

THE BOOMERANG



MAINE AREA 28 NEWSLETTER

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An Open Letter To The General Service Board

Gary A. Glynn, Chairman
General Service Board
1112 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10128
November 22, 1997

Yesterday I received the Quarterly Report and was appalled at the action of AAWS and the General Service Board concerning the possibility of litigation in yet another instance of a members "revolt" against the AAWS policy of pricing literature. You are not threatening to "sue" an outside entity, **you are threatening an AA member who is printing and distributing AA literature, at no charge, to AA groups in order to carry the message.** Let me insert here a little background:

In 1993, following the disastrous legal action by AAWS concerning the circle and triangle, the General Service Conference formed an Ad Hoc Committee to look into how best to protect our trademarks and copyrights and stay within the Traditions. This Committee was to report back to the 1994 Conference with their recommendations. The Committee met and, unable to come to a consensus within that Committee, they reported back to the Conference with a recommendation that the Conference allow the entire Fellowship to discuss the issue for a period of two years, to allow a general discussion among the Fellowship, and arrive at an informed opinion of what measures should be taken in matters of protecting the trademarks and copyrights. In the meantime AAWS formulated what they called a new policy concerning litigation. That policy, to paraphrase, was that AAWS would enter into litigation only after all other avenues

had been exhausted. A "Floor Action" was introduced asking the Conference to accept the "new" AAWS policy on litigation. This "Floor Action" was voted on by the 1994 Conference and was rejected by a vote of 80 some odd opposed and 30 some odd in favor. In spite of the better than two-thirds rejection by the Conference, the "new" AAWS policy on litigation is still in effect.

Since that Conference, two different Areas, in different years, have requested the matter of litigation be placed on the Conference Agenda for consideration by the entire Conference body, and both requests have been rejected by the Trustees Conference Committee. **Bear in mind that the General Service Structure Chart shows the AA Groups at the head of all AA Service entities and, as such, supposedly has the authority to ask the Conference to consider matters of concern to them.** The Areas who asked for this to be placed on the Agenda were composed of literally **hundreds of Groups and were virtually ignored.** It is my understanding that just recently a third Area had passed a motion not to litigate to protect copyrights on AA literature. The three Areas I refer to are Maryland, Tennessee and Arizona. In the case of Arizona, it is my understanding that their motion was not passed on to the Trustees Conference Committee, but was simply regarded as a "communication" to the General Service Board.

In my view, the position the Board and AAWS has taken is untenable and will serve to further divide the Fellowship. Further, it seems to violate, in spirit, Tradition Two which states, in part, **"Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do no govern."** I, for my part, would have no problem with a position of litigation resolved by the General Service Conference in the accepted "Group Conscience" process. However, I find the manner in which this current decision was arrived at is unacceptable. It seems the powers that be in New York have adopted an attitude of "Father knows best" and are determined to not allow the Fellowship any
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voice in the "important" decisions. I would recommend that the members of the Board and AAWS read Tradition Two, Tradition Ten and Warranty Five along with the Conference Charter.

I find that I can no longer associate myself with a leadership that shows no respect for the Traditions and Concepts and does not trust the good sense of the Fellowship. I respectfully request that my name be removed from the mailing list of the General Service Office and any other list maintained by that office that may reflect my membership on the national level. I shall continue to remain an active member in my Home Group, my District and my Area.

Sincerely,

Jesse. L., Past Delegate, Panel 44, Area 46, New Mexico



Highlights from the
General Service Board
Meeting
Special Meeting
Concerning Copyrights

The topic of this special meeting, held at noon, Saturday, November 1, 1997, was European copyrights.

Management provided the A.A.W.S. Board with substantial 90 concerning serious copyright violations, in several languages, by an individual in Germany. The same individual has also indicated his intention to do the same respecting the Russian translation. The A.A.W.S. Board then adopted the following resolution:

Resolved: that the A.A.W.S. Board recognizes its responsibility to preserve and protect the copyrights held in trust for all of A.A., both here in U.S./Canada and throughout the world. The A.A.W.S. Board further recognizes that unchallenged infringement of our copyrighted literature seriously impacts the future growth of A.A. overseas.

Following the adoption of the above resolution, the A.A.W.S. Board authorized management, working with the Board's Legal Advisor, the Chairperson of A.A.W.S. and the General Service Boards, and such other persons as the respective chairs might assign, to take such appropriate action, including legal action, as may be necessary to meet the challenge.

Members of the General Service Board and A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Boards were provided with background information prior to the meeting,, describing the situation whereby the copyrights appear to have been violated by an individual, or group, in Germany who have produced unauthorized translations in two languages and have printed and

distributed our translation of our book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, in two languages. Included in the material furnished was background information regarding : A.A.'s approach to ownership of its own literature; historic copyright, translation and licensing policies; previous copyright issues that have arisen in the US/Canada and other countries; background on current problems.

Following discussion, the trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous unanimously endorsed and approved the resolution of the A.A.W.S. Board and advised that the resolution be carried out.



AA BBSG is an A.A. group. It started in 1995. It is mainly a group which works and communicates by snail mail and e-mail because members and supporters live far away from each other in Germany (majority), Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands and other countries. Though we have regular meetings each Saturday evening near Frankfurt/Main and non-weekly in other cities as well. The group was registered in the English speaking European A.A. structure at the GSO York, England, beginning of 1996.

The group sees it's primary purpose in Tradition Five, long form, "Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose* - that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers". We fulfill that Tradition by face-to-face 12 Step work in the place where we live, and in distribution of A.A. literature. Since the summer of 1996, we have given away, for free, the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, throughout the world. In Germany (27,000), Hebrew (5,000), Finnish (5,000), Swedish (5,000). Currently follows Spanish (20,000), United States alcoholics in prison (75,000), and Russian speaking alcoholics in Russia, Israel, Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus and Sibiria (50,000). We have no dues or fees. All our work is prepaid by voluntary contributions. We are aware that many organizations - using the A.A. name - finance their work and their employees through literature profits. But we trust in God and adhere to Tradition 7.

Our aim is to re-animate the Fellowship of A.A. worldwide where it might have become almost spiritual sleepy and initiate spiritual awakenings. We avoid opinions on "outside issues." But, due to our desire to be and live honest and say the truth (even if inconvenient), some members of us face gossip and litigation from some people representing the established A.A. structure.

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AA BBSG Continued:

Prices of the Big Book in foreign countries: Russian \$5.00; Finnish \$49.30; Swedish \$44.00; French \$10.25; German \$18.00; Norwegian \$28.90; Arabic \$4.69; Czech \$4.60; Danish \$26.25; Dutch \$29.80; Hungarian \$4.60; Italian \$18.00; Polish \$6.55.

We have good experiences with Concept X and the principle "Power of the Purse" in Concept VII which binds the **service** entity to the will of a loving God, as He may express Himself in the group conscience. If we would not adhere to his will nobody would put a penny into the basket and we would have no money to continue our work. If the boards, committees or delegates do not do good, the groups and their individuals could easily stop contributions and thus give us strong directions to change our mind or (in case of an emergency), to stop our work altogether. **The groups have NO "power for the purse" if their service entities source of revenue is mostly from literature income.** In The A.A. Service Manual's Concepts X on page 44 says, "... emergency -usually arises when delegated authority has gone wrong, when it must be reorganized because it is ineffective, or because it constantly exceeds its defined scope and purpose. For example, if the groups are dissatisfied with the Conference, they can elect better delegates or withhold funds..." Although we are not a "Conference" (but just a bunch of recovered alcoholics), we apply this principle to our work of love.

Concerning the experience that alcoholics do not honor what they get for free, it will sometimes happen that they throw away a "free Big Book" and do not recover through the course of action outlined in the 12 Steps. But we claim progress rather than perfection. Even in the best times of AA only 75% of all newcomers recovered We must simply accept the fact that some of our efforts will be in vain We are a tool in God's hands only. The real change in the heart of a human being must come from a Higher Power anyhow and is not at our command

Concerning different translations, we are aware that every translation is an interpretation and the ideal will never be reached But it is worth it to try as much as possible close to the original text. AA BBSG adheres to that. We are also aware that many important books (the Bible and many others) are available in different translations. In Germany there are four different translations of the Big Book. None of them has caused an alcoholic to drink again. Vice versa it has given a deeper understanding to those who searched the versions for meaning of the message.

From the AA BBSG group.



What is the "L" Word?

The "L" word just might stand for "litigation" in AA. today. Whether or not A.A. should enter into litigations has been around the discussion tables for quite some time now. Current events may find this issue front and center again. One of the main problems in discussing litigation is separating the "Principle" of whether or not we should initiate litigation from the "Personality", whether it be the 'person' in Germany, IWS, the Freidman Co., Frames of Minds, and so on.. When focused on the "Personality" the main issue of litigation gets lost in emotional rhetoric. A good example of this is the Chip and Medallion issue of a few years back. That issue was first addressed as 'whether or not we should be litigating to protect the Circle and Triangle. That issue was soon lost when all emphasis was place on whether or not we should be making chips and medallions. The 'real' issue of whether or not litigations is against the Fifth Warranty was left in the dust. It is a lot easier to get 'emotional' about an issue we understand then to take the time to become informed about the nature of litigation and how it may effect Policy. Also, the Maine Area has a "litigation" issue on its Agenda and the item will be discussed at the January Committee meeting. When discussion is brought up regarding the "L" word, litigation, many say they

don't understand the concerns; don't have any background and so on, as a 'reason' to put off discussion. Put together here is a synopsis of writings, events, and correspondence that, hopefully, may shine a little more light on the subject of litigation

A.A.W.S.'s Policy Regarding litigation: Page S103 of The A.A. Service Manual. Footnote: *... Alcoholics Anonymous will continue to oppose unauthorized use of the registered trademarks "AA" or "Alcoholics Anonymous," whether or not used with the circle and triangle, as well as our other registered marks: "The Big Book," "Box 4-5-9," The Grapevine," "GV", "A.A. Grapevine," and "Box 1980." The above statement from A.A.W.S. was not Conference Approved To date, there has been no approved statement regarding litigation from the General Service Conference.

Warranty Five of the Current Conference Charter, Article 12, General Warranties of the Conference and Concept XII of the 12 Concepts of World Service, The A.A. Service Manual, pages S28 and 72-73. "That no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy,"... We have a saying that A.A. is prepared to give away all the knowledge and all the experience it has - all excepting the A.A. name itself.' We mean by this that our principles can be used in any application whatever. We do not wish to make them a monopoly of our own. We simply request that the public use of the A.A. name be avoided by those other agencies who wish to avail themselves of A.A. techniques and ideas. In case the AA. name should be misapplied in such a connection it would of course be the duty of our General Service Conference to press for the discontinuance of such a practice - always short, however, of public quarreling about the matter. The protection of the A.A. name is of such importance to us that we once thought of incorporating it everywhere throughout the world, thereby availing ourselves of legal means to stop any misuse. We even thought of asking Congress to grant us the unusual favor of a Congressional incorporation. 'We felt that the existence of these legal remedies might prove to be a great deterrent. But after several years of deliberation, our General Service Conference decided against such a course. The dramatic story of this debate and its conclusion may be found in our history book, "Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age." (Continued on Page Four)



More on the "L" word

Those early Conferences believed that the power to sue would be a dangerous thing for us to possess. **It was recognized that a public lawsuit is a public controversy, something in which our Tradition says we may not engage.** To make our legal position secure, it would have been necessary to incorporate our whole Fellowship, and no one wished to see our spiritual way of life incorporated. It seemed certain that we could confidently trust A.A. opinion, public opinion, and God Himself to take care of Alcoholics Anonymous in this respect..”

A few quotes from one of our co-founders, Bill W. regarding A.A.'s Public Relations:

"Our public relations are A.A.'s life lines to reaching the alcoholic. One serious public relations calamity could always turn thousands away from us to perish—a matter of life and death indeed!" Bill also wrote, "The future poses no greater problem or challenge to A.A. than how best preserve a friendly and vital relation to all the world about us. Success will rest heavily upon right principles, a wise vigilance, and the deepest personal responsibility on the part of everyone of us. Nothing less will do." "We are sure there must be a million alcoholics who would join Alcoholics Anonymous tomorrow if only they knew what we do. We keenly realize that any fundamental disunity among us could instantly disillusion tens of thousands who would again turn their faces to the wall. Hence those disruptions common to great wealth, power, or controversy ought never be for us. Too many of the "million who don't" yet know would surely die." Bill W.

Should the Conference be discussing litigation? Article 11 of the Current Conference Charter: "The General Service Conference. Its General Procedures: The Conference will hear financial and policy reports of the General Service Board and its related corporate services. **The Conference will advise with the Trustees, directors and staff members upon All matters presented as affecting A.A. as a whole.** The Conference may also discuss and recommend appropriate action respecting serious deviations from AA tradition or harmful misuse of the name "Alcoholics Anonymous."

By who's authority were litigation actions in the past taken? Those lawsuits were commenced on the authority of the A.A.W.S. Directors, consistent with its right of decision 'Right of Decision,' is best defined in Concept III, which states, in relevant part, '... that 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 particular problem or situation as it arises.' From 4/22/91 letter regarding litigation questions; answered by the GSO Service Director/Legal Council Tom J.

AAWS in Litigation - A Past Delegate's view: "It does seem to me that in defending one Tradition (6), we are at a risk of breaking another (10). Since we have already started litigations in some areas, do we not stand at risk that at some point in time these actions will become public? These copyrights and logos are owned under the name of A.A.W.S. Inc. or AA. Grapevine, Inc. which are both legally licensed corporations within the state of New York. But even though the copyrights and logos may be in the corporate entity, A.A. is still drawn into the controversy because of the name we carry. Also, any time we leave the negotiation room, we lose part of the options to resolve those differences without 'public controversy.' Public controversy will come about with the initiation of court action and it makes no difference if our cause is just or right."

Dean R. Panel 37 - Area OK (current U.S. Trustee-at-Large)

Litigation and Anonymity: Question: If AAWS goes into litigation, can the General Service Board and A.A.W.S. give the AA membership a 100% guarantee that A.A. member's names, including Conference member's names, will not leave the GSO for any reason: will not be involved in a subpoena and will never have to testify in a court room? Answer: The limited experience that we have so far is that anonymity can be protected in legal situations, but making a 100% guarantee of what courts of the United States will do would be impossible. From the Regional Forum Report, Southeast Regional Forum Biloxi MS. (the next year the General Service Board got Indemnity Insurance.)

The 'cost' of Litigation: It was reported that **in 1988 alone additional \$188,000** had been spent on legal fees defending our material (though the case then didn't go to court) One can only imagine, with two litigation actions already gone to court, how much litigations has cost the Fellowship. Hundreds of thousands of dollars has already been spent, perhaps close to a million. What will the cost be to litigate with an individual overseas remains to be seen.

Another Conference Looks at Public Controversy: In 1953, the General Service Conference looked at a situation similar to those facing AA now regarding 'taking' legal action on those that may abuse our name, copyrights and so on. On pages 123 thru 128 in *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* is written the history of **whether or not we should protect ourselves 'legally.'** Back then the General Service Board was excited about the prospect of obtaining a congressional charter, an act of congress which would protect the A.A. name. It was thought that the mere existence of such a charter would restrain nearly all those who might be tempted to misuse the A.A. name. A legal bludgeon of that size and weight could easily be used on any who might still defy the law. It looked like a grand idea and those at the headquarters were all for it. But the conscience of Alcoholics Anonymous, its General Service Conference, had other ideas. The Conference pointed out to us how foolish it would be to incorporate A.A.'s way of life as a legal instrument with which to attack anyone, no matter what the provocation. We would not be content with such an instrument for purposes of pure restraint. Under enough provocation, we would be bound to start public lawsuits and thus enter the field of public controversy. It would be like building a war machine on the theory that it would always stay home and never fight. The Conference at that time thought they ought to forget about the questionable advantages of legality and controversy and we at the headquarters saw that the conscience of Alcoholics Anonymous, acting through the delegates, was wiser than we were. A delegate from Mississippi, back at that Conference in '53, reporting from his committee said, in part, "It would implement the spiritual force of A.A. with a legal power, which we believe would tend to weaken its spiritual strength. When we ask for legal rights enforceable in courts of law, we by the same act subject ourselves to possible legal regulation. We might well become endlessly entangled in litigation which, together with the incidental expense and publicity, could seriously threaten our very existence." From that General Service Conference of 1953 the final foundation was laid for Tradition 10, "*Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*"



History of litigation

(The copyright to the First Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, was lost (lapsed) in 1967 and the Second Edition copyright was lost (lapsed) in 1983. This was reported to the General Service Conference in 1986. In the two years following, A.A.W.S., Inc. and The Grapevine, Inc. registered or renewed our registration of 6 logos between the time the copyright to the Second Edition was lost (1983) and when it was reported to the General Service Conference (19%). However, prior to the 19% Conference and in the two years following there was a rush of registration for 15 logos as either trademarks or service marks.)

In the late 30's, Sister Ignatia gave pins for years of sobriety. Then in the 40's and 50's there were various coins given for sobriety. In the 60's poker chips were given.

Meanwhile, our logo, the Circle and Triangle, was registered in 1956. This was renewed in 1973. In the early 70's some of the chip and medallion manufacturers got permission from GSO to put the Circle & Triangle on their products. In the late 80's, several A.A.'s complained to GSO of the infringement of our logo being used on chips and medallions. (They may or may not have been aware that permission had been granted several years before, as indicated above)

GSO mailed out letters to approximately 170 vendors who were using our logo, asking them to 'cease and desist.' All but two vendors either stopped using our logos or changed their design so as not to infringe. After repeated efforts to settle out of court, A.A.W.S., Inc. brought action against the remaining infringers. This was documented in a late 1988 GSO Quarterly Report. Also, the "Sober Times", a non-AA publication featured a front page article entitled, "AA. to Fight Trademark Infringement", in its Feb. '90 issue. Some A.A.'s alarmed by this kind of publicity, initiated a vigorous dialogue over the next two years with delegates, the General Service Board and A.A.W.S. on whether litigate or not; whether litigations were in violation of the 10th Tradition and 5th Warranty.

From the litigation controversy, the Fellowship chose to make an issue of "should we have chips and medallions or not?" thus avoiding, intentionally or not, the 'real' issue of litigation, itself. An ad hoc committee was spawned to study the Chip and Medallion issue. The result of the 1993 General Service Conference were against either of our service corporations producing chip or medallions.

This ad hoc committee also recommended that the General Service Conference find that litigation is a violation of Warranty V; that the General Service Board take steps to make all policies and practices conform to the spirit of the Warranties; and for the General Service Board to develop a new policy statement for inclusion in the Service Manual which reflects the spirit of this committee's report. Then a similar proposal was made to the Conference on Friday afternoon by a Conference member which, in essence, stated the same as the ad hoc's recommendation. It was withdrawn after a member of A.A.W.S. read a statement which said A.A.W.S. would "immediately begin a thorough review of its policies regarding our marks, will do everything possible to avoid initiating litigation and will prepare a revised policy statement to be ready for next

years' Conference" There was no Conference vote taken on AAWS' proposal The proposal stood

The next day, after the close of the Conference, during the General Service Board meeting, AAWS produced this revised policy statement. Its first part specified that they expedite a prompt withdrawal of all pending court activity dealing with protecting our logo. The threat of losing the then current court battle with Friedman Co. stemmed from the earlier permission granted in the 70's.

Several weeks later the Fellowship was informed that we would discontinue using the Circle and Triangle logo officially and remove it from our literature. The reason given was to avoid confusion and/or implied affiliation with others using our logo, since its use outside AA was no longer challenged. This action was initiated by a 5/24/93 letter from the General Service Board Chairman to the General Service Board requesting permission to give up the logo and for them to respond to this matter in 48 hours. It was later found out that this had already been activated by the GSO Services Director's signature on a legal "Consent Judgment" to Friedman and Associates" on 5/13/93. Then, still later, it was discovered that A.A.W.S. knew before the 1993 General Service Conference that they were going to lose the court battle and, in fact, had to put the Circle and Triangle into public domain as part of the agreement with the Friedman Co. AAWS did not inform the Conference of this fact nor the General Service Board even though the Conference, as a whole, was looking into the issue of litigation.

The General Service Board Chairman formed another ad hoc committee in 10/93 to look at policies of copyright and trademark protection. This was an ad hoc committee of the General Service Board and made up of delegates, staff members, the GSO office manager and Service Director. This ad hoc committee recommended to the 1994 General Service Conference:

- 1) That A.A.W.S. follow the policy on identifying Marks and Copyright as guidelines until the 1996 Conference., allowing time for the Fellowship to consider the concerns surrounding this issue; and this policy be reviewed at the 1996 Conference.
- 2) The information and questions about these issues be furnished to the Fellowship at large and input be sought at the group level. Regional Forum workshops and delegate presentations within each Area could be possible avenues for dissemination of this information Specific questions should include our society's responsibility to AA's intellectual properties, basic message and the AA name itself.
- 3) That litigation is a matter for thorough and cautious consideration and should not be undertaken without consultation with the General Service Board

This was turned down by the Conference by a vote of 89 to 30. Again, the Conference decided to 'trust' their trusted servants to do as they saw fit.

Several delegates prepared a Censure of the General Service Board to present to the '94 Conference. The purpose of this measure of an 'official reprimand' was that it was felt the General Service Board, on many occasions, had not maintained enough oversight of AAWS, their wholly owned service corporation, as the Concepts suggest. They felt the Board had allowed AAWS to be **the 'tail wagging the dog.'** However the Board Chairman confided with 2 of the concerned delegates, at the 1994 Conference, proposing a plan which he would present

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something DIFFERENT!



at the 1994 July Board Meeting. The plan was to appoint a liaison committee between the General Service Board and AAWS to oversee AAWS litigation activity. The AAWS Board rejected this plan when presented with it at the 1994 July General Service Board meeting. The General Service Board then took no action News of the failure of this plan and the breach of trust that the General Service Board asked for at the end of the 1994 General Service Board Conference revived the Censure again. The Statement of Censure was mailed to the General Service Board with a dead line for response on 9/1/94. There was no response and the rest of the action is another topic.

In Feb. of 1995, the Maryland Area 29 sent the following item to be placed on the 1995 Agenda of the General Service Conference, "The Conference recommends that the General Service Board and its subsidiary Boards, A.A. World Services, Inc. and The AA. Grapevine, Inc. initiate no litigation."

This request was turned down by the Trustees Conference Committee. It was brought up as a "Floor Action" at the 1995 General Service Conference, along with three other Floor Actions, and all Floor Actions were 'refused' discussion.

In Feb. of 1996, the Tennessee Area 64 made a similar request that "The General Service Board, AAWS and the Grapevine initiate no litigation and this request for a Conference Agenda item was turned down by the Trustees Conference Committee.

In Jan. of 1997, a past delegate from Area 28 submitted the following Item to be placed on the 1997 Conference Agenda, "That the underlined sections, in the statements below, of paragraph 6 of Warranty Five of the 1994-95 A.A. Service Manual, page 72 and the 1st paragraph of Warranty Five, page 73, be footnoted/endnoted to indicate, "This is no longer *applies*."

Warranty Five, pages 72 and 73, paragraph 6 and paragraph 1 respectively reads: We have a saying that AA is prepared to give away all the knowledge and all the experience it has-all excepting the AA name itself. We mean by this that our principles can be used in any application whatever. We do not wish to make them a monopoly of our own. We simply request that the public use of the AA name be avoided by those other agencies who wish to avail themselves of AA techniques and ideas. In case the AA name should be misapplied in such a connection it would of course be the duty of our General Service Conference to press for the discontinuance of such a practice-always short, however, of public quarreling about the matter." This request for placement of this on the Conference Agenda was turned down by the Trustee Conference Committee.

At the November 3 General Service Board meeting it was acknowledged that there had been communications from the Arizona, Area 03, Delegate, that he was relaying a motion by the Arizona General Service Assembly "not to litigate to protect copyrights on A.A. literature." This 'motion' was treated as a 'correspondence' and not transferred to the Trustees Conference Committee for placement on the 1997 General Service Conference.

Note: This newsletter has quite a bit of discussion on the topic of "Litigation" It was the decision of the editor to place this information in the Boomerang because of the outcries that there just isn't enough information, regarding litigation, to make an informed group conscience on the issue. This is the only information I have available. I'm sure there is a lot more out there in the Fellowship. It is my hopes that those interested will contact GSO, the General Service Board and AAWS for more information regarding the issue. The information **is** out there and **one only needs to 'ask' to become more informed.**

TAKING INVENTORY - A FOCUS ON THE DISTRICT LEVEL:

An Inventory is a time to look over the past year and see how we stack up against where we want to be.

This is an example of a District Inventory that may be used.

- 1) Is an adequate opportunity given for all to participate?
- 2) Have new GSRs been given enough information and orientation about service work?
- 3) Does the District provide enough support to the groups within their district?
- 4) Have we done enough workshops?
- 5) Are the district meetings informative or relevant?
- 6) Are there too many meetings?
- 7) How can we attract more GSRs to the meetings?
- 8) Does the district give and receive enough information from the Delegate, Maine Area and GSO?
- 9) Would moving the meetings to different locations increase participation?
- 10) What more can we do to carry the message?

If your District is among those which do not have an active DCM or GSRs, you may want to take the initiative to fill this void. Several previously dormant districts have become very active and productive just from the instigation of a couple of enthusiastic GSRs. If you district doesn't have a DCM, become the GSR of you group and perhaps nominate yourself for DCM! Make a difference! Alcoholic Anonymous needs a strong service structure in order to continue its viability into the nex century. You can help!

From the Margenser Newsletter-Maryland Area 29

Boomerang Statement of Purpose: The Boomerang is to inform members of Area 28 of items about General Service from GSO, the General Service Conference, the Northeast Region, Area 28, Districts and Groups. Communication is the key to an informed "Group Conscience." We wish to thank you for letters and reports. Opinions expressed in the Boomerang are not to be attributed to AA as a whole nor does nay article imply endorsement by AA or Area 28

