

The past trustees from the Pacific region alright they are Tommy, Marita R., Kathy F., David N., Ginger R., Nancy H., Paul C., Greg M., and Ruth J. Today our reader is, Alexandria.

Um they are TomTom H Marita R Kathy F David N ginger R Nancy Good morning everyone my name is Alex I'm an alcoholic I'm from area 03 and at the DCM 4 the new Spanish district 17 in Arizona at leadership in a ever a vital need good leadership originates plans policies and ideas for the improvement of our fellowship and its services but in new and important matters it will nevertheless consult widely before taking decisions and actions good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody anywhere consequently good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better and it will give credit to the source good leadership why am I having trouble with this never passes the book once assured that it has or can obtain sufficient general backing it freely takes decisions and puts them into action for with provided of course that such actions be within the framework of its defined authority and responsibility a political is an individual who is forever trying to get the people what they want a statesman is an individual who can carefully discriminate when and when not to do this he recognizes that even large majorities when badly disturbed or uninformed can once in a while be dead wrong when such an occasional situation arises and something very vital is at stake it is always the duty of leadership even when an A small minority to take a stand against a storm using its every ability of authority and persuasion to effect a change nothing however can be more fatal to leadership than opposition for opposition sake it never can be let's have it our way or no way at all this sort of opposition is often powered by a visionless pride or gripe that makes us wants to block something or somebody then there is the opposition that casts its vote saying no we don't like it no real reasons are ever given this won't do when called upon leadership must always give its reasons and good ones then too a leader must realize that even very prideful or angry people can sometimes be dead right when the calm and the more humble are quite mistaken these points are practical illustrations of the kinds of careful discrimination and soul searching that true leadership must always strive to exercise from the 12 concepts for World Service concept time leadership in a evera vital need thank you our timer for this session is Stan Jay Aloha my name is Sanjay from area 18 District 1 where I currently serve as the district literature chair for this session each of the presenters will give an 11 minute presentation the green light comes on immediately after the presenter introduces themselves the yellow caution light comes on at 9 minutes and 30 seconds and read and the red light ends the presentation if the red light turns on we will thank the speaker with a warm applause the presentation is being interpreted at the time allowed will be doubled to 16 minutes with the yellow light at 14 minutes sharing from the floor microphones will be time to two minutes the O light comes on at 90 seconds and the red light at 2 minutes followed by loving applause if the speaker is being interpreted the time allowed will be doubled to 4 minutes or no to 22 minutes with the yellow light coming on at 3 minutes thank you hey thank you so let's get to it our first trustee is Tom H I'm an alcoholic and my name is Tom um I was recently asked to speak about something that is forward thinking something that would be helpful in your journey moving forward I was asked to think about bill's vision and his leadership

essay not necessarily about planning for A's future but what we could be doing today to keep a healthy growing organization the words healthy and growing stood out to me so I focused mostly on those two words in the forward to our first edition it states we are more than 100 men and women and the forward to our second edition in 1955 it states membership is far above 150,000 in the forward to our third edition in 1976 it states worldwide membership of a was conservatively estimated at more than 1,000,000 and the forward to our 4th edition in 2001 it states worldwide membership has just about doubled to an estimated 2 million or more what will the forward to the 5th edition say about our membership numbers we all know that our estimated membership numbers have not changed much if at all since the 4th edition we aren't growing even though the worldwide estimate of Alcoholics is nearly 300 million if we aren't growing are we healthy Bob Pearson served as director on both a WS and a Grapevine as a general service trustee and as our general manager of GSO in 1986 his 1986 rotation talk Bob shared his vision for A's future and I quote I have no truck with those bleeding deacons who decry every change and view the state of the fellowship with pessimism and alarm On the contrary from my nearly quarter century's perspective I see Alcoholics Anonymous as a larger healthier more dynamic faster growing more global more service minded more back to basics and more spiritual by far than when I came through the doors of my first meeting in Greenwich CT just one year after the famous Long Beach convention a has flourished beyond the wildest dreams of founding members though perhaps not of bill himself for he was truly visionary I echo those who feel that if this fellowship ever falters or fails it will not be because of any outside cause no it will not be because of treatment centers or professionals in the field or non-conference approved literature or young people or the duly addicted or even the druggies trying to come to our closed meetings if we stick to our tradition close to our traditions and our concepts and our warranties and if we keep an open mind and an open heart we can deal with these and any other problems that we have or will ever have if we ever falter or fail it will simply be because of us it will be because we can't control our egos not get along well enough with each other it will be because we have too much fear and rigidity and not enough trust and common sense I mentioned rigidity if you were to ask me what is the greatest danger facing Alcoholics Anonymous today I would have to answer the growing rigidity that is so apparent to me and many others the increasing demand for absolute answers to nitpicking questions pressure for GSO to enforce our traditions screening Alcoholics at closed meetings prohibiting non-conference approved literature banning books laying more and more rules on our groups and members there is an area one of the 93 areas that within a one year. Had their delegate elect submit his resignation had its area secretary submit their resignation ,had a long time member who served multiple positions in the area removed their name from the open secretary position, and depending on who you talked to nearly ran off the area treasurer. Do you know not a single pass delegate from this area wrote a letter of petition to the area committee. Not a single pass delegate from this area made a comment on social media expressing their concern the past delegates from this area did not come to the area assembly each time it met to make a censure motion. Not a single member from the area created a Facebook page to discuss these resignations. Can you imagine as an area delegate area chair or area committee if the past delegates from your area demanded answers for all these resignations and came to each of your assemblies wanting to censure the area committee. il past trusted servants from your area behaved in this manner I am not sure most areas would consider their area healthy or able to do the lifesaving work of AA in fact, I'm not sure most areas would survive in this scenario I want to spend a moment on censure and reorganization. There has been a censure reorganization motion either discussed in committee or presented at the general service conference six times in our history four of them in the last four years. Not one of the censure motions has passed the last one receiving less than 10 votes. Does it feel like the like the motion to censure or reorganize the board has failed to me it does not it feels as if the board has been censured. Does this feel healthy is this what helps the growth of the fellowship how does this further the lifesaving message of Alcoholics

Anonymous? Further the lifesaving message of Alcoholics Anonymous we know that the forward to the 5th edition will not state a growth in A's membership since 2001 I fear if we don't get back to our mission of furthering A's message there won't be a need for a forward to the 6th edition a few paragraphs from Bill's leadership essay I know some was already read earlier quote leadership is often called upon to face heavy and sometimes long continued criticism this is an acid test there are always the constructive critics our friends indeed we need never fail to give them a careful hearing we should be willing to let them modify our opinions or change them completely often too we shall have to disagree and then stand fast without losing their friendship then there are those who we like to call are destructive critics they power drive they are political hers they make accusations maybe they are violent malicious they pitch gobs of rumor gossip and general scuttlebutt to meet their ends all for the good of AA of course but in a we have at last learned that these folks who may be a trifle sicker than the rest of us need not to be really destructive at all depending very much on how we relate ourselves to them to begin with we ought to listen carefully to what they say sometimes they are telling the whole truth at other times a little truth more often though they are just rationalizing themselves into nonsense if we are within range the whole truth the half-truth or no truth at all can prove equally unpleasant to us This is why we have to listen so carefully if they have got the whole truth or even a little truth then we would better thank them and get on with our respective inventories admitting we were wrong if it is nonsense we can ignore it or we can lay all the cards on the table and try to persuade them failing this we can be sorry they are too sick to listen and we can try to forget the whole business there are few better means of self-service survey and of developing genuine patients than the workouts these usually well-meaning but erratic brother members afford us this is always a large order and we shall sometimes fail to make good on it ourselves but we must keep trying End Quote and concept three Bill talks about ultimate authority and delegated responsibility and goes on to say the right a solution for this problem is to be found however in the latter part of tradition 2 which provides for trusted servants this really means we ought to trust our responsible leaders to decide within the understood framework of their duties how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each problem or situation as it arises this sort of leadership discretion should be the essence of the right of decision and I am certain that we need not have the slightest fear of granting this indispensable privilege at nearly every level of World Service there will always be plenty of ultimate authority to correct inefficiency ineffectiveness or abuse if the conference does not function well the groups can send in better delegates if the trustees get badly out of line the conference can censure them or even reorganize them if the headquarters goes sour the trustees can elect better directors and hire better help these remedies are ample and direct but so for long as our service our World Service functions reasonably well there should always be charity for occasional mistakes then the then trust must be our watchword otherwise we shall end up leaderless End Quote Bill closes the concept three essay with our entire a program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust we trust God we trust A and we trust each other therefore we cannot do less than trust our leaders and service the right of decision that we offer them is not only a practical means by which they may act and lead effectively but it also it is also the symbol of our implicit confidence thank you.

Thank you, Tom.

Thank you I'm back Aloha, PRAASA. My name is Marita and I am an alcoholic and like time I'm a first year passed trustee new to this panel but I've been on like Tom I live in this region so I've been watching this panel the whole time I've been here and I learned many things one of the first things I learned about this panel is they're given a topic the next thing I learned is most of them only ignore the topic, I learned that they tell you ahead of time how many minutes you have 7, and then as you arrive on the stage they go ohh you have 11, I won't take up 11 minutes. I want to address the topic just for a second so that I can check the box and feel like I've done everything I'm supposed to do before I would do what I want to do not an old pattern you might recognize of mine but the problem is I have to look it up on my phone and I'm sure I'm going to drop the cane in the process. With this our topic is supposed to be finding common ground you know I I think about common ground and I you know what I think about is surviving on that ship you know we're the survivors that made it through alcohol to Alcoholics Anonymous we were the drowning we have a common peril I don't have any other common ground with most of you know we have different backgrounds different religions different everything's and so it's really easy for me to slide into other ring now and now my peeps because I don't understand them and so I really truly believe that our singleness of purpose is the most important thing we have that's what drives our unity that's what gives us our common ground every time we get off that I think we get lost our region has a tendency to speak truth a lot sometimes appreciated and sometimes not but I have to tell you that same Jackie my sponsor when I became a past delegate what they taught delegates as they rotated was OK now your job is to envision yourself sitting on a back porch and rocking and the assembly is playing in the yard and they're going to get into scrapes and they're going to get bumped knees and they're going to hurt feelings and you go ohh honey I'm so sorry it'll be OK kind of what Tom said but he said it with bill's words so it sounded much better but it that was the idea and then she's passed trusting and she said however if they run into the street you'd be the first one out there screaming at him to tell him get back in the yard where they belong and so I think that's part of the responsibility of being a past is to protect us when we don't realize we might be making an error and then what happens is we say our piece and then we go back to sitting on the rocking chair the other thing my sponsor did when she came up her very first year is you know who I am you've seen me through all my service positions if I have something else to say I'll come back up here but until then I won't and she never came up to the podium again that may be hey I'm here to tell you but I think I can be too opinionated that I'll probably show up next year and have something to say The last thing I want to talk about well two things one is to our Spanish speakers God I love our Spanish speakers I look at the way they do general service where they meet every week so they can have concept studies and they all get together and visit all the groups that don't have GSR's so they're included and tell them what's going on and you know over the years I've realized that is really good theory when like a bunch of people show up you're meeting every week and you don't have time to talk because they're all talking about we're really glad to see you and we wish you Jen it's easier to send GSR than have all these people show up my Spanish speakers have taught me a lot about a so I'm really sorry that fry didn't work out it's a it's a program that the general service board has been using we tried it a form we tried it the international and got it got high praise when I was in area secretary we tried to translate this was way back when the dinosaurs roamed and we tried to translate minutes into Spanish for the first time I don't speak Spanish my son was a high school Spanish student and he used to take it to his teacher and they would correct the minutes and that's how we got Spanish minutes hey it worked we didn't care and so after six months of doing minutes they asked me what's the name of our cat excuse me and they're so polite about it you know they're so kind they don't want to cause any stir they just wanted to be able to report to the groups the name of the cat I said I don't know what you're talking about they said yeah every month you collect money food for the cat food Kitty does not translate quite well like we thought it

would but the point of the story is they were so grateful for any assistance they were willing to take what we gave them what I'm proud of is the Spanish speakers in the Pacific region have had interpretation at all our meetings since the early 2000s it's in our guidelines that they have to have it for processing and I am so proud of them that they're now so used to being our equal partner that they'll complain Hallelujah, I can't wait till we have interpretations in five languages here. And now the last thing I want to talk about is, George Dorsey He has been our closer up here for years. I have thought about him so often. When I was in new GSR he would walk the back of the room with that cigar you know he wasn't smoking it just chewing it and he'd be using it to point at people and you know he just had lots of things he wanted to teach and he and Ruth used to scare the daylights out of me you know they had every possible job there was an Alcoholics Anonymous and they were so damn competent Oh my God I don't want them to know my name I will miss him dearly he went from being scary George in the back of the room that I avoided to an extremely good friend and so I just think we need to talk and keep saying his name so he's still here thank you.

Alright thank you Marita. Our next past delegate is Kathy F Jennifer was my host in Western Washington recently and she's awesome thank you Aloha hi I'm Kathy I'm an alcoholic hi everyone um it's so nice not to be first and you know I get so nervous for this because I still am you know driven by self-centered fear sometimes you know I'm sure you can't relate and I thought man if I prepare I might not be so scared so I prepared a little bit this time I served as the Pacific regional trustee from 2018 to 2022 and during that time I had the honor of chairing the Grapevine board as well my home group is free at last in Tucson there's a bunch of us here another one on on the diet is um we are currently reading we're literature group and we're currently reading the plain language big book uh we're almost through with it and it has been really wonderful people from other meetings have come and we've had so many comments about you know and these are people with sponsors who've had you know the book explained but we've had so many comments about how wonderful it is just to understand and get a different you know view and to just be able to read it and understand it for the first time um thank you Hawaii for hosting process it has been the presentation the presenters have been amazing um they really were prepared and I heard some really great things so I hope you've all had a great time it's actually it's really hard to be up here without George you know I think that's what for me before I came up I always look forward to I've never been to a process where George was not on this past trustees panel and I have to you know they have the caution tape up here but one process George fell off the stage and that wasn't that long ago I mean it might have been I don't know how long ago it was but I ran over there and I said and he popped up and I said are you OK and he said with some very good at falling and he was fine I mean that's a long way so but the last time I spoke with George was on October 4th of this year it was his 64th a birthday and he was it was on a Saturday and he was out running errands um doing Saturday chores and he was very jovial but you know this past six months or so every conversation that I had with George he was really looking forward to his 100th birthday so he was like ohh 64 that's nothing that's not even like you know one of the big ones but you know so he made it to 98 1/2 and so um George did so much for Alcoholics Anonymous he served on our general service board he served as areas delegates he served as the general manager of our office but mostly I think for the 64 years he carried the message to thousands of Alcoholics and for that I'm super grateful he truly leaves a legacy of service in his wake he deeply cared about A and each one of us I spoke with them often but I always had to be prepared because George had a lot to say especially one-on-one because one thing I learned about George um and try to you know be like him when I'm up here is that George he did have a lot to say and sometimes he was deeply concerned and just ticked off at some of the things he saw but when he got up here he was always respectful and loving and kind he got his point across by still being respectful and so I really appreciate that and

you know when I was on the board I mean we didn't always agree about everything and he was a safe place to disagree with but no matter how our conversations went we always ended with I love you and I sure do miss him this past year has been very tough year from my husband and I he has had a very aggressive cancer he's in remission now and here and we are you know glad to be in Hawaii umm but you know a has taught the two of us what true partnership is and has helped us get through each and every day we you know because of Alcoholics Anonymous we have good relations with our family our biological family and we have so much support um in the a community and so we just appreciate everyone's that reached out to us or thought of us during this time so now I want to talk about what I really want to talk about is it time is time up so I'm going to talk a little bit about a finances and I'm going to go back a bit because I think like me we forget what we've been through in this past six years um as you know during and after the pandemic prices rose tremendously uh many of a is publishing vendors shut down and paper and printing them through the roof I was serving on the Grapevine board at the time we had to find new vendors because they could not keep their doors open um book sales plummeted as you know we forget quickly but all the in person meetings shut down inner group shut down book sales plummeted and um and we were in a real bind we had to take a drawdown I think we took in a short period of time \$4 million from our pregnant reserve so that we could carry the message to the soul suffering alcoholic pay our bills pay our special workers and contributions grew during that time they grew quite a bit we had record contributions they went up and then they leveled out and they've kind of come down a little bit since then but and prices have begun to slow so all that is good but the one thing that has plummeted is the percentage of groups that contribute to those that serve us that we keep for the services that we can do in our groups so prices went up contributions went up and the group's percentage just plummeted 13 years ago I was a delegate and the percentage of groups that made contributions was 42% and I remember just thinking Oh my God that that is concerning you know and so as a delegate I talked a lot about that with her groups in our area today they are at 29% of the groups that are contributing um that's a decrease of 13% in 10 years and if this is true for the general service board contributions it's also true for our intergroups our districts and our areas the decreases for many different reasons we all have our reasons right but as you can see um we're not keeping up I know that way back I served on the board during the pandemic and I know that way back we were cutting things we stopped sending box 459 out which saves almost a half \$1,000,000 a year there was so many things but I mean we're cutting getting cutting services and our staff members um work around the clock as it is so um contributions in the basket and passed on to the entities below the group so the evidence so when we make contributions in the basket and pass those on to the entities that serve us we are exercising our final responsibility in concept one we learned about the group's ultimate authority and final responsibility and we all love our authority I hear about it constantly in workshops and beyond what the authority that we all have but I'm not hearing much about our responsibility and one of my responsibilities as a member is to make sure that the services that we can't do at the group level are funded and to build the reserves for the next storm in concept one bill says these vital agent if these vital agencies were to collapse or bogged down our unity within and the carrying the message without would suffer serious and perhaps irreparable damage again contributions are evidence of our group's growing up and exercising our final responsibility I'd like to take a minute uh with some words from George because I think he said it very well these are from a talk he gave in Baltimore when he was the general manager at the general service office his talk was on tradition 78 and 9 George said but now I do want to get to the heart of the matter maybe the heart and soul of the matter and that is since I first started going to AA meetings the basket the process of the basket has been something that I have just been in awe of it has been

said that the basket is where money and spirituality come together in A and this process of passing the basket at a meeting and what goes on thereafter is a totally spiritual process and don't red light George this is the man and I'm talking georgio's word the process of passing the basket and what follows has been part of my whole a life he goes on to say the process continues at the group level when the treasurer counts the money and takes care of the group expenses then if there is any left over the group decides who it should go to in terms of supporting a services this is a continuation of the spiritual process and shows an understanding on the part of the group and a feeling that they want to be part of Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole they are indeed transactions that are totally spiritual my last sentence he goes on to quote and outside auditor um that Alcoholics Anonymous contracted for over 40 years bud Flanagan bud referred to contributions as the mortar that holds the fellowship of AA together and they are vital from the standpoint of unity thank you thank you thank you Kathy our next past trustee is David N.

Thank you, Aloha PRAASA I'm an alcoholic my name is David I served as a director on the a world services board from 2013 to 2021 and for the last four years of that I've simultaneously served as a general service trustee on the general service board excuse me I got like to thank Bob and the project committee for inviting me to speak today like others have said before me it feels very odd to be on a past trustees panel without George being present I am positive though that he is watching us and wishing he was here with us so that he could gently tell us how to do it right it was also mentioned that we initially were told we have 7 minutes but now I have 11 I planned for 7 minutes so I'm going to give you about 7 minutes George you can have whatever I don't use lately I've been thinking about many of the changes that a has gone through over the last several years I think there could be value in reviewing those changes and the impacts that they have had on our fellowship and somehow wherever you are I may be able to bring this around to the theme of this process finding common ground which was also our topic for this panel and as a heads up many of my thoughts have been mirrored in previous presentations this weekend my day job used to be healthcare information technology management it's it doesn't it sounds bigger than it really is in 1997 I was on a project team that introduced e-mail and browser based Internet access to our entire healthcare system only 29 years ago back then the leading browser was Netscape anybody remember that yeah some OK could we have imagined then how deeply the Internet would become part of our global infrastructure I certainly did not the Internet has become the primary source for communication and information for all of us and that includes professionals most professionals only get their journals their drug information sheets online today as a result the conference responded by approving a presence on the professional platform LinkedIn later we created a presence on Instagram a very popular social media platform for communication and sharing the Internet has also become the world's financial and purchasing infrastructure as well the advent of Amazon and other similar companies has changed consumers expectations about purchasing and delivery AA has responded by allowing online literature purchases and online contributions as you all know the Internet also played a huge role in how we responded to the pandemic to this day I am amazed by and grateful for how our fellowship responded to all of us being confined in our own homes through a grassroots effort that arose completely organically the fellowship went online almost overnight people were able to get and stay sober as a result and at a time when from what I understand alcohol sales went through the roof I suspect some new members and potential members were created during that time the existence of online groups was an incredible boon for the recovery of all of us but there have been downsides also as Kathy just discussed there was a huge impact on contributions and literature sales and we're still dealing with some of the after effects of that time I understand that there has been a significant decline in literacy in this country the conference responded with the plain language big book now this change has been controversial within the fellowship however I'd like us to keep in mind that

prisons remote communities and those who have reading difficulties really like the plain language big book they are being well served and we are more efficiently we are more efficiently reaching the still suffering alcoholic as a result my overall point is that as a fellowship we respond appropriately to outside issues when we need to our goal is always how can we more effectively carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic as many have talked about in previous presentations this weekend outside issues do impact us and outside issues can also be present in our meetings themselves do we ignore these issues or do we come to a group conscience about some solution through loving debate discussion and vote at our business meetings it's my opinion and my opinion only and I'm usually very clear about letting you know when it's my opinion my opinion that Bill's biggest fear that led to the creation of Tradition Ten was that we would follow the paths of the Washingtonians excuse me that is a fellowship we would take on public positions on outside issues and thus lose sight of our primary purpose we would fade away just as the Washingtonians did I'm not sure that his intent was that we should ignore outside issues when they arise in our groups and service entities but mostly that we not take public positions on those outside issues my hope would be that someday we could find common ground around acceptance that AHA does and will change in response to outside issues that impact us in my opinion the AA that Bill and Bob had in the 30s would be lost in today's world And we can remember that it changed that if a change we make does not work or isn't effective we can drop it no conference action is binding on the next conference and let's remember we've survived a lot already we argued passionately about whether the GSO was going to sell sobriety chips remember the fights over smoking and non-smoking meetings the printer's manuscript controversy has to some extent faded away to some extent with all of that we're still here we are still vibrant and we are still serving society let's not ignore outside issues let's not fear change so long as it is based on our primary purpose let's embrace it find common ground in acceptance of it and continue to carry the message to the Alcoholics who still suffer and let's always remember Thumpers words to Bambi if you can't say something nice don't say nothing at all love intolerance y'all love intolerance thank you all very much alright thank you David uh our next past trustee is Ginger R Aloha friends I'm Ginger and I am an alcoholic and it's always a privilege to be up here and these it gets just a little bit easier each time but I'm so happy to be here and be with all of you and I was able to have one of my sponsors come along this time and we got to spend a lot of time together so thank you to the committee thank you to all of our presenters for such a wonderful process here today I actually am going to talk about our theme finding common ground and what I'm going to talk about finding common ground is the God of our understanding I was raised Methodist and so when I came to a I had no issue with God um I had a very spiritual experience when a boss did an intervention and asked if I was an alcoholic I said yes and started to cry he asked if I was willing to do something about it and I said yes he had already arranged for me to go to treatment before I left he made me go tell all my staff where I was going it's a little lesson in humility um but over the years I've become really attuned to hearing so much about God in meetings I'm going to tell you a little bit about my service history and that will help you understand part of where I'm coming from I was a non-trustee I was a panel 48 delegate from Washington state east area 92 umm which was a really long time ago um and then I was a non-trustee director from 2007 to 2011 on the Grapevine board then I became a general service trustee from 2017 to 2021 also Grapevine board and on the general service board so I spent eight years on the Grapevine board so when I was in one trustee director we serve on various committees trustees committees from on the general service structure and I was on the literature committee and asked to chair a little subcommittee because it had a request to produce a pamphlet for the atheists and agnostics so this was you know this was a long time ago and I read the background material and there was one letter in there that so struck me it opened my mind to things I had never considered um you know it was an atheist wrote

this I'm not going to share exactly what it was but I still remember that and having that ohh my gosh how does that work the pamphlet went to the conference and was voted down I think it went to the conference a few more times over the years and was never approved for a very long time but as I go forward today as a past delegate past trustee um I am focusing today on my work at the you know my responsibilities at the very most basic level especially in my Home group uh they don't all know what my history is what they do know is when I chair meetings I usually have something to speak their thought or something controversial to Sharon because I think one of my responsibilities it for me is to have people open up to awareness of all of our diversity and um we don't always sit in our meetings and think about that all right my Home group is women and gratitude in Mesa AZ we have about 4030 to 40 women that come every Tuesday and we have at least 20 in our group conscience meetings so we're very involved and so I brought this up as one of the topics um and I used a Grapevine article several actually but the one in particular is and you can go to the archives and find it is a for Christians only well that brought up a few things because everybody's talking about their God and you know um one of the one of the women I kind of felt an affinity for is an atheist and she's expressed that openly and we didn't always have that of different ideas of our higher power or no higher power you know for me to think that they have to have a higher power to be sober it's ridiculous for me to think that you know they have to have what I have I I have changed over the years in my thinking I have a higher power that I cannot explain but it is not a Christian higher power and I'm fine with all those who have any belief but I think we ought to talk about it um because I know for many years I've known atheists who never would say that they were so I've been asked I I've done um chairing an online meeting I've been asked to do this it's I don't know where it is you know it's virtual it's called recovery at the resort and you put together a panel of about four or five people and bring up a topic and so this is the topic been bringing forward to that meeting and I think it's on the 15th of March ohh that's this month now and the woman who's the atheist is going to be on the panel I have another I have a sponsee that has a very different spiritual program I'll have one on there who is very religious Christian you know so we'll have that mix and we'll talk about how we stay sober with whatever we believe and I I'm pretty sure that everybody doesn't think about these things all the time and I like to think about them but you know and to bring a Grapevine article you know almost actually says to the group ohh there's another source it's just not ginger thinking this OK um and I like to use Grapevine articles a lot of course after eight years on the Grapevine board you know you'd expect that I would so uh that's kind of where I am on that so where I find myself in my sobriety these days and um Wednesday will be my 39th sobriety anniversary I'm leaving here today for to Kauai to meet my husband and I will be at a morning 7:00 AM meeting on Wednesday in Kauai so you know what a wonderful blessing to have that to look forward to so one of the I really think one of my purposes or responsibility is to bring a members to open their minds to think to see differences that they may not see I mean basically my Home group is a bunch of white women from age 18 2 I think there's somebody that's 80 but um I'm close I'm close is to be a teacher a mentor um to help people learn their way and that's kind of how I think we build leaders is to expose people to different ideas and so thank you so much for being here today I'm allowing me to share mahalo hey thank you ginger our next past trustee is Nancy H Aloha I feel I can say that today because my dear friend Scott lent me an Aloha shirt a kind gesture to a comma so I could feel that I was somehow honoring this beautiful place and all of you who have worked so hard to bring us this process it really has been a great process the presenters have all done spectacular jobs I too what ohh my name is Nancy Haynes I'm an alcoholic I am of course a past trustee because otherwise I would have crashed this this table much like Marita I knew Ruth and George from the time I got sober but when I say I knew I mean I recognized who they were I certainly didn't speak to them for years and George especially um I come out of California and N coastal so I especially knew a lot about George and there was a time

when I was at DCM which meant I was probably maybe three years sober maybe not um and there was a subcommittee and the members of this subcommittee were me and more guys George the alternate delegate and two older men with I swear 100 year sobriety each and they were all much taller than I was well not so much George especially if I wore heels but the other ones were quite large so we hold our first meeting at the assembly where we were appointed and George said immediately OK I think Nancy should be our chair I was petrified I spent hours creating agendas I of course also had to take the minutes because none of them would and we would meet Georgia's house every few weeks and sit at the dining room table and I would attempt to bring some order to the proceedings completely it didn't work at all and I think we ended up when we submitted our report there was the one I wrote on behalf of the committee and there were the four dissenting opinions and that was my introduction to George and shortly thereafter not through no fault of my own he went to New York to become the general manager so I didn't see him again for a while but my last memory of George I'm so happy I have is I had lunch with him the day before his 98th birthday and 1st I had to go to his house because I had not met his current dog and George felt this was quite a failing on my part but I'm not in New York a lot so it was hot so I came and met Trey, who did not seem interested particularly me and then we went out to lunch and we had a three hour lunch that means I ate lunch and George talked to me for three hours explain things I needed to know um and I treasured that memory and the next day was his 98th birthday and he was going off to Maui and I found out a couple weeks later he'd decided 98 was close enough to 100 that he would tell people he was really 99 so we could celebrate 100 for two years in a row now that made sense to me because I come from a family where my grandmother who looked really good for her age lied about cut off 10 to 15 years easily and then thought wait if I look this good for my fake age I'm going to tell people my real age only she didn't she went up five years so she went from 65 to 85 on her next birthday and I just thought that's what old people did um I didn't know I'm thinking of doing that but I forgot to lie about the 15 years before so it won't be nearly as impressive the theme of this that we were told finding common ground I really like and I want to um I want to say how extremely that we don't have to find common ground how lucky we are that as such a large group of people we have the extremely valuable lovely gift of being sober Alcoholics and that to me is the most common ground you could possibly have I mean I don't care about size shape age gender if I meet another sober alcoholic we meet we meet right away it isn't it isn't like other relationships and to have the privilege of being in a room a giant room of sober Alcoholics is stunning to me and in fact this is my 35th process I had to miss a couple and I will tell you when I I was also a piano 49 delegate I when I got to the conference I was sort of disappointed because I was used to going from my Home group to my sub district to my district to my area and area 6 is the big area and then I went back to this little room and I thought ohh but of course inside that little room are all the people we were there to represent so it's quite large and the other thing I wanted to read is umm I even printed it out so I could correctly quote it's from the 12 steps and 12 traditions page 77 step 8 learning how to live in the greatest peace partnership and brotherhood with all men women of whatever description is a moving and fascinating adventure and I think that's been the whole story of my life in a a moving and fascinating adventure and for those of you who how many are here at their first process ohh OK welcome and I will tell you if you are at all confused and my first process I do not understand one single word one person said except Ruth who was the dinner speaker so I have always listened to what Ruth says because she's always if I can't understand anybody else I can figure out what Ruth is saying but if you are confused and overloaded and thinking you have to go home and sleep for 36 hours to clear your mind which was my state come back come back the next year and the next year because it isn't there's tremendous information available there's tremendous um things to learn things to do but most importantly to me at this certainly at this stage there are the people you meet your lifelong friends and much as I am always happy to be in a

room full of Alcoholics this is especially dear to me and um there are there are people that I see once a year that we run up and hug ohh and I have to say if like I you have slightly faltering eyesight ginger who has been my friend for years I saw a woman who looked like ginger and I ran up and hugged her only she was too polite to say I don't know who you are and I'm not ginger so it's good to look for a badge in the name tag before you get caught up in the spirit and attack total strangers in the elevator at least that's a piece of advice I'm comfortable passing on to you but the people that you may I mean to me that I have been extremely extraordinarily grateful to be allowed to be into service and to my Home group sent me to be GSR when I was six weeks sober and you can imagine how valuable I was to the group but for years I thought it was to keep me away from the coffee pot because in our room if you put the plug in the wrong socket you blew everything for the NA meeting and the AA meeting and I thought they could tell just by looking I was all too likely but it was years later I thought no these kind people recognized what they have in me or rather what they didn't have in me and they needed to give me a job that had a long term and that had a focus and that would keep me tethered to the ground and they were willing to give up their own connection to a we had more than one meeting in my town so it wasn't that they couldn't find anything but they were willing to put up with that for me because they thought I needed it and that it took me years to figure that out but I thought that is what service is to me that it not only is because we need people to be part of the service pipeline and all of that which we do but sometimes we need people who need service and when we recognize that we try to match them with a job not coffee maker usually if you think they're a danger but um but that and I s document 9ee that I've seen that this weekend in everyone and um I thank you all it's been Alcoholics Anonymous gave me my life but you all gave me the best part of my life and a so thank you alright thank you Nancy our next past trustee is palsy thank you my name's Paul and I'm an alcoholic I was a panel 42 delegate and then I would just eventually a non trusted director on a world services from 2002 to 2005 and a general service trustee on a WS from 2005 to 2009 um I was sick sad sorry and suicidal one more time when I came into Alcoholics Anonymous um ohh before I go on where is Paola where there she is Paula and I'm probably mispronouncing her name is senior editor of la Viña can you stand please OK so there she is and I expect I expect all of you who are interested in Lavinia will mob her after the session is over thank you thank you so much I am attended my first AA meeting uh in a county jail in upstate state New York where I had been lodged against my will because in New York State evidently it's illegal to give LSD to undercover narcotics detective and I still remember what the guy said who came into the jail to put on the AA meetings he said we didn't make Alcoholics Anonymous so hard that a drunk couldn't do it or none of us would be here I've never forgotten that I also want to note how pleased I am to be a member of the South Oceanside men's group in Oceanside CA which part of the San Diego imperial area not the calm down it's a San Diego imperial area it's not area O eight OK I don't think I need to remember the geographic areas of 93 different numbers it's a bit much but I also wanna say how glad I am that our general service representative is present taking copious notes so he can report back to the group what a bad representative of what's up the group so my sobriety date is January 15th 1974 I was 21 years old at the time I've now been sober 52 years and um it if you do the arithmetic you can figure out that I'm about 50 years old so sometimes I think in a sometimes we look like that pilot joke pilot comes over the intercom and says folks I got some good news and some bad news the bad news is were lost the good news is we're baking great time OK so that that happened sometimes OK so let me simply know ohh by the way George was a terrific guy and one of my favorite memories of George is when app couldn't speak at our traditions records George was going to Australia so he stopped in San Diego and he stayed with us and he I remember him sitting there in his bathroom at the dinosaur table with my little son playing with legos they made a dinosaur which we called the Lego hours and also a Dorsey source he was a big kid at heart really

anyway so historically our UM finances our reserve fund has been aimed at 9 to 12 months of expenses of our three corporations the general service board Alcoholics Anonymous world services Inc and the a Grapevine Hank and the way we kept it in there was to adjust big book prices OK so a few years ago all help went got loose with the public health emergency of course and things have been difficult since then with the recent drawdown of a 750 thousand \$1000 from the reserve fund and other expenses currently our reserve fund from the uncorrected past minute of the media passed a world services minutes our reserve fund is at 5.92 months and hurdling towards 5 months five months in the next few months um this is alarming I got my eyes sometimes cooperate and sometimes don't OK ohh this reminds me of that passage from Ernest Hemingway's 1926 now novel the sun also rises quote how did you go bankrupt bill asked two ways Mike said gradually and then suddenly so this is kind of one person told man I'm not sure I believe this but somebody told me the biggest problem is overspending uh and spending our money and our reserve fund like drunken sailors and that's an insult to sailors so our reserve fund is not a Piggy Bank to shore up difficulties this is what management and good budgeting is for now you can't budget for \$1,000,000 lack of contributions like we had last year I get that but come on we can do something I also want to suggest that nonprofit law in New York State encourages us to the greatest possible openness about our finances yeah I gotta tell you this one time after mating some young guys come up to me and they want me to attend a rave you've heard about these raves the young people have evidently they stay up all night listen to music drink dance and take drugs all night long and they call this a rave I told him you know when I was young we hit something like that we called it the weekend there's nothing new under the sun here OK uh but I could certainly improve my handwriting that's for sure uh so I think not-for-profit law in New York State suggests the greatest possible openness about our finances and other matters that boards are concerned about um certainly personnel matters and legal issues should not be disclosed but the rest of it should be open and that's why I continued to be concerned about an alleged code of conduct which keeps everybody buttoned up and not being able to share what's going on and that's really not in the spirit of this wonderful fellowship that we are fortunate enough to be members of and I think are we doing on time here how much longer do I get to torture these people to you huh that's it to you no they charge 26 seconds 26 seconds I'm gonna give you another minute holy **** we should not be applauding foul language in Alcoholics Anonymous OK I I'm gonna I'm gonna close with this and you're all grateful so many people think that um don't show up here are important people um I've got just this drunker than than you did and sugar day umm I I want to suggest that it is nice to be important but it's more important to be nice thank you OK thank you alright our next uh thank you Paul our next past trustee is Greg M hi everybody my name is Greg I'm alcoholic most days it's under control other days it's not uh so I need you to pray for me and I'm going to asked several prayers be said as you may or may not know on my way to the International Convention this year I got sick and I had some major operations and I I'm probably about 95% back but what's not here most days is that I could be talking to you and I forget what I'm saying so if I freeze up here make sure you yell at me I need lots of help and I wanna thank my dear friends on the dais for taking up all of my thoughts that I wrote down and so to hell with that so I my sobriety date is what is my strength back is Valentine's Day 1978 and it was in Kihei Maui Hawaii where I surrendered through my alcoholism which I knew nothing about but um I want to talk to you about groups and service and that kind of stuff um so I had worked myself up I was a panel 37 delegate and I followed Ruth as regional trustee in 1990 and I went to New York City now I had been living in why holy why Connie so the local folks know where that is it's Chinaman's hat on the North Shore and I've never been to New York I lived here in Hawaii for 30 plus years and ohh I'm telling you my heart is warm because of that experience so in 1990 I went to my first board meeting and some delegates and definitely trustees know that on Saturday there's always a sharing

session that the general service board has topics and all of the participants on that weekend they get to share about it now I'm a mouse from Hawaii and I'm sitting very quietly because I'm you know it's all about me and I'm uncomfortable and I don't want to make an ***** out of myself so I just sit there and listen which is a good trait sometimes and um they weren't there talking about the reserve fund and Kathy told most of my story and I think several else down the way did too but I was sitting there and uh good sharing and they were debating whether nine months was enough reserve to get him through hard times and that was what the consensus was and but the other side of the room were all bean counters and our outside auditors and some very smart people and they shared at the end and they thought that it ought to be about 18,000,000 and this is \$1990.00 and so you could really you know bring that up higher and higher and well look we had planes flying into the tower we had all kinds of stuff we had pandemics and we weren't prudent enough we weren't foresighted enough and so we need to do a lot of work together and we can start off by saying some prayers and the one I want you to join me in if you so choose is my sponsor for many many years is being airlifted from Southeast Asia to Hawaii he's very sick and so if you could just the energy of sober people are so healing so just a moment OK I know he'll be alright for today so I'm going to talk to you a little bit about my Home group it uh you know the day I surrendered and I was taken to my first meeting and the school in Kihei you made in a different room today we were in an actual classroom and I remember in there and the folks who had a step one meeting they're all turn around look at me when they were talking and especially because tears were coming down my eyes constantly right you know I'm self-centered fear is the boogeyman for me and I didn't want to you know I'm living in a car out in mud flats and I'm worried about what they're going to think about me but I had a truck crying spell the first time ever but what was what was really meaningful to me some two guys came up to me afterwards and invited me to go on a 12 step call with them and I mean I'm three days dry I'm not even close to getting my wits about me but I went with them and it was a little funky apartment and we got there and it was filthy and it was really a mess and I was assigned KP duty while the two guys talked to the person that had asked for help and I had never heard men maybe women sometimes use words of love and compassion and they really touched this person and they were touching me and when I when I got back to my car later that evening and I before nodding out I thought about what had happened to me and I came to this realization that the last two hours I had not thought about me once not once and I know this is a room full of people that can identify with that kind of freedom from their head and from that day to this day I have not had a pill fixed drink nothing zip and not because of anything I did it was because of the 12th step the gift that we are challenged to give to whoever asks for it we heard some numbers I may repeat a couple of them but I think uh participation in a I mean the dollar is the way that our financial people talk about how many groups I think there's 55,000 groups and they're giving on average per year 56% of the contributing groups do that and we're now I have 32 on my paper but someone said 29% of the known groups send money to the general service board with gratitude for the services they supply that help individuals like me get out of themselves so I'd like to see a hands who have people in the room that have physically gone or I guess electronically gone on a 12 step call that's great and because you're in service you hang around with all of us and you know that's the way out so the second warranty says uh that sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve should be our prudent financial principle so my group I'm going to talk about my group which is steps to freedom and I've got my heart ate I got back here and the steps to freedom group here has folded has gone away as my Home group is in Hawaii I mean in in Las Vegas where I live so my my home group's really weird and I hope yours is weird like mine so every the last Thursday of the month we have a Home group meeting the topics are always the same what do we do with our finances well we got to pay rent coffee we got to have district and area needs some

bucks uh the GSR needs to be reimbursed we send money to central office we send money to the general service board and any other 12 step group that needs it so we take our time in that and sometimes we have some money percent on other times we don't but we do send thank you notes for the service how many year old long enough that sober that you got a contribution letter like in 1958 and 60s the finance department did GS O would send out a receipt a contribution that showed how much your group gave or 0 but you got it just like you go shopping anywhere you get a quarterly statement and you can pay for it or not um in nineteen 5869% of the known groups were participating with their money 69% and when they say it's now 29% I believe it's because we're not doing 12 step work that's where the energy is that's where God lives that's where we need to be focused on sharing our experience strength and help whenever wherever that we're asked to do so I want to ask you to have a moment of silence for a second before that goes red and that is um I think sometimes we hurt people not on purpose but they're hurt by our actions and I've learned to try to be sensitive enough to remember to make amends for my actions I hope all of you have that same attitude and I need to be more sensitive to people and I need to make sure that I hug them and love them let's not forget that we make mistakes and we need to make amends for those mistakes and with that put the red light on afternoon alright thank you Greg and closing this out is Ruth Jay hi everybody I'm Ruth I'm an alcoholic I'm a member of the second edition group in Las Vegas NV and I didn't realize they gave us a topic which we normally just ignore anyway and I intend to do that age has its privileges somebody suggested when I came up here it would be nice if we had an empty chair for George and it's right next to me he was on my trustee when I was a delegate I'm a panel 29 delegate from Nevada my whole sobriety has been in Las Vegas or Nevada I have a lot of history wonderful times happy to share it I mean I love going over it but it's best when I'm able to share and yes I have been taped many times and I prefer to be known I went through a woman's recovery house called we care and I prefer thank you another week care girl as does Ruth from we care I didn't know you were anything else at all I said that's fine that's what I am I'm awesome we care and I'm an alcoholic so a couple of serious things and then we're going to have some fun the serious things I've been mentioned and most of the presenters have covered things that I would say and I would heartily second it um we need to be gentle with people who have made mistakes who in this room has not made a mistake in a I'd like to see those and speak to you afterward about how you accomplish that we had an area treasurer take off with the money hopefully you'll have an experience like that and you know how to handle it we don't take it to the courts for leadership I always learn and we're coming up this fall in election assembly I recommend people read concept 9 about leadership and the concepts may be a little dry for everybody but you can concept 12 kind of wraps it all up for us about how we don't punish those that make mistakes thank goodness or say the wrong thing at the wrong time and the other thing we're self-correcting fellowship if we make a mistake we can admit it and move on it takes a long time to accomplish some things in Alcoholics Anonymous my area knows that I often tell the elephant joke which is if you want something done in a it's like 2 elephants making love stunned by their high level seems to be a lot of trumpeting and yelling about it and it'll take at least two years to see results so remember that when you're passionate about getting something done um our treasurer came back and paid the money back and made amends but not all of them do it's a lesson for us to be careful who we elect the I have a Home group I've always had a Home group I have outlived a couple of sponsors the and I was not happy to be here in the beginning my first process was 1973 my sobriety date is June 26th 1970 and I celebrated 55 years since last June no I'm about 10 years behind George on both numbers he was my trustee when I was a delegate he taught me how to be gentle with people and how to get those of you who do not speak up promptly like some of us do to draw you out and get your ideas and you don't give yes and no question or question that you can answer with a yes or no we wanna know what you're thinking if you have ever

been in a group inventory or an area inventory and seen a minority voice stand up and change the opinion of the whole group it's amazing so his presence will be felt for a long time alright we were we talked about our responsibility declaration here said it a couple of times it's not a pledge we don't have pledges and aid the declaration that that we want the hand of a be there and sometimes that means to show the person to the correct fellowship it doesn't necessarily mean to take them into ours but it doesn't mean shutting the door on them either we're the oldest fellowship we should be polite to others and show them where they need to be I think that's all the lessons for today but I feel strongly about those and taking up too much non meeting time at me at Jehovah group and at least once a year looking at your finances and do you need to adjust where you're sending your money Greg's group does it every month I kind of drag hours into looking at it once a year maybe twice a year if somebody needs something what I've learned that what we have in alcoholism is very serious it's cunning baffling powerful and potentially deadly I always say that when we read that part of chapter 5 I've seen people die of it my 2 parents to begin with my sister died with 35 years sobriety and I have spawned one who is working on it my children were 6:00 and 12:00 when I came to a they are now both senior citizens I don't know how that happens there and bless all of you who know me or seen me at many processes I think this is my 49th or 50th the that you come up and say ohh it's so nice to see you I'm Jane from Northern California or wherever you're from because my memory was never that good for all the faces and names and they don't always print them big enough for you to read these are a little better than some so thank you thank you for that and I now travel with people who watch out for me because my balance isn't as good as it used to be so my daughter makes sure we have guardians around me then I thank my guardians for this weekend the with all the seriousness of our disease and keeping our fellowship afloat and financially fit and restraining our spending habits sometimes it's just too easy with Amazon um I'm not talking about a I'm talking about personally um you know just push a button and you got it uh the I think I want to enjoy my sobriety I've done things outside of Alcoholics Anonymous that allowed me to return to civilization outside and I've done things in outside organizations but I never would have done without being sober and thanks to you I had a sponsor in the beginning that forced me forced me to do those steps and told me what I was going to do where I was going to go my I was seven days sober when my I went to meeting and the chairperson the lady said you're my Co chair and I said what does that mean what does that mean she said well you can read can't you yes I could read you read the Bible you read chapter 5 so that was my start my first crossing was in Las Vegas in 1973 there were 230 people there I hadn't a clue what you were saying so if it's your first time and you wonder what it is you have to keep coming back I like the feeling in the room and if you like the feeling in the room those of us that want to perpetuate our fellowship please come back because we need you GSR DCM's that's the hardest job it's like herding cats um and my hats off to you the I was a delegate in 1979/1980 so I had nine years sobriety so you can do things with relatively little sobriety certainly made some mistakes there was no Internet hand wrote all my reports gave it to somebody who typed better than me and typed it up uh we've come a long way but I want you to have some fun with your sobriety and it's not all doom and gloom and seriousness that we think maybe at the beginning it would be and I don't know how many of you have heard me say this before but it's important I think you know we have control over so few things in life sometimes I don't even have control over me and what I say I have some scars on my tongue because I try to restrain I don't I want newcomers to feel safe and accepted and I don't want them to hear a lot of F bombs or S bombs in their first meeting that's not the kind of fellowship I want to belong to but you can have some fun and whatever you control in your life maybe your child would do controlled children for a while and your cat or your dog or whatever but there's something that you like in order might be the socks in your drawer might be the way your T-shirts are folded I don't know for me it is very important that you hang the toilet

paper correctly I always get a lot of identification with that one and yes if you're not sure if I come to your house you will be sure when I leave umm I am recovered enough so I don't feel impelled to do it in hotels and on airplanes anymore but I had to get control of that along my sobriety so I think UM I'm here today because George isn't I didn't have any plans to be here and it didn't make Alaska for the same thing travel is more difficult as you get older it takes more out of you so I'm here because George isn't and I hope to see you all in Seattle thanks