class A Trustee for three years, has announced her resignation effective 30 November 2020 due to career commitments.

Ruby has made an excellent contribution to the Fellowship in her time on the Board. We thank her for her service and wish her well in the future.

## Joke of the Day

My wife sent me a text, "Your great".

So naturally, I wrote back, "No, you're great".

She's been walking around all happy and smiling.

*Should I tell her I was just correcting her grammar, or leave it?*

## Chairman's Report

The Board continues to be active on a number of fronts: it continues to work on the finances of the Fellowship in these times; the reconciliation with the Richmond office; and is aware that calls and enquiries are up (not necessarily newcomers but existing members due to confusion particularly in the early days of COVID-19 and when meetings started opening up again). We've also made updates to our website; and the online bookshop is now open (whilst encouraging members to buy through their local CSO).

Thank you to the Fellowship for your donations. And thank you to members who have written letters of support during the pandemic. It has been wonderful to see the success of members holding online meetings and workshops.

Wishing you all the best as we move into the very busy end of year.

Yours in service,

**Andy P. Chairman, General Service Board**

# OUR UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP



## A Newsletter from the World Service Committee

Number 2

### ASIA OCEANIA SERVICE MEETING (AOSM)

The proposal for an AOSM was first raised at the 1978 Helsinki World Service Meeting. Discussions were held at subsequent World Service Meetings before the initial AOSM in Tokyo in 1995. These meetings are held every two years alternating with the biennial World Service Meetings.

The population of the AOSM zone makes up two-thirds of the earth. It is located among countries in the Middle East, India, Oceania, South Asia, and East Asia including East Russia. There are 72 countries in this zone although the number participating in AOSM is relatively small. It is Australia's responsibility, as an "older sober member" country, to spread the AA message in the AOSM zone.

