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Good afternoon everyone. My name is Jeff and I'm an alcoholic. I am very grateful to have the honor of serving as your panel 69 Area Delegate. I am here today to report back to you the actions of the General Service Conference; the 70th annual Conference held May 16th through 19th, virtually. First, I will report to you the format we had to use was a challenge. To complete the work of our conference virtually was quite an accomplishment. It took a lot of effort from the General Service Office staff and numerous adjustments from all the conference members. All in all I was very pleased with how the conference unfolded. We were productive and were able to get essential work accomplished. I am so glad I was able to be part of this historic event. It's been quite a year. Who would have thought we'd be doing everything using the Internet by mid-March. Well, I'm here to tell you our A.A. General Service Conference was no exception.

## Slide 2

We first received word on March 25th in an email from Greg T. our general service office general manager the Conference as we know it was being cancelled. I have to say I was crushed. And, as the days unwound after that, it became even more disappointing. Thinking about all we would be missing in the second and last year as a Delegate. But as plans began to shift toward how we could still accomplish the essential business of A.A., I got a bit more tolerant and understanding of what faced us. I got back to the business of preparing for the conference.

I will be honest though, I was not truly excited until 2 days before the Conference. Probably my first spiritual moment of my conference work standing in my kitchen and saying to my wife, "The conference starts Saturday. I'm excited". And start it did. I'm here today to report back to you what happened and what we did, and did not get accomplished. Now a quick view of the conference make up.

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This year, as with last year, the conference was made up of 135 members. 93 Delegates, 15 GSO and Grapevine staff, and 27 Trustees and Directors. As the group's representatives, the Delegates are always the substantial majority giving them the ability to vote an item through by 2/3 regardless of the feelings of the remainder of the conference.

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Picture of Pacific Regional Delegates

As mentioned earlier, a lot of work went into modifying the conference process and structure to accommodate our virtual requirements. The time we had was limited, and so was the time to plan. It was pointed out at the beginning of our work we are to trust our committee process and let the committees do their work. As time was so critical this was more important than ever. This slide is of our Pacific Regional Delegates and our Regional Trustee Kathi F. She was a valuable leader to us all through our journey into the unknown. The Pacific Region group was inspiring and shared much support and encouragement during the conference. I was proud to be part this tremendous group of dedicated trusted servants.

## Slide 5

To give you some personal perspective I wanted to show you a picture of the work area I used to do my preparation and report back work. Small, but it worked.

## Slide 6

As we got closer to the day 1, we received many e-mails asking us to do some prep work for the conference due to how little time we were to have of actual conference activity. It started 3 weeks prior. There was our orientation with our region. There was a joint meeting of the trustees and conference committees. The prep work also included viewing the opening statements by the board chairs which were recorded. We were asked to watch them in our own time one week ahead of the conference start. More about those reports later.

## Slide 7

The conference began Saturday morning May 16th at 9:15am. Michele G. our general service board chair gave the official welcome remark and Greg T. the GSO general manager took roll call. We heard a greeting from our delegate chair Ray M. who comes from Area 91 Saskatchewan Canada, and then the keynote from Tom A. West central regional trustee. I share with you now our main conference hall.

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All of our conference voting, debate and discussion occurred here.

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As I mentioned earlier we started off with the board chair reports. Michele G., chair of the General Service Board discussed 4 projects which were primary to their work in 2019.

1. The ERP or enterprise resource planning tool; MyPortal. This is the software which will tie together much of the work the General Service office does electronically.
2. The new communication services department. How timely given our current situation.
3. New office space construction on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the NY current location.
4. Enhancing AAWS and AAGV's digital presence.

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Next was Cathy B (class B, AAWS Chair) -

She made sure we were clear that prior to our pandemic, our contributions continue to rise. 2019 was a record.

She discussed the drawdown of the reserve this year of 2 months; the reserve was at 9 months. Our current situation is exactly the circumstance where we need our prudent reserve, she said. Cathy also talked about safety in A.A. About how the new revised yellow card will have options for groups. And a flyer is under consideration.

She closed by saying, "A.A. is based on service, and dependent on action". She quoted Bill W., saying, "To server AA is to live".

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She reviewed new literature releases.

Including ASL Big Book and 12&12. Large print "As Bill Sees It" and "Come to Believe". She closed by saying, "A.A. is based on service, and dependent on action". She quoted Bill W., saying, "To server AA is to live".

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The third and final report was given by Ginger B. (class B chair, AA grapevine, Inc.)

She began, "Grapevine is a reflection of contemporary voices of A.A." Bill Wilson commented on the purpose of Grapevine in 1946, saying, "Like the Alcoholics Anonymous movement it is to mirror, there will be but one central purpose: The Grapevine will try to carry the AA message to alcoholics and practice the AA principles in all its affairs."

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After we received our opening statement on Saturday, we broke into committees. I sit on the corrections committee. Our main task was to review the corrections kit and workbook. We took a very close look at both. This next slide shows where the committee did their work –

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Picture of work area

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When committee work was done we got a financial report from Leslie B. the treasurer. I will not get into much detail here. Anyone wanting to see the entire report can request it from me. This slide does show the important numbers. Total contributions of 8.86 M and total costs of 9.26 M. There was a loss of .3 M covered by literature sales as is most often the case. As noted earlier though, contributions were up and we were asked to pass along a huge thank you to the fellowship for that fact.

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One more financial slide with some interesting data regarding on-line contributions and how they have risen from \$87,000 in 2010 to \$1,000,000 in 2019

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Last, the ever popular and present slide with the comparison of the 1935 dollar with today's dollar; or \$18.84. Please, everyone keep this in mind when putting your contributions in the basket, whatever form of basket that may be.

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On Monday we began the committee reports and the work of the conference as a whole body. As I've mentioned before based on the timing of the Conference and the virtual format, I will report back the advisory actions for each committee and what was forwarded to the next conference. Full lists of advisory actions, committee considerations and forwarded items will be posted to our Area web site under the Delegate's Corner. As I typed this these lists were not available yet. As soon as I have them in both English and Spanish I will make them available and inform the Area.

I will now share with you the committee advisory actions and forwarded items.

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### The Agenda Committee

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The Committee –

A. Reviewed suggestions for the theme of the 2021 General Service Conference.

The committee recommended that the theme for the 2021 General Service Conference be: “A.A. in a Time of Change.”

Passed 134/1

B. Review presentation/discussion topic ideas for the 2021 General Service Conference.

The committee recommended that the following be presentation/discussion topics for the 2021 General Service Conference:

Practicing A.A.’s Spiritual Principles in a Changing World:

1. Recovery in a Changing World
2. Unity in a Changing World
3. Service in a Changing World

Passed 128/2

C. Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2021 General Service Conference.

The committee recommended that the following be the workshop topic for the 2021 General Service Conference:

Inform - Communicate

Involve - Act

Inspire – Attract

Passed 126/9

There were no items forwarded to next year’s Conference by this committee.

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### Cooperation with the Professional Community

Cooperation with the Professional Community committee had no recommendations this year and thus nothing to vote on or become advisory actions.



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The committee did forward these items to next year's conference –

1. Discuss progress report on LinkedIn page implementation.
2. Consider a request to create a pamphlet for mental health professionals.
3. Review contents of C.P.C. Kit and Workbook.

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The Corrections committee, the one I sat on, had no recommendations this year and thus nothing to vote on or become advisory actions. We did do an extensive review of the workbook and Corrections kit as I mentioned earlier. You can read more about the details of that work in the committee considerations.

The committee did not forward anything to next year's conference.

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The Finance Committee

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A. Review the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix."

1. Consider a request to revise the pie chart percentages on page 12.
2. Consider draft language related to the "virtual basket."

The committee recommended that the draft language related to the "virtual basket" be included in the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix."

The language reads:

**Q. Some members of our group wanted to pass a "virtual" basket – to collect Seventh Tradition contributions digitally. How could we do this?**

A. A number of groups have utilized digital payment platforms as an adjunct to passing the basket in the conventional sense in order to provide opportunities for cashless contributions. There are different payment platforms to facilitate this service and it is up to the group to determine which one to use. Some groups have found that a smartphone app-based payment platform is the most efficient, seamless and minimally disruptive solution for providing a digital contribution. Experience suggests that the treasurer is a likely choice to handle digital contributions, though some groups add more than one trusted servant to share the responsibilities or create a new service position to inform the group about digital payment options and assist other group members who are interested in contributing this way.

**Passed 128/2**

The committee did not forward anything to next years conference.

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### The Grapevine Committee

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- A. Consider a request to change the name of the Conference Committee on Grapevine to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.

The committee recommended that the name of the Conference Committee on Grapevine be changed to the Conference Committee on Grapevine and La Viña.

**Passed 130/4**

#### **The committee agreed to forward the following to the 71st General Service Conference:**

1. Review progress report on AA Grapevine Workbook revisions.
2. Review progress report on actions taken from the findings of the A.A. Grapevine Fellowship Feedback Survey.
3. Consider a request to develop an A.A. Grapevine pamphlet on how the AA Grapevine can be utilized to carry the A.A. message.

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### The Literature Committee

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- A. Review draft update of the video “Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure.”

The committee recommended that the updated draft video of “Your General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure” be approved.

**Passed 131/2**

- B. Review “A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials” approved in January 2020.

The committee recommended that the “A.A.W.S. Policy on Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials,” approved by A.A.W.S. in January 2020, be approved.

**Passed 120/14**

C. Consider updating the pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic.” The committee recommended that the pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic” be updated to include fresh stories and a new title that is respectful and inclusive.

**Time for discussion on this item ran out as each committee had only 45 minutes. It was automatically forwarded to the 71<sup>st</sup> Conference.**

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**The committee agreed to forward the following to the 71st General Service Conference:**

1. Review proposed “A.A.W.S. Policy on Conversion of Written Conference-approved Literature and Service Material into Video Format.”
2. Consider requests to revise the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*:
  - a. Add pages 3 through 41 of the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” as an appendix in the next printing.
  - b. Revise the first 164 pages.
3. Consider proposals related to possible Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*:
  - a. Develop a Fifth Edition.
  - b. Develop a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* with updated stories and revisions to Appendices III and V.
  - c. Add a proposed addendum to a Fifth Edition foreword of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* at the time it is published.
4. Consider development of a draft Fourth Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos*.

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**The committee agreed to forward the following to the 71st General Service Conference (con’t):**

5. Consider requests to revise the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*:
  - a. To remove the phrase “opposite sex” from paragraph two on page 117 in the chapter “Step Twelve.”
  - b. To reconsider use of the phrase “lustful enough to rape” in paragraph one on page 66 in the chapter “Step Six.”
6. Consider request to add a subtitle to the booklet *Living Sober*.
7. Consider requests to revise text related to open meetings in the pamphlet “The A.A. Group”
8. Consider request to revise text related to self-support in the pamphlet “Frequently Asked Questions About A.A.”
9. Consider revising the pamphlet “Questions & Answers on Sponsorship”:
  - a. Change the suggestion that sponsor and newcomer be of the same sex.

- b. Expand the section on “Service Sponsorship” and retitle the pamphlet to include service sponsorship.
- 10. Consider request to include a G.S.R. preamble in the pamphlet “G.S.R.: Your Group’s Link to A.A. as a Whole.”

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### Policy and Admissions Committee

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- A. Consider a proposed process for approving observers to the U.S./Canada General Service Conference.

The committee recommended that the “Process for Approving Observers to the Conference” be approved.

**Passed 124/4**

- B. Consider implementing electronic voting for trustee elections.

The committee recommended that the General Service Conference implement electronic voting for trustee elections starting in 2021.

NOTE: Should this recommendation become a Conference Advisory Action it may warrant updating of the second sentence in Article 10 of the Conference Charter.

**Passed 124/7**

- C. Consider continuing the review of dates for the General Service Conference with timing and year(s) to review as requested by the general manager.

The committee recommended that the review of Conference dates be changed to consider dates for the General Service Conference with timing and year(s) to review as requested by the general manager.

**Passed 123/8**

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**The committee agreed to forward the following to the 71st General Service Conference:**

1. Review G.S.O. general manager's report regarding General Service Conference site selection.
2. Consider a proposed process for how a Conference committee could review, discuss and act on proposed agenda items not forwarded to a Conference committee.
3. Review the Floor Action process.

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#### PUBLIC INFORMATION

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- A. Discuss a request to adjust all A.A.W.S. video titles for search engine optimization (SEO).

The committee recommended that all A.A.W.S video titles be adjusted for search engine optimization (SEO).

**Passed 131/1**

The committee did not forward anything to next years conference.

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## REPORT & CHARTER

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A. Consider amending a sentence in Article 4 of the current Conference Charter.

The committee recommended that the sentence in Article 4 of the current Conference Charter which currently reads:

It will be further understood, regardless of the legal prerogatives of the General Service Board, as a matter of tradition, that a three-quarters vote of all Conference members may bring about a reorganization of the General Service Board and the directors and staff members of its corporate services, if or when such reorganization is deemed essential.

Be amended to read:

It will be further understood, regardless of the legal prerogatives of the General Service Board, as a matter of tradition, that a three-quarters vote of all Conference members **participating in the vote** may bring about a reorganization of the General Service Board and the directors and staff members of its corporate services, if or when such reorganization is deemed essential.

**Passed 122/11**

**Minority was heard and there was a motion to reconsider – Passed 76/58**

**Motion to recommit to trustees committee – Failed 46/87**

**During debate, call the question – Passed 118/15**

**Recommendation - Passed on the second vote 96/33**

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The committee agreed to forward the following to the 71st General Service Conference:

1. Discuss General Service Conference Final Report.
2. Discuss A.A. Directories (Canada, Eastern U.S. and Western U.S.)

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## TREATMENT & ACCESSIBILITIES

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- A. Discuss the report on the review of materials related to Bridging the Gap activities.

The committee recommended that the pamphlet “Bridging the Gap” be updated for currency and inclusion to reach a broader scope of treatment settings about temporary contact services, and that a progress report or draft be brought to the 2021 Conference Committee on Treatment and Accessibilities.

**Passed 122/12**

The committee did not forward anything to next years conference.

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## TRUSTEES

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

The committee recommended that the slate of *trustees* of the General Service Board [presented by the Trustees committee] be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in May 2020 following presentation at the 2020 General Service Conference.

**Passed 130/3**

The committee recommended that the slate of *officers* of the General Service Board [presented by the Trustees committee] be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the General Service Board in May 2020 following presentation at the 2020 General Service Conference.

**Passed 133/1**

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

The committee recommended that the slate of directors, which excludes John W., be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the A.A. World Services Corporate Board in May 2020 following presentation at the 2020 General Service Conference.

**Ruled out of order by the Chair as the committee removed one of the names.**

C. Review slate of directors of AA Grapevine, Inc.

The committee recommended that the slate of directors be elected at the annual meeting of the members of the AA Grapevine Corporate Board in May 2020 following presentation at the 2020 General Service Conference.

**Passed 125/6**

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**The committee agreed to forward the following to the 71st General Service Conference:**

1. Consider the revised “Procedures for a Partial or Complete Reorganization of the General Service Board, the A.A.W.S. or AA Grapevine Boards.”
  - The Conference Committee on Trustees agreed to include a memo for the 71st General Service Conference proposing consideration of alternate trustees.

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## **ARCHIVES**

The Archives committee had no recommendations this year and thus nothing to vote on or become advisory actions.

The committee only forwarded reviewing the Archives Workbook to the 71st General Service Conference.

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## **INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION/REGIONAL FORUMS**

The International Convention/Regional Forums committee had no recommendations this year and thus nothing to vote on or become advisory actions.

The committee did not forward anything to next years conference.



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## **FLOOR ACTIONS**

After taking a well needed break Tuesday afternoon, we began work on the floor actions. The floor action process was different for this virtual shortened conference. It went like this. A floor action was introduced (we had 7). The chair would ask if there was a motion to “decline to consider”. In every instance there was. If the motion to “decline” passed by 2/3, the floor action died. If the “decline” motion failed, the floor action would automatically be forwarded to the 71<sup>st</sup> Conference.

With that in mind, this is what happened.

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**#1** It was recommended that:

The Finance Committee expand item #2 that will be forwarded to the 71st Conference to include the proposal to revise the pie chart percentages, in order to emphasize more clearly that any percentages included in the pamphlet are only suggestions and examples, not recommendations.

**Decline to consider Failed 78/52. Item forwarded**

**#2** It was recommended that:

Since many agenda items from the shortened 70th Virtual General Service Conference will be forwarded to the 71st General Service Conference in 2021, the 71st General Service Conference Committee on Trustees consider the extension of the 71st General Service Conference by as many as three working days and that consideration be offered regardless of whether the 71st General Service Conference is face-to-face or held digitally.

**Declined to consider Passed 103/26. Item dies**

**#3** It was recommended that:

The General Service Conference consider developing a PSA about Alcoholic Anonymous geared toward minorities.

**Decline to consider Failed 52/81. Item forwarded**

**#4** It was recommended that:

The 70th General Service Conference approve the slate of directors for A.A. World Services, Inc. as originally submitted.

**Decline to consider Failed 87/46. Item forwarded**

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**#5** It was recommended that:

The pamphlet “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic” be updated to include fresh stories and a new title that is respectful and inclusive.

**Decline to consider Failed 34/95. Item forwarded**

**#6** It was recommended that:

The slate of directors of A.A. World Services, Inc., as submitted by the Conference Committee on Trustees, be approved.

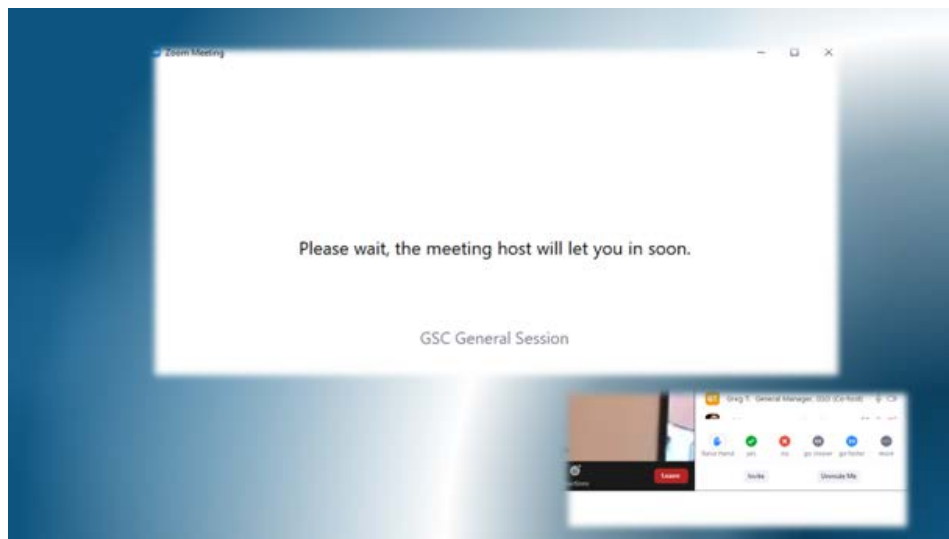
**Decline to consider Failed 72/59. Item forwarded**

**#7** It was recommended that:

The launch of Google AdWords Grants by the General Service Office be halted until the 71st General Service Conference convenes and approves that launch, and that the “Ad Hoc Committee Progress Report - Google Grants and the 7th Tradition,” from the trustees’ Finance Committee, dated March 30, 2020, be immediately released to all members of the 70th General Service Conference.

**Decline to consider Failed 65/60. Item forwarded**

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Tuesday evening, after the floor actions had been completed we were tired. It was a long 4 days with a lot of time sent in front of our computers. I know I was ready to call it a night, but there was one last item. Michele G. had to wrap up the conference with her farewell remarks. She thanked us all for our work and spoke of how we all learned much about the virtual process.

Usually, there are goodbyes from the second year delegates. This year, we were given the opportunity to record a goodbye to be available for viewing later. It wasn't the same as the microphone goodbyes last year by the panel 68 Delegates, but it was the best we could do.

After a long last day it was time to leave the Zoom meeting of the Conference for the last time. I found myself with mixed emotions. I was glad the day was over, but sad for the end of our conference journey. On the screen, I clicked “leave meeting”...and it was gone.

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As I did last year I will close with this. I want to thank you all for my life today and for this incredible experience. For helping me stay sober and giving me the opportunity to serve this miraculous fellowship. Being your Delegate and serving Area 93 and A.A. has changed my life. I am forever grateful and I wish love, health, and safety to you all!

With Love and Service,  
Your Delegate, Jeff