

## **PRAASA 2010 Report**

### **Madeleine P., Pacific Region Trustee**

Your General Service Office welcomed 1,513 visitors this year. They responded to 51,655 letters, faxes and emails. Taking weekends and holidays off, that works out to approximately 207 items per day. That doesn't count all the phone calls made to the office.

### **AAWS**

Total distribution of all books for the 12 months ending December 31, 2009 was 2,212,348 units, up 5% from the same period in 2008. For the year ending December 2009, total AA purchases amounted to 1,695,186 units while non-AAs accounted for 517,162 units or 30.6%. This percentage is much higher than normal, owing to a large order received from Hazelden prior to the July 1, 2009 price increase. It is estimated that the Hazelden order represented two to three years' inventory for them.

Big Book Sales (All Editions) – Through the twelve months ending December 31, 2009, we distributed 1,224,346 units, compared to 1,111,906 units for the year ending December 31, 2008. The 1,224,346 units represent 55.5% of all books distributed in 2009.

Contributions received of \$6,296,700 were \$203,300 (3%) less than budgeted and \$166,100 (2.5%) less than the total for 2008.

Net profit for the year 2009 of \$1,288,650 compares with a budget profit of \$835,100 and was \$1,564,000 more than the \$275,300 loss reported for the year 2008.

Now the facts about self support. With contributions at 6,296,700 and an approximate number of listed groups at 61,581, that equates to about \$102.24 received per group. The average cost per group - \$142.64. That's right – for \$0.39/day, we could be self-supporting. We are only receiving \$0.28/day. We know that less than half of the groups contribute. But think about those figures, this would be easily accomplished. We just have to take action.

### **AA Grapevine**

AA Grapevine, Inc. faced a number of challenges this quarter: the repercussion of subscription price increases; the accelerating change in magazine and digital publishing; lower than expected sales of books, CDs and other items; and a full publishing schedule. At the same time, AAGV received more stories and art from members and began to realize increased income per subscription.

While Grapevine circulation fell to 97,900 in the month of December 2009 and circulation is expected to continue to decline in the months ahead, average monthly circulation for the year of 102,281 was higher than the 100,000 budgeted. Income from the magazine offset the lower than expected income from books, CDs and other items, and AAGV, Inc. finished the 12 month period ahead of budget.

La Vina circulation fell to 9,100 in December 2009. In the last 12 months, average bimonthly circulation and the sale of other items were lower than anticipated. However, the sale of back issues was higher than expected, direct costs and overhead expenses were under budget, and La Vina finished the year ahead of budget as well.

Year to date, AAGV, Inc., distributed 1,273,922 copies of the Grapevine (current and back issues) and 69,928 copies of La Vina (current and back issues). It distributed 77,095 Grapevine and La Vina books; 10,748 Grapevine and La Vina CDs; and 31,641 other items. Grapevine received 2,130 submissions (stories, letters, photos, and art) this year. La Vina received 205.

For the twelve months ended December 31, 2009, AAGV, Inc. realized a net loss of \$128,957 versus a budget loss of \$167,360. This was ahead of budget by \$38,403. Total AAGV income, including interest income from the Reserve Fund, was \$1,830,511, which was \$58,585 ahead of budget and \$23,892 better than last year. Total AA Grapevine expenses of \$1,959,468 were \$20,182 over budget.

Bimonthly circulation for La Vina averaged 9,663 for the 12 month period (6 issues). Year-to-date magazine income was \$84,076, which was \$76 better than budgeted. Direct costs of \$67,169 were \$7,429 under budget. Gross profit on the magazine was \$29,490, which was \$8,575 ahead of budget and \$6,875 ahead of 2008. Gross profit on related items was \$20,915, which was \$8,114 below budget. Net loss for the year was \$54,472. This was ahead of the budgeted loss of \$95,776 by \$41,304.

Most important in our discussions is the budgeted loss for 2010 for the AA Grapevine of \$245,741. Part of the expenses impacting this budget are the project related costs of updating the website (\$55,000), reinstating the position of web Staff position (\$92,000), unifying (combining) the customer/subscriber database and outsourcing the online catalog (\$60,000), and a gift subscription program (\$43,860). These expenses are part of a plan to help the Grapevine stem the loss of circulation, adapt to current changes in publishing, and make its stories available to alcoholics in new media as well as in print.

It should be noted at this time, the AAGV, Inc., has a budgeted profit of \$90,462 in 2011 and \$457,221 in 2012. I know it's tempting to play armchair quarterback and second-guess management and the AAGV board in their decisions but trust me, they have analyzed every possible scenario and they are taking proactive steps to insure the future of the AA Grapevine. Instead of focusing on the "red" number at the bottom of the page, remember that the AA Grapevine has still remained profitable over its history, placing more into the Reserve Fund than we have ever taken out. We are judged by our actions, not our intentions. If you want to see the AA Grapevine succeed, then get on the bus and support it. Buy Grapevine and La Vina magazines and products. It remains one of the most incredible twelfth step tools in our arsenal and it deserves our loyal support and love.

### **Nominating**

This committee has some important work on their plate. Over the Winter Board Weekend, we interviewed 6 potential Class A trustee candidates and chose two candidates to fill the upcoming vacancies on our board. Michele G., J.D., of Charleston, West Virginia and Dr. John F., of Waban, Massachusetts, were chosen from these outstanding applicants and we look forward to the talents they will undoubtedly bring to our board.

We also reviewed the resumes for Eastern Canada Regional trustee as well as the Pacific Region trustee. This will be an exciting time for our region and I know, from the list, we can't go wrong as we have a treasure trove to choose from.

### **Public Information**

This committee has a full agenda for the GSC but I would like to mention they are seeking applicants for a second Appointed Committee Member to serve on that trustees' committee. They are looking for expertise in communicating the AA message via a variety of media outlets with an emphasis on young people in AA.

### **International Conventions**

Holy moly! We are going to have a party in San Antonio! When we tried to explain to San Antonio how many of us might be showing up, you could tell they thought, "Yeah, sure you are." Well, we had approximately 31,000 people registered for the Convention as of the end of January. Trust me, San Antonio has sat up and taken a "sober second look" and thought, "Holy crap, they weren't kidding!!" They are hurriedly trying to anticipate our arrival and I have a feeling, we're gonna rock that city!

### **Corrections**

The most exciting news on this committee was their need for an Appointed Committee Member to assist in the revision of "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell." We were honored to have almost 40 incredible applicants for this position and our beautiful and talented, Diane O., past delegate from Area 06 CNCA, was chosen to serve in this capacity. Do they have good taste or what?!

### **Contributions Online Launch**

I am truly excited to tell you about the coming attraction on the aa.org website – the ability to make individual and group contributions online. There will be an icon appearing in the banner across the bottom of the website for contributions online. Click on the icon and you will be directed to a page where you can create a personal user name and password with your personal information. Most importantly, you will be asked to click on a box indicating whether you are a member of AA or not. If you click on the "not" box, you will get a "sorry, AA members are the only people to contribute to AA," message, along with a message about our 7<sup>th</sup> tradition. But, if you are lucky enough to have drank like a pig, ruined your life and made it to our doors, then you can click on the "Why, yes I am!" box and you are ready to make online contributions using a credit card or E-check. It allows for individual, birthday and group contributions on this site. If you don't know your group number, no problem. Just follow the easy directions, click on your town and your state and pick the name of your home group. Your group number will pop up and be linked to your contribution. Also, there is a function for you to track your year-to-date contributions made online, as well. I hope everyone will visit the website and give it a whirl!