

2024 Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña

ITEM C: Discuss the cost effectiveness of continuing to print La Viña.

Background notes:

Past Conference Advisory Actions and Committee Considerations:

1995: It was recommended that: Based on an expressed need, a Spanish edition of the Grapevine be produced, contingent on the following: that the Grapevine Corporate Board proceed to gather information and develop a business plan for a bimonthly Spanish edition of the Grapevine, for presentation to the trustees' Finance Committee, and that funding for up to five (5) years be obtained from the General Service Board Reserve Fund, with start-up costs estimated at \$84,000 for the first year. It was further recommended that if a Spanish edition is established, the monthly Spanish articles be removed from the English-language Grapevine, and that if, after five (5) years, the Spanish edition of the magazine is determined to be no longer feasible, publication be discontinued.

1999: Committee Consideration: Being mindful of the demonstrated effectiveness of La Viña and the need for it expressed by the Hispanic community, and considering its spiritual benefits and benefits as a Twelfth Step tool, the committee wishes to express strong support for its continued publication.

2000: Committee Consideration: The committee reviewed the five-year history of La Viña. Being mindful of the demonstrated effectiveness of La Viña and the strong support for it expressed by the A.A. membership as a whole, and considering its spiritual benefits as a Twelfth Step tool, the committee wishes to express strong support for its continued publication.

2001: It was recommended that La Viña continue to be published by the A.A. Grapevine and supported by the General Service Board as a service to the Fellowship. It was recommended that La Viña continue to be published utilizing A.A. Grapevine resources in order to achieve efficiencies in production and distribution.

2010: The Committee recommended that La Viña achieve spiritual parity with the A.A. Grapevine, beginning in the following manner:

CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

- Publishing La Viña as a bimonthly, perfect-bound, black-and-white, 68-page issue at an additional estimated cost of \$21,400 per year for one year beginning in 2011 followed by a year of review and assessment in 2012. The results of this review and assessment will be brought to the 2013 Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine.
- Content and substance be of primary importance.
- An announcement will be published in La Viña magazine beginning immediately and throughout the trial year, encouraging increased submissions and subscriptions, moving toward the goal of being self-supporting.

2013: Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions: The committee reviewed the results of the 2012 assessment of La Viña as a bimonthly, perfect-bound, black and white, 68-page magazine and concluded:

- The committee recognized that funding La Viña as a service, through the General Fund, is an issue affecting the overall Fellowship.
- The committee acknowledged the increase in circulation by 8.6% from January 2011 to December 2012 may be tied to the changes in format and additional content.
- The committee acknowledged that the 2012 increase in La Viña deficit results in large part from allocation of pension funding expense.
- The committee expressed concern that funding La Viña through the General Fund of the General Service Board while A.A. Grapevine Inc. has responsibility for the production of La Viña may suggest an imbalance between responsibility and authority.

The committee requested that the GV board submit a proposal to the 2014 Conference Committee on Grapevine magazine that would significantly reduce the La Viña deficit.

2014: Additional Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's suggestion that a new business plan is required for La Viña and requested that a new business plan be developed for La Viña and be brought back to the 2015 Conference Committee on A.A. Grapevine for review.

2015: Additional Committee Considerations that did not result in Conference Advisory Actions:

CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

- The committee reviewed the A.A. Grapevine Board's 2015 Office Report on La Viña and agreed that La Viña is published as cost effectively as possible given existing parameters and conditions. The committee agreed with the A.A. Grapevine Board's suggestion to develop and implement a communication plan that utilizes (but is not limited to) A.A. Grapevine, Inc.'s newsletters, Forum presentations, and *Box 4-5-9* to clarify to the Fellowship La Viña's unique status as a hybrid entity that is at once a service to the Fellowship and is also required to strive to become self-supporting.

2017: Additional Committee Considerations:

- The committee discussed the spiritual value of Grapevine and La Viña in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and agreed that the magazines are important Twelve Step tools, noting that they serve as a beacon of hope for alcoholics in treatment centers and prisons and alcoholics all over the world. The committee recognized that Grapevine and La Viña cannot accept contributions and are self-supporting only through subscriptions and sales of books and other items.

2018: It was recommended that La Viña be published at its current frequency of six times per year as a service to the Fellowship, with perfect binding, at 68 pages, and in full color.

2020: It was recommended that the name of the Conference Committee on Grapevine be changed to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.

Background:

1. PAI #103 Submitter Form
2. AA Grapevine Office Report on La Viña

2024 Office Report
La Viña Finances

This is a review of La Viña magazine circulation, revenue, costs and the contribution from the General Service Board over the past 6 years, and the corresponding budget for 2024. Note that La Viña’s circulation peaked in 2019, but then dropped dramatically in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID shutdowns hurt circulation in 2021 and 2022 as well. A rebound has been slow, but circulation did improve in 2023 and we expect that trend to continue. *The column “Other Revenue” refers to La Viña books and other items from the catalog. The budget for 2024 shows improved circulation and a reduction in costs and GSB contribution.

Year	Circulation	Magazine Revenue	Other Revenue*	Costs	GSB Contribution
2018 Actual	9,635	65,343	15,392	229,202	148,467
2019 Actual	10,150	68,338	15,749	373,401	288,594
2020 Actual	6,435	21,831	12,425	426,881	252,080
2021 Actual	6,415	24,159	17,005	429,810	388,646
2022 Actual	6,685	96,151	59,710	714,086	636,604
2023 Reforecast	7,281	109,000	100,754	865,144	754,451
2024 Budget	7,836	115,187	101,304	688,373	569,512

General Service Conference (G.S.C.)
Proposed Agenda Item Submission Form

(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.

That the Conference review the overall cost effectiveness of continuing to print La Vina and whether the ongoing annual financial loss from continued publishing of La Vina is sustainable.

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

The financial loss that is absorbed annually from the La Vina publication

(3) What level of group conscience, if any, discussed the proposed agenda item? Make it clear who is submitting the item (an individual, group, district, area, etc.).

Note: While all items are received equally, experience has shown that ideas greatly benefit from the value of a broader group conscience. Consider if and with whom you would like to have a group conscience discussion on the proposed agenda item prior to submitting.

I am submitting this PAI on my own after reviewing the Financial Reports over the last five years.

(4) Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal:

In the final financial report for 2022 it states that La Vina experienced a loss of \$670K. In June 2023 the Q2 financials show that La Vina is currently at a net loss of \$343K. This tracks that to be a more substantial loss than 2022. In a year where our financial state is tight absorbing another loss of this magnitude may no longer be prudent. In 2021 the loss was \$429K. In 2020 the loss was \$385K. In 2019 the loss was \$329K. In 2018 the loss was \$72K. In 2017 the loss was \$62K. Each of these amounts are from the final financial reports released by the General Service Board.

(5) What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed item is approved?

CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

The intended outcome is that the General Service Conference would, in the spirit of good stewardship, be willing to assess the cost effectiveness of continuing to print La Vina. And consider that there may be other avenues to reach the intended audience for La Vina that are more financially appropriate.

(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.

Laura B.
Home Group: Hopeful Agnostics Big Book Study
District 13
Area 68
Southwest Region

(7) Final comments:

I believe in the usefulness of La Vina as I do in the usefulness of the Grapevine. I am not necessarily in favor of discontinuing the magazine but believe the continued increased loss annually deserves the Conference's full attention and hopefully an informed group conscience decision based on the principle of good stewardship.

Submit completed forms to the GSO Staff Member on the Conference Desk:

EMAIL: Conference@aa.org

POSTAL MAIL:

Attn: Conference Desk
General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station New
York, NY 10163

Updated 7/22

2024 Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña

ITEM D: Explore the services provided by AA Grapevine and how they should be funded.

Background notes:

Past Conference Advisory Actions and Committee Considerations:

1987: It was recommended that the Grapevine staff be responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters.

1988: It was recommended that the committee reaffirmed the 1987 Conference Advisory Action number 29: "The Grapevine staff be responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters," in order to keep these lines of communication open.

1993: Committee Consideration: The committee discussed the Grapevine's history of self-support and wanted to reestablish focus on the magazine and to affirm the desire that the magazine be self-supporting through subscription income only.

1994: It was recommended that all AA members be strongly urged to work toward the goal that the AA Grapevine magazine be self-supporting through the sale of magazine subscriptions.

2008: Committee Consideration: The committee discussed the Grapevine's legacy of self-support and encouraged the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. to uphold that legacy.

2009: Committee Consideration: The committee supported the spirit of communication between the Grapevine Board and Conference members, as recommended in 1987 and reaffirmed in 1988 that: "The Grapevine staff be responsible for communicating updated information to the delegates at appropriate intervals regarding editorial, circulation/fulfillment, and financial matters."

CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

2011: The Committee recommended that, in the spirit of being self-supporting while also protecting our Traditions of attraction, anonymity, and non-affiliation, A.A. Grapevine be permitted to utilize digital channels and current (commissionable) support and distribution technologies, such as, but not limited to, smart phones, tablets, e-readers, applications and commissioned online stores for the sale and distribution of magazines, books and products. The committee requests that the Board ensure that all contracts protect our Traditions, with the option to discontinue any and all contracts at any time. The Committee requests that a status and financial report be submitted to the 2012 Grapevine Conference Committee.

The Committee reviewed a request for discussion on how to best support the Grapevine magazine and recommended that the A.A. Grapevine Board, in consultation with the A.A. World Services Board and under the guidance of the General Service Board chairman, continue to investigate what efficiencies and objectives can be accomplished by combining services and sharing resources, including reviewing Concept 11, while still maintaining editorial and corporate independence.

After extensive review and discussion of the results of the surveys conducted per the 2010 Conference Advisory Action, the Committee recommended that, in order to encourage unity and to support A.A. Grapevine, Inc., the A.A. Grapevine Board establish an ad hoc committee to review and determine actionable items from the A.A. Grapevine Fellowship Sharing Report and that the ad hoc committee have a proportional representation similar to the General Service Conference and be chaired by the Chair of the General Service Board.

Committee Consideration: The committee considered permitting A.A. Grapevine, Inc., to accept contributions limited to the same General Service Board contribution policy, to be used for operation expenses with excess funds continuing to be forwarded to the Reserve Fund and agreed to take no action. The committee noted that the current financial structure is appropriate.

Committee Consideration: In order to adhere to our spiritual principle of self-support, the Conference Committee on the A.A. Grapevine suggests that the A.A. Grapevine Board only propose balanced operating budgets to the General Service Board.

2015: Committee Consideration: The committee encouraged the support and purchase of Subscription Gift Certificates by local service committees, groups and members as a way to carry the A.A. message. These subscriptions would be used to provide magazines to people in correctional facilities, treatment centers, nursing homes, and other facilities or locations. This work would be accomplished at the local area level.

CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

2017: Committee Consideration: The committee discussed the spiritual value of Grapevine and La Viña in carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous and agreed that the magazines are important Twelve Step tools, noting that they serve as a beacon of hope for alcoholics in treatment centers and prisons and alcoholics all over the world. The committee recognized that Grapevine and La Viña cannot accept contributions and are self-supporting only through subscriptions and sales of books and other items.

2018: It was recommended that A.A. Grapevine, Inc. allow sales of Grapevine and La Viña books, single-issue magazines (as available), and other products to non-A.A. entities, such as (but not limited to), hospitals, treatment centers and bookstores. NOTE: As a current practice, A.A. Grapevine Inc. does not seek outside sales for magazine subscriptions.

Background:

1. Trustee's Finance & Budget Committee Memo
2. GV Services and Funding Report
3. Section of GSB Bylaws

Memorandum

November 16, 2023

To: Jon W., Senior Editor/Secretary to the Conference Committee on Grapevine/La Viña

From: Zenaida Medina, Secretary to Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee

Re: How services are funded for Grapevine/La Viña

The Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee discussed the Grapevine budget report and referenced the request for funding of services provided by Grapevine.

The Committee had a discussion on how the La Viña services being funded by the General Service Board was a Conference Advisory Action. They felt the decision to fund services for Grapevine should be sent to Conference for further discussion.

The Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee recommended to the General Service Board to forward a request to the Conference Committee on Grapevine/La Viña to explore the services provided by AA Grapevine and how it should be funded.

Thank you.

cc: Kevin Prior, Trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee Chair
Chris C., Publisher AA Grapevine/ La Viña
Diana L., Conference Coordinator

2024 Office Report
Services Provided by AA Grapevine

At the request of the General Service Conference, AA Grapevine, Inc. provides digital publishing services to the Fellowship at no charge to members. The Conference Committee on Grapevine will be discussing how these services shall be funded going forward. Below is a rundown of the cost of these services in 2023. These costs include vendor, talent, editing, freelance and platform fees.

Project	2023 costs	Notes
AAGV Podcast	\$47,640.00	Talent, Editing, Travel, Captivate, Apple, staff time.
GV & LV Instagram	\$14,850.00	Stikky Media, research, scheduling, posting, creative.
GV & LV YouTube Channel	\$2,900.00	Editing, posting.
In-house cost estimate	<u>\$26,000.00</u>	Staff time, promotional materials, equipment, zoom, etc.
Total	\$91,390.00	

From the BYLAWS OF THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, INC.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., now has but one purpose, that of serving the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is in effect an agency created and now designated by the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous to maintain services for those who should be seeking, through Alcoholics Anonymous, the means for arresting the disease of alcoholism through the application to their own lives, in whole or in part, of the Twelve Steps which constitute the recovery program upon which the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is founded. These Twelve Steps are as follows:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we *understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

2024 Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña

ITEM E: Consider a request to develop a pamphlet on the Asian and Asian-American alcoholic in A.A.*

* 2024 EDW distribution

Background Notes:

Excerpt from the October 28, 2023, trustees' Literature Committee meeting report:

The committee considered a request to develop a pamphlet for Asian and Asian-American alcoholics with stories of experience, strength and hope from Asians and Asian-Americans and agreed to forward to the 74th General Service Conference.

Background:

1. Proposed Agenda Item (PAI) Submission Form – PAI #74

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(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion. PAI #74

Area 49 office manager respectfully proposes to have a new pamphlet for the Asian and Asian-Americans. With stories of experience, strength, and hope from other Asians and Asian-Americans that are still in recovery.

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

This item reaches out to alcoholism in the Asian and Asian-Americans.

(3) What level of group conscience, if any, discussed the proposed agenda item? Make it clear who is submitting the item (an individual, group, district, area, etc.).

Note: While all items are received equally, experience has shown that ideas greatly benefit from the value of a broader group conscience. Consider if and with whom you would like to have a group conscience discussion on the proposed agenda item prior to submitting.

This idea comes from an Area committee member from Area 49. It has been discussed that AA needs to reach out to our Asian brethren. The proposed agenda item was also discussed during our Area Assembly on September 10, 2023. It was seconded, there was discussion and then a vote. Area 49 supported this proposed agenda item with substantial unanimity by a vote of 90 in favor of supporting, 2 opposed and no abstentions. The proposed agenda item is supported by Area 49 with substantial unanimity.

(4) Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal:

The committee member is an Asian in recovery in Area 49, it was hard for him to relate to people in the rooms. Since there were no Asians in the meetings, he couldn't feel like I belonged. Even if an Asian comes into the room, they find it hard to identify themselves as a newcomer or as an alcoholic. The drinking culture is slightly different from Western drinking culture. Culturally Asians don't think drinking alcohol is a problem at all. They think it's a mindset of having a sense of control. Also there is the culture of honor and shame, if admitting that they are alcoholics; it means the family will not have honor and will be shamed in society. During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, some Asian members of the fellowship have been dropping out of the program. This is because they were being verbally/physically assaulted on the streets. Most Westerners didn't really know what to say or do while this was happening to their Asian fellows, so they rather say and do nothing. In AA, the minority myth is rampant; if an Asian male comes in, most don't come up to him. And if an Asian female comes into the rooms, everyone comes up to them. It seems like if Asians come into AA, most Westerners think they could figure things out for themselves. The Chinese translated Big Book only contain the first 164 pages of the Big Book, and not the personal stories in the back because Asian don't identify with the stories of Westerners. The 12th step say we carry the message of recovery to the next suffering alcoholic.

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(5) What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed item is approved?

To reach out to the Asians and Asian-Americans who are still sick and suffering.

(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.

This agenda Item is being submitted by Jo Ann McC., Delegate Area 49 Panel 73

(7) Final comments:

We believe that this will help the program of AA evolve to the next level of acceptance, compassion, and understanding.

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